

Manmohan's speech

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A series of other proposals and ideas that came up in the Indian premier's address include setting up of a South Asian University, a Regional Food Bank, holding of a South Asian Energy Dialogue, a South Asian Car Rally, daily air services among Saarc countries, hosting of a Saarc Centre for Disaster Preparedness, a Saarc Museum of Textiles and Handicrafts and developing a regional telemedicine network.

Expressing optimism about the proposed South Asian Free Trade Area (SafTa) taking effect from the first day of next year, the Indian head of the government observed, "Even this will represent only a modest beginning in terms of our goal for regional economic integration."

He raised the question whether justice has been done to the initial blueprint for regional cooperation in first two decades of Saarc and then [Manmohan] said that the regional economic cooperation in South Asia has fallen far short of "our expectations."

Stressing the need for recharging and regenerating the arteries of transport and communications that bind the South Asian countries together, Dr Manmohan said, "We cannot be the crossroads of Asia but remain disconnected within our own region. Without the latter, the former is not possible, or at least, will be possible to a very limited extent." In this context, he reminded all that the ancient roads criss-crossed the subcontinent, and linked-up with the seaports, which were the gateways to the region.

"If Saarc as a region has to recapture its role as crossroads of culture and commerce, how much more necessary is it for us to remove the barriers to the free flow of goods, of peoples and ideas within our own region," he added.

The deliberation by the Indian prime minister also emphasised the importance of the Saarc acting speedily for catching up with the dynamic Asia, which he says, is emerging in "our neighbourhood."

Referring to the Asean, he said, "We are clearly witnessing nothing short of an Asian resurgence based upon the rebuilding of the pre-colonial arteries of trade and commerce that created a distinct Asian identity in the first place."

SOUTH ASIAN ENERGY DIALOGUE
Manmohan described energy security as an increasingly major challenge that the region is faced with and proposed for a South Asian Energy Dialogue involving experts, academics, environmentalists, officials and NGOs to recommend measures to tap the energy potential.

REGIONAL FOOD BANK
Identifying food security as another major challenge, the India premier proposed for a collaborative project in the form of a Regional Food Bank which shall be used to meet shortages and losses caused by natural calamities in any Saarc member countries.

SOUTH ASIAN UNIVERSITY
To create a centre of excellence, in the form of a South Asian University, Manmohan urged all seven members to pool their resources and observed, "Wherever an enabling environment and world class facilities are made available to our talented peoples, they excel."

He wanted the proposed South Asian University to become a forum where the academicians, scholars, researchers and gifted students, could work together in the service of human advancement. He expressed India's

Economic union

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to satisfy the ever-escalating expectations of the peoples in the region, he added.

"We have to move swiftly to recover the lost opportunities and maximise gains by forging regional synergy," the King said, adding that South Asia must send a clear message that violence can't be an instrument for further political objectives.

"We visualise it [Saarc] as an embodiment of South Asian identity. In order to promote people-to-people contacts on a larger scale, we must think of a visa-free regime in South Asia along with a free trade regime."

It has become imperative that Saarc countries introduce and carry out parallel processes of economic integration and infrastructure development that will obviously require huge investments, he noted.

"We need to revitalise the South Asian Development Fund (SADF) with required resources and appropriate technological and institutional design," the King observed.

Regional cooperation today is not merely a simple political aspiration, rather an economic necessity accentuated by the forces of globalisation, he said.

Saarc region possesses great potential to be a vibrant force in the international arena and what is urgently required is unity of purpose and cooperative resolve to gain collective benefit from its own strengths, he said.

"Many countries and peoples around the world have learnt from our

1st Saarc Award

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summit began at the Bangladesh-China Friendship Conference Centre (BCFCC).

The award carries a purse of \$25,000, agold medal and certificate of citation.

The decision to confer the award upon the late president was taken at the 25th session of the Council of Ministers held in Islamabad in July this year.

Before the opening of the 13th summit, the Saarc leaders visited the grave of the late president and offered floral tributes.

Prior to presenting the award, the Pakistani prime minister described Ziaur Rahman as a great visionary, who took initiative in bringing all the South Asian nations under one banner to fight poverty and improve the living standard of the people.

Shaukat Aziz said the late president of Bangladesh wrote letters to all Saarc leaders in the early 1980s presenting his vision about the need for regional cooperation aimed at the overall prosperity of the region.

His [Zia's] vision came to reality through the establishment of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation in December 1985, the outgoing Saarc chairman added.

Saarc Secretary General Chenkyab Dorji read out the citation, which stated that the late leader set in motion the process for the creation of the Saarc.

"The seed of Saarc was sown by late President Ziaur Rahman...Saarc will remain as a testimony to his vision and foresight," he said, adding that the award is a recognition of the vision and initiative of Ziaur Rahman for establishment of the seven-nation forum.

Meanwhile, Indian Prime Minister Dr Manmohan Singh in his summit speech said the vision of president Ziaur Rahman helped move forward the idea of Saarc. "It is only appropriate that we honour his memory at this summit with the first Saarc Award," he added.

Hasina

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Prime Minister Lyonpo Sangay Ngedup separately at the same hotel.

The schedule of Hasina's meeting with President of the Maldives Maumoon Abdul Gayoom is yet to be confirmed, AL office sources said.

Martyrs

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Manmohan Singh, Nepalese King Gyanendra Bir Bikram Shah Dev, the Maldives President Maumoon Abdul Gayoom, Pakistan Prime Minister Shaukat Aziz and Sri Lankan President Chandrika Kumaratunga to the altar of the memorial.

They placed wreaths in a ceremonial way at 9:49am. A contingent of the armed forces played the last post while the Saarc leaders stood in solemn silence for a while as a mark of respect to the martyrs.

Prime Minister Khaleda Zia arrived on the premises of the National Memorial at 9:10am and received the dignitaries from 9:31am to 9:45am.

From the memorial, they left for the mazar of late President Ziaur Rahman at 9:55am.

The South Asian leaders arrived at Chandrima Udayan at Sher-e-Bangla Nagar in the capital at 10:40am paid tributes to the dreamer of the Saarc, late president Ziaur Rahman, by placing wreaths at his grave near the Crescent Lake.

A contingent of the armed forces played the last post as the Saarc leaders stood in solemn silence for a while showing respect to the late president Zia who first mooted the idea of regional cooperation in 1980 which eventually culminated in the launching of the Saarc in 1985.

India favours

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The Standing Committee of the organisation will be convened early next year.

Foreign Secretary Shyam Saran said a memorandum of understanding (MoU) will have to be signed between Saarc and China in case it is associated with the seven-nation South Asian organisation.

China has made a request to the Saarc for admission into the organisation either as an observer or a dialogue partner.

"We would welcome inclusion of China on mutually-beneficial basis... But certain modalities have to be worked out," Saran told a group of reporters on the sidelines of the 13th Saarc Summit in Dhaka.

To work out the modalities, Saran said the Saarc has decided to convene a special session of Standing Committee early next year.

Sources said the Saarc Charter at present did not have provisions of having an observer and as such some amendments might have to be made to make the adjustments.

The Saarc Council of Ministers meeting on Friday could not reach a consensus on inclusion of China, but there was unanimity on entry of Afghanistan into the Saarc.

"This Dhaka Summit will be remembered as a landmark event for we would welcome the brotherly country of Afghanistan to the Saarc family," Pakistan Prime Minister and outgoing Saarc Chairman Shaukat Aziz said addressing the inauguration of the summit.

On China, Aziz said, "We welcome the interest of our friend and neighbour" to be associated with the organisation as an observer or dialogue partner.

Khaleda for actions

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for an 'either-or' approach in this regard."

The Bangladesh premier observed that lessons from other regional organisations show simultaneous movement - both political and economic -- was required on all fronts in ways acceptable to all concerned.

"Our future initiatives to create a more dynamic and prosperous South Asia should benefit from these lessons," she continued.

Terming the ongoing Saarc summit a window of opportunity for the South Asian countries, Khaleda said, "This is a summit to consolidate our gains in regional cooperation during the last two decades. This is a summit that enables us to look to the future and forge a blueprint for the next phase of Saarc activities. This is also our opportunity to turn commitments into action."

Stressing the need for all-out efforts in improving the condition and quality of life of people of the region, the Bangladesh primer called upon the South Asian leaders for making a fresh commitment to achieve the goals.

"Let us make a fresh commitment during our present summit to unite our efforts to address the common challenges facing our nations, and to realise the aspirations of our peoples for a peaceful, progressive and prosperous South Asia," she asserted.

SAARC REVIEW
As Saarc completes 20 years of its existence, Khaleda Zia said it is now time for a review and reform of the institutions and mechanisms.

"I would suggest that the standing committee should hold a special session to undertake a thorough and comprehensive review of all Saarc institutions and mechanisms, including the secretariat.

"The 21st century undoubtedly belongs to South Asia. Despite our high potentials, we have remained on the peripheries of the global society for far too long."

POVERTY, TERRORISM, CATASTROPHE
She stressed the concerted efforts in the process of eliminating poverty, accelerating economic growth and combating terrorism.

She also put emphasis on serious efforts to reinforce regional cooperation for management and conservation of water resources and environment, pollution prevention and preparedness to deal with natural calamities.

On combating terrorism, the Bangladesh prime minister expressed satisfaction, observing that all the Saarc countries are united in combating terrorism.

Referring to the last summit that adopted an additional protocol to the Saarc regional convention so as to deal effectively with financing of terrorism, Khaleda said four countries have ratified the protocol.

"I urge the remaining members to expedite their ratification so that the protocol can be enforced at an early date, if possible by the end of the year."

On economic development, the

Bangladesh premier said economic development in South Asia must be accompanied by concomitant progress in the social sector.

"We must make concerted efforts in achieving the objectives outlined in the Social Charter adopted by us during the last summit."

To achieve these goals, Khaleda Zia suggested setting up of a regional mechanism for follow-up and implementation of the Saarc Social Charter and implementation of regional programmes and projects in areas requiring collective regional responses or initiatives in accordance with the charter.

"We should also encourage all stakeholders including the private sector, the media and the civil society organisations to contribute to the objectives of the Saarc Social Charter. I suggest that we undertake a mid-term review of the progress in realising the objectives of the Saarc decades on the rights of the child," she continued.

"Finally, I call for ratification by December 2005 of the Saarc Convention on Preventing and Combatting Trafficking in Women and Children and of the Saarc Convention on Child Welfare."

Accelerating economic growth is a major Saarc objective, Khaleda Zia said, adding, to realise this objective, an immediate task will be to achieve substantial increase in intra-regional trade and investment.

SAFTA AGREEMENT
"In this context, we must ensure that the Safta agreement enters into force as agreed upon with effect from the first of January 2006," she asserted. "A major step forward would be marked by the entry into force of the Safta agreement."

"Indeed, South Asia is an emerging economic giant with unlimited potentials. Realising South Asia's true potentials is the challenge facing us today."

"Formidable obstacles, however, still confront us. Widespread incidence of poverty continues to be a major concern for us. Intra-regional trade in South Asia is still about four percent of our region's combined trade with the rest of the world. Foreign direct investment in South Asia accounts for a mere one percent of the global total."

"Initiatives would now have to be taken for exploitation of the region's energy resources, setting up of energy grids and promoting energy trade."

In order to advance economic cooperation in all these areas, there should be greater collaboration among the public and private sectors, she added.

ANNUAL BUSINESS MEET
"There could be an annual business summit preceding each Saarc summit. Such a forum could bring together the finance and trade ministers, governors of the central banks, investment boards, business leaders, economic policy institutes and the media," she said.

The Saarc chamber could take a leading role in organising such a forum to promote intra-regional trade and investment, she added.

Bird flu outbreak

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confirmed since last month, when the virus suddenly returned to China after a lengthy lull.

China has so far not reported a single confirmed human case of bird flu, although official fears are mounting that people might have been infected.

Health and agricultural departments in the northeastern province of Liaoning said Friday a female chicken farmer was undergoing further tests to determine whether she had bird flu, making her the fourth suspected human case in China.

The World Health Organisation (WHO) said its knowledge of the Liaoning case was limited to media reports and information on the health ministry's website.

"That's all the information we have right now," said Roy Wadia, a Beijing-based WHO spokesman. "We're certainly keeping an eye on it through the information provided by the Ministry of Health."

The details of the three other suspected cases -- including a 12-year-old girl who died -- were being investigated Saturday by WHO experts working with Chinese officials, he said.

It could be at least one or two weeks before the WHO will be able to say with certainty if these are human cases of bird flu in China, he said.

In Thailand, authorities Saturday rushed to investigate the home of an 18-month-old boy who was diagnosed with bird flu, in the first case of the disease found in the capital Bangkok.

The house where the boy contracted the virus had two chickens and one fighting cock, which died on October 31 but were only reported to authorities after the boy fell sick, officials said.

The public health ministry said the boy fell ill on November 1 and went to

hospital on November 3 with a runny nose, fever and coughing.

The boy's 65-year-old grandmother has also shown symptoms of the disease, but so far has tested negative. Doctors were awaiting the results of further tests, expected by Sunday.

The boy is the 21st case of bird flu diagnosed in Thailand since the H5N1 virus was first detected in the country in January 2004. Thirteen of those cases have been fatal.

The events in China and Thailand helped shape the agenda as officials gathered for annual meetings of the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (Apec) forum in the South Korean city of Busan.

An official involved in Saturday's talks said discussions would focus on how Apec countries would respond to a pandemic and plans for an Apec-wide mock exercise simulating a human-to-human outbreak.

At the other end of the Asian continent, the Gulf region was reeling from its first discovery of bird flu.

One of two birds discovered in the Gulf state of Kuwait that were stricken with avian flu carried the deadly H5N1 strain, an agriculture official said Friday.

He said a second bird, a falcon found at Kuwait airport that had been brought in from an Asian nation, was found to have the milder H5N2 strain.

Scientists fear that the H5N1 strain, which has killed more than 60 people in Asia since late 2003, could mutate and combine with human flu variants, possibly creating a global pandemic.

At present, H5N1's lethal stretch to humans is limited. It is picked up by people who are in close proximity to infected birds, breathing in virus-laden nasal secretions or pulverised feces.

Woman gang-raped

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went to Karwan Bazar market at about 8:30pm to collect money from Malek, a trader to whom he sold goods on credit.

Searching for Malek, Selim managed to get Malek's employee Sohel who promised to give him money on Saturday morning.

Saying that no vehicles were plying due to the security measures for the Saarc summit, Sohel arranged a room beside the market, normally used by market employees, for the couple's stay at night.

After a while Sohel took Selim to a tea-stall.

Gayoom

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"We should always keep in mind the challenges that lie ahead and preserve in our endeavours to achieve greater regional cooperation."

Pleading the involvement of civil society members in promoting and working towards achieving the aims and objectives of Saarc, President Gayoom said the success of the association in all its identified areas largely depends on them.

"Their role must be recognised, synergies built and their energies tapped," he said.

"We should work harder on strengthening the mutual understanding and goodwill among the peoples of South Asia."

Stressing the need for cooperation with the other regional and international bodies, he said, "International developments are increasingly impinging on our lives, as the world grows more interdependent. The forces of globalisation make it imperative to look for ways in which Saarc could intensify cooperation with other regional and international organisations."

Member states

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sharpen our focus on clear priority and refrain from spreading ourselves too thinly over a large number of activities," he said.

The Bhutanese premier suggested concentrating on "tangible projects" that have a clearly regional bearing, saying, "This is a strategic choice that will enable Saarc to emerge as a viable and effective regional enterprise in the new millennium."

He reiterated Bhutan's commitment to make South Asia, where one-fifth of the world population live, a place of peace and happiness.

He lauded the signing of Safta and termed it a bright milestone in the history of Saarc. He expressed the hope the implementation of Safta will go a long way in realising the future envisioned by Saarc's founding fathers.

"As Saarc enters its third decade, it is an opportune time to consolidate our gains and make it more relevant for the common man," he said, adding, "It is time to renew our joint commitment for action."

The Bhutanese leader also called for a high-performance teamwork among the member countries with an acute sense of urgency to tackle natural catastrophes like the devastating tsunami and earthquake that ravaged the region this year.

Nepal's king

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Maoist insurgency that has claimed more than 12,000 lives.

"We believe there cannot be a meaningful exercise in democracy without elections," he said.

Improved security in the Himalayan kingdom had also allowed the government to announce a date for municipal elections, he said.

Gyanendra urged the Maoist rebels who are aiming to overthrow him "to renounce violence and take part in a democratic political process".

Forge economic

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to the creation of a South Asian Economic Union.

On Safta, she hoped that the member states will take necessary steps so that some of the contentious issues concerning it are sorted out quickly and the much-talked-about agreement will come into effect from January 1 next year.

Implentation of Safta will create an atmosphere where people, investment and trade in goods and services will have unhindered mobility across national boundaries, the Sri Lankan president thought.

She urged the leaders of the Saarc states to look beyond economic integration and work for a mutually supportive process of strengthening the physical, legal and technical infrastructure and overall connectivity in the region.

Underlining the need for pragmatic approaches to trade and commerce, and social progress, Kumaratunga observed, "It will bring out the collective strengths of the people of the region -- leaders, policy makers, entrepreneurs, professionals, thinkers, academicians and civil society representatives -- in fulfilling the essential principles enshrined in the Saarc Social Charter."

Mentioning the success of the European Union, African Union and Asean, Kumaratunga expected that Saarc can also immensely benefit the people of the region.

She noted that the energy pipeline from West Asia running through several Saarc countries, a road network through the ESCAP region and opening up of international borders following the recent earthquake are marks of improved political climate of the region. The long held ethnic differences would be obliterated by mutual understanding and solidarity, she hoped.

She emphasised strengthening the Saarc Secretariat both in terms of capacity building and its proactive approaches to implement the decisions taken at the political level. For this, it should be provides with necessary resources, efficient manpower and required authority, she felt.

Leaders join hands

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Before handing over the chair, Shaukat Aziz in his report informed the summit that Afghanistan has formally requested to be a member and China an observer of Saarc.

He expressed the hope that Afghanistan's request for membership would get the formal nod. He also recommended the case of China, terming her "our friend and neighbour."

In fact Bangladesh had mooted the idea of creating the category of observers in Saarc at the 11th summit in Kathmandu and also circulated a detailed proposal among the member states, official sources said.

Addressing the summit, Khaleda as the new chairperson of Saarc said the countries in South Asia are all united on combating terrorism.

Four countries, including Bangladesh, so far have ratified the Additional Protocol to Saarc Regional Convention on Counter-terrorism aimed at curbing financing of terrorism effectively, she pointed out. She then expressed the hope that the remaining three countries would expedite the ratification process so that the instrument could be enforced by the end of this year.

In his speech, Indian Prime Minister Dr Manmohan Singh said no Saarc country should allow its territory to be used against the interests of another member country and there should be 'zero tolerance' for cross-border terrorism and harbouring of hostile insurgent groups and criminal elements.

Nepalese King Gyanendra Bir Bikram Shah Dev also noted the 'stark reality' that South Asia is 'mired in terrorism', which, he said, has emerged as a serious threat to international peace, security, stability and democracy.

Terming accelerating the economic growth as a major objective of Saarc, the premiers of Bangladesh, India and Pakistan expressed their firm determination to implement the South Asia Free Trade Area as per its schedule in January.

"We must ensure that Safta comes into use as agreed from first of January 2006. We need to take further measures including harmonisation of standards, measurements and quality control, and a regional agreement on these issues should be concluded as soon as possible to facilitate realisation of the objective of the free trade area," maintained Khaleda Zia.

In response, Dr Singh said, "I sincerely hope that Safta comes into operation by January 1, 2006 and this will represent only a modest beginning in terms of our goal for regional economic integration. If we wish to be a part of the Asian economic progress, we must act, and act speedily without any loss of time."

Similarly, Shaukat Aziz expressed the hope that negotiations would be completed in time for Safta to become operational from January. He suggested Saarc adopting an inclusive approach and opening up to interaction, especially with the larger Asian neighbours.

The other leaders taking part in the summit -- Sri Lankan President Chandrika Bandaranaike Kumaratunga, Maldives President Maumoon Abdul Gayoom, Nepalese King Gyanendra Bir Bikram Shah Dev and Bhutanese Prime Minister Lyonpo Sangay Ngedup -- echoed them on timely implementation

Only 2 former presidents attend opening

BNEWS, Dhaka

Only two of the former presidents attended the inaugural session of the 13th South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (Saarc) Summit yesterday.

Those who attended the summit are former president Hussain Muhammad Ershad and Abdur Rahman Biswas.

Former presidents Justice Shahabuddin Ahmed and Prof AQM Badruddoza Chowdhury were not present at the summit.

Justice Shahabuddin was absent from the summit because of his old age while Badruddoza Chowdhury was not invited, sources said.

The initiative to forge the Saarc was taken during the tenure of Ziaur Rahman but it was officially launched through holding a summit in Dhaka in 1985.

The Saarc summit was also held in Dhaka in 1993 when Abdur Rahman Biswas was the president.

Leaders retreat

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at 4:00pm at the International Conference Centre (ICC) inside the Prime Minister's Office. The Saarc chair and other high officials will receive the Saarc leaders there.

The session will adopt reports on 25th and 26th sessions of the Council of Ministers and the Dhaka Declaration.

The new Saarc chairperson will give a concluding statement and also address a press briefing. A vote of thanks to be given by India Prime Minister Dr Manmohan Singh will wind up the summit.

A fair of traditional Bangladeshi products will be held at the State Guesthouse Padma for the spouses of the Saarc leaders today.

of Safta.

Dr Singh said, "The honest answer is that regional economic cooperation in South Asia has fallen far short of our expectations." While Khaleda Zia observed, "Mindssets and perceptions emanating from the past" were affecting regional cooperation.

As natural disasters presented a new challenge to the region, the Saarc leaders emphasised building a regional early-warning centre and cooperation in disaster preparedness and management.

India offered to set up the Saarc Centre for Disaster Preparedness while Bangladesh asked for enhancing the capacity of the Saarc Meteorological Research Centre in Dhaka by networking with other relevant centres to serve as the regional institution for early warning.

The Bangladeshi premier said her government strongly believes that a regional response should be developed to face tsunami, floods, earthquakes, cyclones and other natural disasters in the region.

In response, the Indian prime minister said, "These once again remind us of the need for forging closer ties among ourselves to enable us to pool our resources to deal with such calamities."

Khaleda also underscored the threat to the region's ecological balance arising out of years of neglect and pressure on its natural resources. "There must be conscious and serious efforts to reinforce regional cooperation for the management and conservation of water resources and environment, pollution prevention and preparedness to deal with natural calamities," she remarked.

The Saarc leaders also spoke about setting up new markers for regional cooperation, implementation of the Saarc social charter and energy cooperation. They stressed the need for speedy implementation of decisions and translating them into tangible terms through prioritising, quantifying and evaluating constantly the forum activities.

Former president of Bangladesh and first Saarc chairperson HM Ershad who had hosted the founding summit in Dhaka in 1985 was present at the opening session amongst a host of dignitaries. Former president Abdur Rahman Biswas was also present, but Leader of the Opposition Sheikh Hasina stayed away from the event. Ministers, lawmakers, judges, diplomats, high officials and elites of the city attended the inaugural function.

Kumaratunga

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the longest serving regional leaders.

Her attendance at the summit in Dhaka is also her final foreign trip as a head of state before the November 17 election in Sri Lanka.

"I am indeed truly happy to be among Sri Lanka's closest friends only a few days before I relinquish my duties as President after 11 years," she told the summit yesterday.

Pointing at the Saarc leaders on the dais she said, "I take this opportunity to express my heartfelt gratitude to my dear colleagues for the unstinting support and encouragement you gave me at every step along the difficult but necessary path I chose to steer my country. Your solidarity and friendship provide us the strength to go on."

This summit is undoubtedly an emotional one for Kumaratunga, 60, which was evident during her talks with other South Asian leaders. She was the chairperson of Saarc from 1998 to 2002, the longest time served by a Saarc chief since the inception of the regional grouping in 1985.

She has been highly critical of the regional body and wanted more dynamism injected into it where the charter precludes discussions on contentious bilateral issues.

During the 9th Saarc Summit in the Maldives in 1997, she suggested having "off the record" bilateral discussions but the initiative failed to attract widespread support.

Mob beats

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populated area of Faridpara near Chandganj Police Station. Some locals, sensing their intentions, encircled them and cried out for help. Hundreds of people rushed there and captured four of the gang.

They beat them up killing one Tasir Miah, 35, on the spot while Mujibur Rahman, 30, and another unidentified succumbed to their injuries at Chittagong Medical College and Hospital (CMCH) around 5:00am yesterday, police and hospital sources said. The critically injured M Abdur Rob, 35, is undergoing treatment at the CMCH, they added.

Meanwhile, another angry mob beat up three muggers including an auto-rickshaw driver at Nayapara near Bayezid Bostami Police Station as they were allegedly mugging city commuters.

Police admitted Azad Khan, 26, CNG-driver Arab Ali, 22, and another unidentified mugger to the CMCH with serious injuries.