The most impassioned speech came from Amna Rahman, the president of the SAARC Women's Association. She spoke on the foundation of the SAARC Women's Association in 1996 and how its goal was to strengthen and promote cultural and friendly relations amongst the member countries. She then discussed the association's strong ties to help achieve the Millennium Development Goals and ended by thanking the sponsors for their contribution to the evening. Standard Chartered and City Cell were the major sponsors of the event as they contributed Tk 500,000 and 490,000 respectively; along with them many other sponsors donated gifts for the Raffle Draw. By the time the speeches were over there was a party atmosphere to the Ball as the dance floor was cleared for some heavy-duty usage. The Dj quickly got the pulse of the occasion as he started his set with some well-known numbers, staying away from trance and house music. At first there were more than a few nervous faces on the dance floor but they soon lost their inhibitions as more people joined them to cut a rug. By the time dinner was served the people needed to be dragged off the dance floor.



Currently the Shishu Hospital treats between 500 to 800 children a day.

The food was impeccably decorated and tasted as good as it looked with both the main meal and the desserts garnering rave reviews. The Chocolate Mousse deserves an honourable mention as it proved a perfect end to a gourmet meal. While the dancing and the eating seemed to take centre stage there were also volunteers scurrying about the place raising more money by selling lottery tickets which included some great prizes, all generously donated by the sponsors. The prizes included business class tickets air tickets, mobile phones, gift vouchers, colognes, perfumes and much more. After the meal people were raring to go again as the dance floor was flooded with people having a good time.



The eight heads of the SAARC country missions in Bangladesh on stage to light candles.

All in all the event was a success and raised a lot of money for a worthy cause. Currently the Shishu Hospital treats between 500 to 800 children a day and of those patients 40% of them must pay for their treatment, but with events such as the Crystal Ball money is raised so that more patients can be treated without cost and provided with medicine. The pitiful situation is also played out in the intensive care unit, which houses only one ventilator, that too only for paying patients. The SAARC Women's Association plans to buy another ventilator for the ICU, which will also be available for patients who cannot pay. With projects such as this and the malnutrition ward it is easy to see how deeply they care for the downtrodden and the under privileged and if their fund raising work is to continue then the sky's the limit. ■