Japanese robot lost Indo-Pak talks in space mission

A miniature robot released by a Japanese space probe to a small asteroid circling the Sun was lost before it was able to land on the asteroid's surface, the Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency (JAXA) reported yesterday.

Minerva, a 10 cm (3.9 inch) long can-shaped "baby" robot, had been designed to gather information on the Itokawa asteroid as part of a rehearsal ahead of the unmanned Hayabusa probe's own landing on the asteroid Itokawa scheduled for Nov 19.

Minerva's landing was to have been the first attempt by Japan to send information-gathering equipment to an astronomic object outside the Earth.

Equipped with a camera and thermometers, Minerva was meant to hop around Itokawa and send data such as surface temperatures and images back to Earth via Hayabusa, the Kyodo news agency reported.

A previous attempt to land Minerva earlier this month was aborted due to $technical \, problems.$

Itokawa, a 600 metre (1,970 feet)-

that takes it between earth and Mars, is named after Hideo Itokawa, the father Japan's space exploration ogramme. It is currently around 290 million km (180 million miles) away from the Earth.

Iunichiro Kawaguchi, a professor at IAXA, said scientists had miscalculated the best moment to release Minerva, a task made difficult by Hayabusa's changing altitude over the asteroid.

"It is very disappointing that it did not work out nicely. We found out various things about the asteroid, so we will study the data and hope it will lead to the successful landing of Hayabusa," Kyodo quoted him as

Hayabusa, which was fired into space on May 9, 2003, has been hovering over Itokawa for almost two

The space craft is designed to swoop down on the asteroid on two separate occasions and gather samples before returning to Earth.

Scientists hope that by studying samples of the asteroid's surface they will be able learn more about the origins of the universe.

would start," said Mostafizur Rahman

research director of independent think-

negotiators will face some pressure to

yet broken up is the only positive thing

to have come out of the summit," said

Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal President

failed to make any breakthrough both in

political and economic sectors. "It was

rather a grand gala of the leaders faking

take any tangible steps towards poverty

alleviation. There were also no mea-

sures to deal with the issues like terror

nated the summit that some very dis

turbing groups were maintaining

inter-governmental association rather

spoke on practical grounds," said Saiful

Islam president of Dhaka Chamber of

Commerce and Industry (DCCI). He

said the smaller economic issues should

be resolved through piece meal basis

World Health Organisation experts will

travel this week to the central Chinese

province of Hunan to investigate

whether bird flu caused the death of a

12-year-old girl and infected two other

time this week, to join the ongoing

investigation into the three pneumo

nia cases," said Roy Wadia, WHO

snokesman in China, quoted by the

investigation will take. So far there are

no updates from our side as the work

human bird flu despite several out-

breaks of the deadly disease in poultry

farms and in migratory populations

early October coincided with the death

of a young girl who became sick with a

flu-like disease after reportedly eating

with a mysterious flu-like disease as

was a school teacher in the same

said it could not rule out bird flu and

invited WHO experts to investigate.

county. They recovered.

Xiangtan county.

The girl's brother was also stricken

On November 6 the health ministry

All three cases were in Hunan's

In a report from Xiangtan later

ease control experts as saying the

Sunday, Xinhua quoted veterinary and

bird flu outbreak in Hunan province is

lives, Singh said various clues indi-

cated that the bombers had "external

blame Pakistan for the attacks.

rebels with links to Pakistan.

ready to be lifted from quarantine.

Indian PM

'We do not know how long the

China has yet to document a case of

However, an outbreak in Hunan in

official Xinhua news agency.

has only just begun.'

They will probably be there some

people, a spokesman said Sunday.

 $careful\,cease\hbox{-fire,}\,he\,commented.$

than a true regional association.

before launching Safta.

WHO set to

probe bird

flu death

AFP. Beiling

It seems by the way niceties domi-

According to him, the Saarc is still an

"I am hopeful because the leaders

ism and communalism in the region.

The seven-nation meet could not

Otherwise, he said, the summi

implement Safta, he pointed out.

Hasanul Hague Inu.

smiles," he remarked.

As the leaders gave a green signal, the

"That Saarc still exists and [it] has no

 $tank\,Centre\,for\,Policy\,Dialogue\,(CPD).$

Experts pin high hopes

executed, fulfilling the desire and

aspiration of the people. "The decision to give Afghanistan

new membership and China, Japan observer status were significant breakthroughs in the Dhaka summit," said Imtiaz Ahmed, a teacher of international relations department at University of Dhaka

"The symbolic value of Saarc would increase tremendously with the joining of those three countries," he said. The expansion will help the regional body to break free of the logjam, he observed.

Besides, the country has proved that such a high-profile summit could be held even amidst high tension, he said referring to the recent acts of terrorism. Besides, the issue of people's patience is noteworthy as no untoward incidents occurred regarding security measures.

On the question of deliberations, Ahmed said for the first time Saarc has moved from the context of economy to politics and culture. Because, political mindset should be changed before forging any wider economic co-

He said it is not an easy task to bring the area into a free trade regime within a couple of years. It would take even more time for the member states to get rid of

political suspicion, he pointed out. "This summit was more actionoriented than the previous ones as it took a number of tangible steps," said noted economist Atiur Rahman. The desire to make Saarc effective was very much evident and there were some

concrete steps as well, he added, For example, he said, the summit declared formation of a \$300 million fund for poverty alleviation. "The leaders tried to avoid political tension and there was a sense that Saarc is maturing and moving forward," Atiur

On launching of South Asia Free Trade Area (Safta), he said the summit could not vet remove dilemma among the leaders over some key issues. It could not give any clear-cut directions about three contentious issues before launching Safta. The issues include negative lists, rules of origin and reve-

Some clear directions, which were widely expected from the leadership, would have given a renewed impetus to

the trade negotiations. He, however, thinks that it would

 $take \, time \, to \, resolve \, those \, issues.$ He observed that the Saarc is still a government-oriented organisation rather than a people-oriented body. The future leadership should think about making the forum more oriented

"The summit made it clear that the process of Safta will start from January next but it did not state at what level it

Nepal king

During the bilateral talks on the sidelines of the 13th Saarc Summit, the king told the prime minister that Nepal wants to use Mongla Port and Banglabandha corridor for enhancing trade between Dhaka and

men, were collected from different areas including Delhi. The ejected people claimed they

The people would be pushed back soon, BDR official Lt Col Jahid Hasan

India has long-accused Pakistan of aiding militants in their fight against Indian rule in the Muslim-majority territory, a charge Islamabad has

the harsh Himalayan winter approaches

During his meeting with Singh, Aziz said his country is against "all forms of terrorism and is ready to cooperate with any country to combat the men-

The India-Pakistan peace process received a minor boost after they agreed to open their heavily militarized frontier to exchange relief material, and allow Kashmiris to cross over to visit relatives hit by the quake. Although three border crossings have been opened so far, no one has been allowed to cross because of bureaucratic delays.

China, Japan

ber states will sit early next year in Dhaka to prepare the modalities.

He said the meeting of the Council of Ministers will also be held in Dhaka.

On a question whether the Saarc Charter requires amendment to include new members or accord

He said Afghanistan will attend the next Saarc summit in India as the eighth member of the South Asian

ssued yesterday says the heads of state and government have hailed the Afghan membership request and invited the country to be a member, subject to the completion of formali-

The summit leaders also "welcomed and agreed in principle with the desire of the Peoples Republic of China and Japan to be associated as observers," the declaration adds.

Shaukat

He lamented that for 20 years since its launch the seven-nation forum "has not been able to exploit its full poten-

"This is a region mired in conflicts... It's not only the India-Pakistan conflict, but there are other dimensions and problems," he told the iournalists.

conflict resolution, saying, "We want to move from conflict management to conflict resolution."

The Pakistan Prime Minister observed that Kashmir remained the "core issue" and there would not be any durable peace in the region without removing the bone of contention between India and Pakistan.

"We want a sustainable solution to the Kashmir problem," he said.

Referring to his talks with Indian Prime Minister Dr Manmohan Singh on the sidelines of the Saarc Summit, he said it was "very productive" and it covered some of the bilateral issues.

"We are building ties with India block by block, step by step. Yesterday's meeting with Dr Singh

tion," the Pakistani leader said. Asked about the peace process between his country and India, Shaukat said Islamabad would like to see reduction of troops on the highly militarised Kashmir front and con-

veyed their intentions to New Delhi. The Indian side explained their position, he said, without elaborating much. But Shaukat pointed out that the "trust-deficit" between the two neighbours has been declining and hoth would like to move toward

the two-day Saarc Summit covered all ssues, from terrorism to trade

Three major FROM PAGE 1

ments in presence of their heads of state or government

The signing ceremony was followed by a cultural function.

Earlier, Saarc Chairperson Khaleda Zia received the leaders at the state guesthouse, where the forum leaders were on retreat from about 11:00am to

summit adopted a joint declaration. Indian Prime Minister Dr Summit. We look forward to welcoming you all to India.'

Saarc leaders

The president made the remarks when Saarc Chairperson and Prime Minister of Bangladesh Khaleda Zia, Bhutanese Prime Minister Lyonpo Sangay Ngedup, Indian Prime Minister Dr Manmohan Singh, Pakistan Prime Minister Shaukat Aziz, President of the Maldives Maumoon Abdul Gayoom and King of Nepal Gyanendra Bir Bikram Shah Dev called on him at Bangabhaban vesterday.

President of Sri Lanka Chandrika Bandarnaike Kumaratunga could not attend the meeting as she had to leave Dhaka for attending an important programme in Colombo.

Welcoming the heads of state and government, the president appreciated the decision of the Saarc leaders at their summit meet for strengthening the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (Saarc). He hoped that the ongoing Saarc process would ultimately lead to the South Asian economic union.

Briefing the newsmen about the outcome of the meeting, President's Press secretary M Mokhlesur Rahman Chowdhury said it was held in a very cordial atmosphere.

"The Saarc leaders discussed everything frankly and thanked the president for warm hospitality," he said. The president congratulated the

new chairperson of Saarc, Khaleda Zia. and sought support and cooperation from the member countries in this

Regarding the devastating tsunami

and earthquake that happened in this region recently, the president

expressed deep shock at the tragedies. He underscored the need for fight against terrorism and poverty jointly, as these two scourges are common prob-

lems facing the Saarc countries. "The pragmatic ideas and proposals put forward by the Saarc leaders on the present and future of the forum are truly inspiring," the press secretary quoted the president as saying.

The president expressed the hope that there would be reflection of many of the concrete commendations in the

Saarc states for conferring the first Saarc Award on late president Ziaur Rahman. He said the Saarc nations should realise the greater economic cooperation through trade liberalisation,

He said Bangladesh is grateful to all

investment promotion, poverty alleviation and social development for buildng a poverty-free South Asia. The third decade of the Saarc should be devoted to turning commitments into concrete actions, projects and programmes," the president told

day summit meeting here vesterday. The president appreciated the decision taken by the Saarc leaders to implement South Asian Free Trade Area (Safta) from January 2006, saying, "It will help the region in poverty allevia-

the leaders who concluded their two-

He thanked the leaders and wished them good health and happiness.

Hasina meets

to regional cooperation including poverty alleviation and curbing terrorism, Political Secretary to the AL chief Saber Hossain Chowdhury told The Daily Star last night.

The AL president told the Indian PM that regional cooperation, to be effective and meaningful, must have to be consistent with the national objectives and aspirations of the people, Saber said.

"The challenge therefore is to synthesise these two perspectives," Hasina said For a true regional stability, it is important that no country in the region remains behind in economic or development erms, she told Manmohan.

"Through regional cooperation we can take advantage of the immense potential that exists in the region as a whole. Awami League is supportive of greater connectivity, people-to-people contact and movement as well as increased trade, investment and economic cooperation," the AL chief said.

Hasina also observed that apart from poverty, terrorism is another major problem in the region and all parties must work together in a spirit of mutual trust to resolve the problem. "Through discussion, solution to any problem is possible and we are always generating dialogue and discussions among all parties," she

Indian State Minister for External Affairs E Ahamed, Foreign Secretary Shyam Saran and Indian High Commissioner in Dhaka Veena Sikri were

present during the meeting. Hasina also met Pakistani Prime Minister Shaukat Aziz at Dhaka Sheraton Hotel and discussed bilateral issues that included economic development, growth strategy and relations between the two countries.

The two leaders agreed to plan the growth strategy in a way that will benefit the real poor. They also agreed on building people-to-people friendship' for the overall development of the two countries.

Pakistani Foreign Minister Khurshid M Kasuri, Information Minister Sheikh Rashid Ahmed, Minister for Port and Shipping Senator Babar Khan Gouri, and Pakistani High Commissioner in Dhaka Alamgir Babar were also present at the

AL General Secretary Abdul Jalil MP, Presidium Members Kazi Jafarullah Suranjit Sengupta, Syed Abul Hossain, Political Secretary to Hasina Saber Hossain Chowdhury and former Ambassador Ziauddin accompanied the

Meanwhile, Sri Lankan Foreign Minister Anura Bandaranaike called upon Leader of the Opposition Sheikh Hasina at her Sudha Sadan residence in the city yesterdaymorning.

After the meeting, Awami League (AL)

General Secretary Abdul Jalil MP at a press briefing told journalists that the Sri Kumaratunga.

to regional cooperation including poverty alleviation, development of infrastructure and curbing of terrorism during the hourlong meeting, Jalil said.

Liberation War and the history of demopointed out the overall development of the country during the AL regime, Jalil

Tk 30 lakh

of a window was broken with the glass

Mujibur Rahman, 45, who told the police that he went home on Saturday around 10:00pm as he felt feverish. Assistant Superintendent of Police (ASP) Noor Ahmed said primary investigation indicates the involve-

Assistant General Manager (AGM) Tamizuddin, principal in charge of Sonali Bank Narayanganj office, said an investigation committee would be formed soon to investigate the inci-

Manager of Sonali Bank Nabinagar branch Shahabuddin Hamid filed a

Act, make Saarc

 $The sheer \, magnitude \, of \, the \, problem \, of \,$ poverty, she noted, still remained a major concern for Saarc. "Making a serious dent on this problem will require sustained, serious and targeted efforts through an appropriate balance of adequate national and regional

The Saarc leaders, she said, decided to follow up on all the possibilities to give a new momentum to the region's fight against poverty The summit declared the coming10

years as the Saarc Decade of Poverty Alleviation, Khaleda pointed out. Focusing on the Dhaka

Declaration, the new Saarc chairperson noted, "This Declaration reflects the common desire of our countries to strengthen regional cooperation in South Asia in order to achieve peace, progress and prosperity for all our peoples."

Khaleda said the Saarc leaders have an ambitious set of objectives to promote cooperation in the core

She hoped that the very positive

WB board

FROM PAGE 16 cabinet is yet to approve the draft Public Procurement Law (PPL).

The WB board now will discuss the matter in another meeting on December

A source said if the cabinet subcommittee comprising four ministers and a state minister tasked with reviewing the draft law makes any major change in it and if it is not approved before December 1, the WB may further postpone discussing disbursement of the DSCinstalment.

The subcommittee led by Local Government and Rural Development (LGRD) and Cooperatives Minister Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan is scheduled to sit today to finalise the draft law by making any necessary amendments. The proposed law was tabled at a

cabinet meeting on November 2. In the

face of a strong opposition from some cabinet members, the meeting did not clear the draft and formed the subcommittee to further scrutinise its clauses. The subcommittee held its first meeting last Friday and tasked Agriculture Minister MK Anwar and Law

Minister Moudud Ahmed with scrutinising and suggesting amendments to the draft bill in two days time, meeting sources said. The cabinet's approval of the PPL is

one of the 13 conditions set by the WB to get the third DSC tranche.

Four leaders

FROM PAGE 16 session of the 13th Saarc Summit. She could not attend the session for her domestic compulsion.

Senior officials of the foreign ministry saw the Lankan president off at Zia International Airport.

Pakistan Prime Minister Shaukat Aziz left for home after attending the concluding session of the two-day

A special flight of PIA, carrying the

Pak prime minister and his wife, took off from the Zia International Airport at Indian Prime Minister Di Manmohan Singh left for home last

A special flight of Indian Airlines, carrying the Indian prime minister and his wife, took off from the ZIA at

Reaz Rahman, advisor to the foreign ministry, saw them off at the airport.

Enayetullah

FROM PAGE 16

Enayetullah Khan will be taken to the residence of his younger brother Shahidullah Khan Badal (House No--22, Road No--113, Gulshan) at 12:30pm. The coffin will be kept there until 3:30pm.

The second namaj-e-janaza of the

eminent journalist will be held at

Gulshan Azad Mosque after Asr prayers. He will be laid to rest at Banabi Graveyard. To pay tribute to him, a civic condolence meeting will also be held on the

premises of the Jatiya Press Club on Enavetullah Khan died in Princes Margaret Cancer Hospital in Toronto.

Canada, on Thursday.

Manmohan multi-party democracy and said he was prepared to work with political

parties towards this. Relations between India and Nepal have been strained since the king sacked the government and took power in the impoverished country in February saying political leaders had failed to tackle a nine-year Maoist insurgency that has killed more than

Although the king has announced municipal elections next year and parliamentary polls in 2007, political parties say free elections are not

India has been upset with King Gvanendra's slow moves to return power to political parties. Hours before arriving in Dhaka on Friday, Singh warned there was a danger of failed states emerging in India's

While Singh did not name any country, analysts said he could be referring to Nepal, among others.

On Saturday, King Gyanendra sought to garner support at the summit of the seven-nation South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (Saarc) saying security had improved

cal parties and his move had not endangered democracy.

Govt wasting

leaders to withdraw the award, Hasina, however said, "It is a matter

present Bangladesh government Bangladesh territory, Hasina directed him to ask the prime minister about this and said the AL in its tenure sheltered no such insurgents.

AL General Secretary Abdul Jalil

Roadmap for Saarc

barriers and encourage investment. We agreed on an ambitious set of goals in the most important areas, including the establishment of a free trade area, promotion of investment and cooperation on energy, transport and communications and disaster management," she said.

"We put special emphasis on combating terrorism," Khaleda said, noting that the Additional Protocol to the Saarc Convention on Terrorism will now come into force

It was decided that the Saarc home ministers will meet annually, preceded by the meeting of the home secretaries, to address the issue of common concern.

In view of the recent natural disasters, the summit has taken a number of decisions and Bangladesh will host a meeting of regional expert groups in December to elaborate a comprehensive framework on early warning system and disaster management, the

Bangladesh's proposal to proclaim 2007 as the "Year of Green South Asia" through region-wide afforestation programmes has also been accepted.

On regional social challenges Khaleda said the summit recognised the importance of the social dimension of development and all the seven countries have already formed national coordination committees to implement the Saarc Social Charter.

of Saarc and subsequently directed the Saarc Standing Committee to meet a special session and elaborate a blueprint in this regard. Observing that a major problem in regional cooperation has been the

lack of a viable funding mechanism.

Khaleda said that Saarc finance

The Saarc leaders have agreed to

draw a roadmap for the third decade

month to formulate recommenda tions on funding Saarc programmes and projects, particularly the Saarc Poverty Alleviation Fund.

She said a major highlight of the summit has been the rich tributes paid by all leaders to late president Ziaur Rahman for his statesmanship

and vision of launching and pursuing the idea of Saarc. Asked whether India want transit and transshipment through Bangladesh in the name of communication linkage, the PM said, "It is not a matter between Bangladesh and India...it's the matter of the entire region. Setting up of such linkages is time-consuming as it needs series of meetings of experts and other bodies

concerned. On the failure of Saarc to bring any tangible development in the past two decades, Khaleda said there was strong mistrust among the seven member states, but the situation has changed greatly and relationship among the Saarc countries is now much better.

"Everyone reached the conclusion that development cannot be achieved fully without regional cooperation and we are confident that the Saarc countries will now move forward," she

atmosphere and trust, created at the 13th summit among the member countries, was absent in the past 20 "However, a friendly environment is now prevailing among all and the

atmosphere is fully positive and

mutual trust has increased greatly,"

In this context Foreign Minister M

Morshed Khan said the congenial

Principal Secretary to the PM Dr Kamal Uddin Siddique and Foreign Secretary Hemayetuddin were pres-

Curtain falls on summit

and decided to establish a Saarc Poverty Alleviation Fund to deal with what they termed the greatest challenge to the region.

In the comprehensive charter of

combined actions they also agreed to

enhance cooperation in international political and economic environment to address social challenges, and threats to environment and natural disasters, and also to facilitate people-to-people contact through tourism. The declaration endorsed the recommendation for establishing a Saarc Energy Centre in Islamabad to promote development of energy

energy trade in the region, and renewable and alternative energy, and also to upgrade energy efficiency and conservation in the region. On South Asia's environmental challenges and natural disasters, the leaders decided to consider the modalities for having a Regional Environment

Treaty in furthering environmental

resources including hydropower,

cooperation among the Saarc mem-They also approved the recommendation for expanding regional programmes and projects on early warning, preparedness and management of tsunami and other natural disasters. The leaders also called for elaboration of a Comprehensive Framework on Early Warning and

Disaster Management The seven heads of state and gov-

put in place a permanent regional response mechanism dedicated to disaster preparedness, emergency relief and rehabilitation to ensure immediate response. They directed the national authorities concerned to coordinate their activities in areas of disaster management such as early warning, exchange of information, training and sharing of experiences, and best practices in emergency relief

The leaders reiterated their pledge to continue working in the next decade and beyond to address the formidable challenges faced by women and children, especially the girls. They also reaffirmed their strong resolve to continue working together to address the problems posed by trafficking in

women and children. The civil society organisations and the media have an important role to play in raising awareness of the degrad-

the victims of trafficking, they noted. The summit leaders directed for taking concrete measures to enforce the provisions of the Regional Convention on Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances through an

appropriate regional mechanism. The spirit of Saarc, they observed needs to be sustained by efforts promoting people-to-people contact and by a vibrant civil society throughout

Briton world's first

medical research to help doctors in their quest to find a cure for HIV, which leads to full-blown Aids.

"I remember after the repeat tests my doctor came into the room saying, 'You've cured yourself! This is unbelievable, you're fantastic!' "It's so amazing to think that one day I was staring death in the face and now I am waving it goodbye," he told the News of the

came from the same person. Stimpson was all the more surprised given that on hearing he had tested HIV positive, he gave up safe sex with his infected boyfriend, 44-year-old Juan

On hearing of the negative tests, he considered suing his hospital with this in mind over what he thought must have

The hospital launched an investigation and Stimpson received a letter last month saying that DNA testing had confirmed it was his blood in all the

from the National Health Service

Litigation Authority. "The fact that you have recovered

"I understand the (hospital authority) Trust have written to you highlight

ing your importance to other HIV patients." Stimpson said: "I will do anything I

can if it will help find a cure for HIV."

Dr George Kinghorn, an HIV special-

ist from Sheffield's Royal Hallamshire

vital clues in the battle to beat Aids. "For an individual to have been infected with a virus, cleared of it and then become antibody negative is highly

unusual. "If we can better understand what happened inside Andrew's body it could prove to be a step towards a breakthrough in beating the HIV virus."

Stimpson, from the Scottish coast

west of Glasgow, went for tests in May

2002 after feeling weak and feverish.

virus can take three months to appear in the blood after contraction. Tests in August that year found an

exceptionally low level of HIV anti-

UK minister FROM PAGE 16

He will also visit Sylhet to meet the nembers of British Bangladesh commu

DFID-funded project.

hailed from Bagerhat and Pirojpur districts, BDR sources said.

BSF pushes FROM PAGE 16

On Saturday, India claimed that infiltration and violence by Muslim militants in Kashmir have not abated even after the devastating Oct 8 earthquake in the region which killed some 86,000 people, almost all of them on the Pakistani-controlled side of Kashmir. The quake has left millions homeless as

FROM PAGE 1 the Saarc Council of Ministers at its

27th meeting in July 2006. Speaking to The Daily Star, Foreign Minister M Morshed Khan said the standing committee comprising the foreign secretaries of the Saarc mem-

observer status, Morshed said as per the charter any decision taken by the Saarc leaders is final.

Meantime, the Dhaka Declaration

Shaukat stressed the need for

was another step in the right direc-

normalising their relations. The Pak premier said his bilateral talks with Dr Singh on the fringes of

member countries inked the agree-

Next summit in India," she said after the Saarc

economic areas, including the creation of a wider economic space in South Asia. She underscored promoting greater and deeper economic

opposition leader during the meetings. SRÎ LANKAN FM MEETS HASINA

Lankan FM made the courtesy call on behalf of President Chandrika They discussed different issues related

The Sri Lankan minister also recalled the role of AL and Bangabandhu in the cratic struggles in Bangladesh. He

intact. Police arrested the bank guard

ment of bank officials in the robbery.

discussion that the Saarc leaders had during the 13th summit would infuse a sense of purpose and commitment to move ahead in all areas. "The signing of the regional agreements on cus-

toms, taxation, investment and arbi-

tration matters will facilitate intra-

regional trade. Further trade and

investment facilitation agreements

should be concluded as soon as possi-Manmohan Singh underlined expediting the process of resolving the outstanding issues impeding a final

"It must be our collective effort to

ensure that this agreement enters into

force on January 1, 2006," said the

agreement on Safta.

He referred to the signing of three agreements on avoidance of double taxation, on customs and on the establishment of a Saarc Arbitration Council. "We have also agreed to a liberalisation of the visa regime so as to facilitate freer travel among all our people, including our media persons," Dubbing the Dhaka Declaration as

a forward-looking document,

12,500 people so far. possible under the royal regime.

neighbourhood.

in Nepal under his rule. He said he was forced to take power because of the failure of politi-

of the Saarc." Asked by an Indian journalist if the harbours Indian Ulfa insurgents in

senior leaders Suranjit Sengupta, Mofazzal Hossain Chowdhury Maya were present at the press conference.

ing and inhuman treatment faced by

South Asia actively engaged in forging ernment underscored the urgency to links across national boundaries.

The Mail on Sunday reported that in two previous cases of "spontaneous clearance", it was impossible to prove that both the positive and negative tests

been bungled earlier tests.

"There had been no error in the labelling or testing of the samples", it added. Both newspapers printed the letter

from a positive antibody result to a negative result is exceptional and medically remarkable," the letter read.

The UK minister will also visit a

health, Repeat tests in October 2003 and ever since have come back negative.

Hospital, said Stimpson could provide

They came back negative. However, the

Because he was in the early stages, he did not require medication, but doctors were surprised by his continuing good

Minister for Home Affairs Lutfotzzaman Babar, senior government and political leaders and discuss matters of bilateral

Manmohan hoped that it would add linkages" although he did not directly Abdur Razzak, Syeda Sajeda cooperation that opens up opportuninew vigour to the Saarc process. Manmohan Singh accepted the offer Chowdhury, Tofail Ahmed, He also expressed happiness at instantly saying, "India has the The attacks jolted the peace Mohiuddin Khan Alamgir, Motia "Saarc as a regional organisation India's hosting the next Saarc Summit privilege of hosting the 14th Saarc process when India earlier hinted Chowdhury, Obaidul Quader and cannot be self-sustaining unless we they were carried out by Islamic