



# Sri Lanka Foreign Affairs Monthly

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## SAARC FORGES AHEAD



(President Premadasa inaugurates Session)

The Eleventh Session of the SAARC Council of Ministers was held in Colombo on 8 - 9 July 1992 under the Chairmanship of Harold Herat, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Sri Lanka. The Session was inaugurated on 8th July 1992 at the BMICH by President Ranasinghe Premadasa. (Text of address on pg. 4) Two working sessions were held on 8th and 9th July 1992 respectively.

The Council of Ministers approved the Report of the First Special Session of the Standing Committee held in Colombo on 27-29 April 1992 which consid-

ered measures for strengthening SAARC and adoption of a more business like and functional approach in the conduct of SAARC activities.

The Ministers also took several decisions for the facilitation, encouragement and promotion of regional trade. The Council directed the Inter-Governmental Group on Economic Cooperation (IGG) which will meet in Kathmandu shortly to proceed expeditiously to draft an agreement on a SAARC Preferential Trading Agreement (SAPTA). The IGG was asked to submit this draft to the next

meeting of the Committee on Economic Cooperation to be held later this year in New Delhi to enable the Dhaka Summit to take necessary action to give effect to the proposals. Member States were also requested to exchange information on export items which could eventually be listed as trade preferences.

During the meeting the SAARC Council of Ministers also decided to explore the enormous potential of the south Asian Development fund. The Panel of Experts on the Fund chaired by the Foreign Minis-

*Continued on page 2*

ter of Bhutan have been asked to undertake a feasibility study to examine the possibility of mobilising global surpluses for the development of South Asia. The Chairman of the Panel has been requested to conduct preliminary consultations with potential contributors and international financial institutions. Two meetings of the Panel have been scheduled to be held in the Maldives and Bhutan respectively to enable the Panel to also report their findings to the forthcoming Dhaka Summit.

The work of the Independent South Asian Commission on Poverty Alleviation was also reviewed. The Commission has upto now held meetings in Colombo, New Delhi and Dhaka. Two further meetings are scheduled to be held in Islamabad and Colombo respectively and the Commission's final report will be submitted to the Dhaka Summit

through the Chairman of the SAARC.

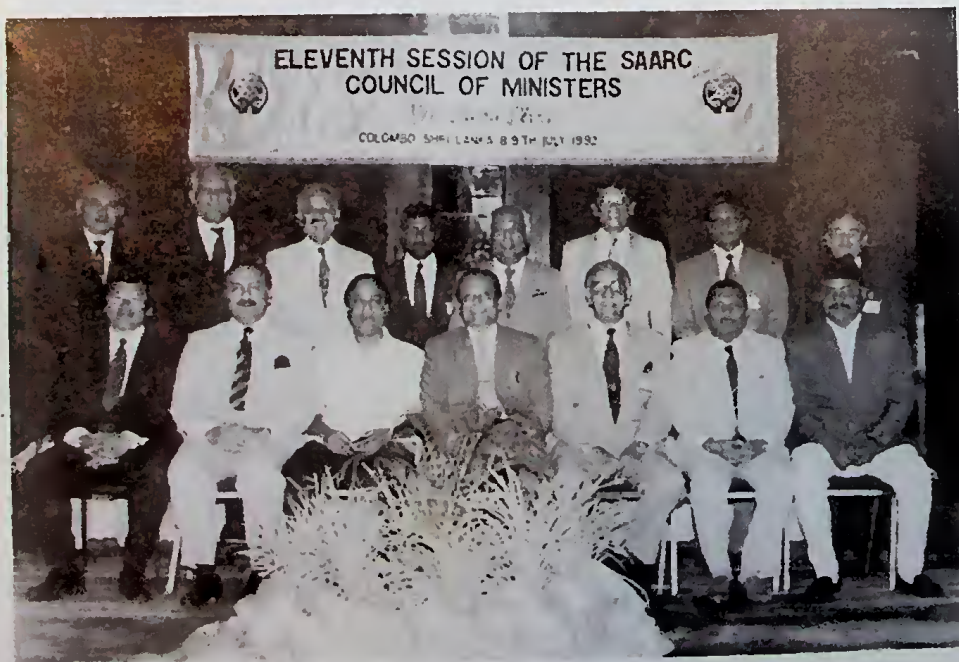
The Council of Ministers also approved detailed measures regarding the promotion of cooperation between SAARC and appropriate international and regional organisations. It was resolved that the hand of cooperation extended from individual countries must be responded to in the spirit in which it is offered. The Ministers who expressed satisfaction at the ability of SAARC to present a collective SAARC position at the recently concluded United Nations Conference on Environment and Development held in Rio de Janeiro 3 - 14 June 1992 resolved that this trend must continue and extend to other areas as well.

The Council of Ministers also approved the guidelines and procedures recommended by the standing Committee for granting recognition by SAARC to re-

gional apex bodies with a view to enhance people-to-people contact in SAARC countries. It decided to grant recognition to the SAARC Chambers of Commerce and Industries with immediate effect.

It was also agreed that Sri Lanka will host a Ministerial Conference on Children in South Asia from 16-18 September 1992 and that a preparatory meeting for this purpose would be held in Colombo. The UNICEF will also assist this Conference in accordance with past practise.

The Council of Ministers noted that the working processes of the meeting had been simplified and made more effective following the adoption of the guidelines of the Special Session of the Standing Committee. They resolved that the process of improvement of the working methods should continue.



(Foreign Ministers and the Foreign Secretaries of the 7 SAARC Countries pose for a Photograph at the conclusion of the session. Seated from left to right are Foreign Ministers, Lyonpo Dawa Tsering (Bhutan), Mohammad Siddique Khan Kanju (Pakistan), Eduardo Faleiro (India), Harold Herat (Sri Lanka), A.S.M. Mostafizur Rahaman (Bangladesh), Fathulla Jammel (Maldives), Bijaya Gachhadar (Nepal), and Standing from left to right Foreign Secretaries, Desho T.J. Rixin (Bhutan), Shaharyar M. Khan (Pakistan), L.L. Mehrotra (India), B.P. Tilakaratna (Sri Lanka), Reaz Rahman (Bangladesh), Salah Shihab (Maldives), Narendra Bikram Shah (Nepal)

# EXPO '92

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## PRIME MINISTER CHIEF GUEST AT SRI LANKA DAY

Prime Minister D.B. Wijetunga represented Sri Lanka as the Chief Guest at the Sri Lanka National Day Ceremony on the 19th July 1992 at Universal Exposition '92 in Seville, Spain. While in Spain the Prime Minister had discussions with a view to promote trade and tourism between the two countries and bring in new investment to Sri Lanka.

Expo '92 was opened in Seville as the last Universal Exposition of the 20th century on the 20th of April 1992. It is scheduled to go on for a period of six months and during this period an estimated 20 million visitors are expected to go through its gates.

Sri Lanka is among the 110 countries that has been afforded an opportunity to display its artistic, cultural and scientific achievements at this Exhibition. The Sri Lanka Pavilion at the Exhibition has been designed for this purpose and visitors get an opportunity to forge new links with Sri Lanka. Trade and industry, foreign investment and tourism are among the items that are likely to get a boost by our taking part at this Exhibition.



(Prime minister D.B. Wijetunga at the Sri Lanka National Day ceremony held at Universal Exposition '92, Seville, Spain. Others in the picture are Spanish Minister of Parliamentary Affairs and Expo '92, Sri Lanka's Ambassador in France Dr. Ananda Guruge, High Commissioner in charge of Expo '92 Hubert Jayakody and Secretary to Prime Minister K.M. Abeyasinghe.)

# Address of President Ranasinghe Premadasa on the Occasion of the Inauguration of the Eleventh Session of the SAARC Council of Ministers, B.M.I.C.H., Colombo 8th July 1992

"I am happy to be associated with you today. This is an important occasion for all of us in South Asia. It marks the Inauguration of the Eleventh Session of the Council of Ministers of the South Asian Association for regional Cooperation. I warmly welcome all of you to Colombo.

You meet today, almost at mid-point between our last Summit in Colombo and the next Summit in Dhaka. This is a good opportunity to take stock of the progress made since the last Summit. It also gives us an opportunity to think ahead and plan for our common future.

The Colombo Summit accorded the highest priority to the alleviation of poverty. It is a problem which all of us share in common in our region. We decided to establish an Independent South Asian Commission on Poverty Alleviation. The Commission, has already had two meetings, one in Colombo and the other in New Delhi. It has reached broad agreement on a number of fundamental issues. The Commission hopes to provide a relatively simple set of recommendations. Of course, it would be open to the respective Governments to adapt these recommendations. It has to be done in the light of the socio-political circumstances in each of our countries. A review by you, of the progress made by the Commission, will be a valuable input to its work.

At the Summit in Colombo, we were deeply conscious of the rapid changes in the global economic environment. The Summit brought out the importance of international economic inter-dependence. We are happy that our Association is gradually moving away from its self-imposed isolation. We are exploring the possibilities of mutually beneficial co-operative relations with other regional groups and international organisations. In fact, we have recognised that global inter-dependence

is no longer an abstract concept. It is indeed an unavoidable reality. No country or association can isolate itself from global political and economic developments.

The need for this was brought out vividly at the recent Earth Summit in Brazil. All nations, rich or poor, big or small, have to share the resources of a single planet. The environmentally sound management of our fragile ecosystems is indeed a delicate operation. We have to strike a balance between the immediate demands of development and the long-term needs of sustainable growth. In fact, our Association for the first time, presented its considered collective position before the UN Conference on Environment and Development. You should frankly assess to what the extent the Conference was able to satisfy our hopes and aspirations.

We resolved at the Colombo Summit to keep an open dialogue on a number of matters which affect the lives of our people. We identified the importance of securing less restrictive trading and market opportunities for our products. We emphasised the need for more extensive technological transfers to South Asia. We called for debt relief. We sought access to resources from multi-lateral financial institutions on more favourable terms.

We have to explore ways and means of establishing mutually beneficial relationships between SAARC and appropriate International and Regional Organisations. That was our mandate. In doing so, we will have to take into account the evolution of SAARC activities, especially in the core economic areas.

It will be recalled that the Colombo Summit welcomed the adoption of a Plan of Action on Children in South Asia. You will agree that the survival, protection and development

of children is a sacred trust. In a sense, it is the most vital investment that any nation can make. Sri Lanka will be hosting the First Ministerial Meeting on Children in South Asia in September this year. My Foreign Minister will brief the Council of Ministers on the arrangements that are being made for the Ministerial Meeting. We look forward to your guidance and cooperation in making this Conference a success.

Mr. Chairman, our relationships with each other and the rest of the world have been structured by historical factors and the legacy of colonialism. They have also distorted relations between most South Asian countries. For example even the question of direct access by air between SAARC Capitals is only now being seriously considered. Since the last Summit, I am happy that air links between Colombo and Dhaka and between Colombo and New Delhi have almost been finalised.

Similar illusions from the past have retarded the growth of intra-regional trade in South Asia. Over 90% of SAARC trade lies outside our region. The Governments of South Asia are all nationally committed to the liberalisation of trade. This happy identity of interest could help us reap the rich economic benefits of closer regional cooperation. However, it is necessary for each of us to be flexible in the interests of all of us.

You are aware of the initiatives that were taken at the Colombo Summit on Trade Liberalisation. Since then several meaningful steps have been taken towards establishing a South Asian Preferential Trade Arrangement (SAPTA) by 1997. A complex process of trade negotiations among our countries has already commenced. We must accelerate this process. Our target date of 1997 could be even advanced to 1995. We need the political will to do so. Other regional

groups have advanced in establishing closer regional cooperation in trade. We can benefit from their experience.

Beyond trade, we could look into the possibility of complementing our industrial development. This could cover intra-regional investments and joint ventures. In this programme, the Private Sector can play a major role. The time is particularly opportune to advance such programmes to benefit our people. The Council would also do well to give thought to other innovative measures which could benefit the people of South Asia. For its own part, Sri Lanka has taken modest unilateral measures to accord preference to imports from the region. This is a gesture of our commitment to promoting trade, investment and services within the region.

SAARC must endeavour to muster its own financial and other resources to advance economic development. Yet, it is evident that we stand to benefit by supplementing our own resources from multilateral sources. The SAARC Fund for Regional Projects has already been established. This would help in harnessing the savings and the surpluses of individual SAARC countries to explore regional projects.

The South Asian Development Fund on the other hand should provide us with a window to multilateral and extra-regional resources which we could utilize to make up for any short-fall within South Asia. The Experts Group set up by the Secretary-General in terms of the Colombo Declaration has, I believe, submitted its initial views to your Council for consideration. The South Asian Development Fund is a futuristic plan with a great deal of potential. Bold and imaginative thinking is needed if we are to move forward.

Mr. Chairman, all these efforts at regional economic cooperation will succeed only to the extent of our Association's capacity for action. From the President of the Maldives, we have had valuable initiatives relating to the adoption of a more businesslike approach in the conduct of SAARC meetings. These constitute the first major review of our working methods. Our Foreign Secretaries at their meeting in Colombo last April have, I believe, succeeded in preparing a practical and effective catalogue of proposals to achieve this. They have made valuable suggestions regarding the strengthening of SAARC. I am confident that their adoption will make SAARC a more effective instrument for realizing the aspirations of the people of South Asia.

Your Council will be considering this report. I urge you to consider expanding the operational scope and the capacity of our Association. Let not past precedents alone rule us. We must be innovative to develop the full potential of the Association for the future. If necessary, we must shed what has proved to be ineffective or wasteful. As we move into core areas of economic cooperation, we must equip ourselves to take on increasing responsibilities. In a rapidly changing economic and political environment that is an obligation we have to shoulder.

SAARC has helped to deepen understanding between our Governments. This is not sufficient or meaningful. How can we ensure the participation of South Asian people themselves in the process of regional cooperation? How do we make South Asia more tangible, more accessible and more relevant to our people? How can we make our people shareholders of the Association? We must establish professional, technical, cultural and intellectual links between our people.

Barriers have to be broken.

Bridges have to be built. Mr. Chairman, we have endeavoured therefore to encourage people-to-people contact. We are happy to see the establishment of apex associations linking South Asian Chambers of Commerce, Legal Institutions, Accountants and other Professional Organizations. Criteria have been devised for according recognition to such organizations. These will be placed before you, for you to consider, improve and adopt.

At the level of our Legislatures, since the last Summit, I am happy to note that the Speakers of our Parliaments have met in Colombo. They have resolved to establish an Association of Parliamentarians. This new Association will in due course seek formal recognition by SAARC. I have no doubt that this application will be duly processed by the Council and favourably recommended to the next Summit. At the cultural level, we welcome the Indian initiatives for hosting the first South Asian Festival later this year in India. This will serve as a rich expression of the magnificent cultural and artistic traditions of our people.

Mr. Chairman, SAARC has been in existence for almost seven years. Five patient years of preparation and planning preceded the first Summit. We are aware of the painstaking efforts that were required to articulate a true South Asian identity. We must consolidate our gains. We must harness the benefits of our unity. Let us not forget the saying that - United we stand - Divided we fall. SAARC must overcome the unfortunate interplay of South Asian bilateral misunderstandings. Quite often, they tend to hinder regional cooperation. Bilateral differences and prejudices must not be allowed to inhibit cooperation in South Asia. Indeed, cooperation in SAARC will in itself inspire confidence in bilateral relations."

## Association of South Asian Airlines Mooted

Representatives of Nine Air Lines of South Asia who met in Colombo in July 1992 have agreed that a concrete proposal to form an association of South Asian Airlines be prepared. This will be considered at the forthcoming meeting of the Heads of South Asian Airlines to be held in Colombo later this year. The Airlines which were represented at the Colombo meeting were Air India, Airlanka, Biman Bangladesh Airlines, Druk Air, Indian Airlines, Maldives Air Services, Pakistan International Airlines, Royal Nepal Airlines, Vayudoot Airlines.

A constitution for the proposed ASAA, based on consensus, as well as a draft agenda for the forthcoming meeting, are also being prepared. ASAA, will be a body which will co-ordinate matters between the regions airlines, through a secretariat which may be set up in Colombo.

The decision to set up a regional airline association, in which Airlanka played a significant part, was the result of the realisation by many South Asian Airlines that the changing world environment presented both attractive opportunities as well as potential threats to the region's Airlines.

In an opening speech to the meeting, Airlanka's Chairman/Managing Director Dunstan Jayawardena stressed the need for airlines of the region to move away from wasteful competition and share technical and marketing knowledge to exploit more effectively the booming travel trade. He pointed out that ethnic traffic to South Asia was on the rise as well as labour traffic, tourism and more recently, business traffic. However, these benefits could only be exploited successfully if joint solutions were adopted for common problems. These included the emergence of protectionist trading blocs in Europe and East Asia and the birth of mega-carriers, huge multi-national airlines who may threaten operations by smaller companies.

## Foreign Journalists cover Gam Udawa "Investment Forum"

Twenty-six journalists representing widely circulated newspapers from eighteen countries participated in the Investment Forum organised by the Greater Colombo Economic Commission at the Gam Udawa 92 site at Buttala. The Journalists represented news organizations from India, Maldives, Pakistan, Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand, France, United Kingdom, U.S.A., Hong Kong, Australia, Indonesia, Japan, South Korea, Saudi Arabia and Oman. Airlanka granted free air tickets to these Journalists while GCEC met the cost of accommodation.

At a meeting with Industries, Science and Technology Minister Ranil Wickremasinghe, the economic Liberalization policies and steps taken by the government since 1977 especially after 1989 under President Premadasa including the industrial policies were explained. Director General, GCEC was also present. On 29 afternoon the Journalists visited BEPZ and KEPZ.

A press conference was arranged by the GCEC at Colombo Hotel Hilton for foreign and local press. The Press conference was attended by the Line Ministries, Chairman Tourist Board, Chairman UDA, representatives from commercial banks and Chief Executives of private sector companies. The conference was chaired by Lakshman R. Watawala, Director General, GCEC Ministers John Amaratunga, Dr. Wimal Wickremasinghe and A.J. Ranasinghe participated. In this press conference current policies on industry privatisation, foreign investment etc. and measures taken by the present Govt. to solve the ethnic problem were explained.

The Chairman, Colombo Stock Exchange Ajith Jayaratne drew the attention of the press to the recent developments in Colombo's share market and positive steps taken by government to develop and popularize investments and shares in stocks and also to promote foreign investors and country regional funds to invest in equity of Sri Lankan listed companies through the stock exchange. Two expatriate Chief Executives from GCEC companies explained the factors which motivated them to invest in and expand their manufacturing operations in Sri Lanka. Special emphasis was made on the ongoing violence in North and Eastern parts of Sri Lanka which had no impact on their operations in other provinces.

The Journalists accompanied by Director General, GCEC also visited Nuwara Eliya. Visits were arranged to Interfashion Pvt. Ltd. and cut flower project by Hujay International Ltd., both GCEC projects. The Journalists were briefed on tourist promotional aspects. The Managing Director, Interfashion Ltd. briefed them on the welfare measures provided to the workers and some of the advanced technicians employed by the factory like pattern making where the local personnel has been drawn by this company. They also visited a tea estate and a factory at Ramboda.

## South Asian Plan to Fight Poverty

The third meeting of the Independent South Asian Commission on Poverty Alleviation was held in Dhaka from 8th to 13th July 1992. The meeting was inaugurated the Planning Minister of Bangladesh Zahiruddin Khan.

The commission set up by a decision of the heads of the government of seven SAARC nations at their last summit in Colombo had held two previous meetings in Colombo and New Delhi. It will have two more sittings in Islamabad and Colombo before submitting the report to current SAARC Chairperson Sri Lanka President R. Premadasa. The report is expected to be considered by the next SAARC Summit in Dhaka late this year.

Planning Minister A.M. Zahiruddin Khan said that the poor could not be made a victim of poverty and charity but should have the right, to human dignity through productive employment. Terming the productive employment for the poor as a precondition for balanced and dynamic human development of the country, the Planning Minister said the best way to bring the poor into the mainstream of economic development was through productive employment generation.

Vice Chairman of the Commission Dr. Poona Wigneraja of Sri Lanka addressing the inaugural session warned that the fragile democracy in South Asia was heavily vulnerable to the acute poverty situation of the region. He told the audience that the political leadership of the region had grossly under-estimated the extent of poverty in the region and said the efforts made so far to alleviate poverty in South Asia was totally inadequate. He added by the time our final report is done, we would have consulted with all heads of governments in one manner or another for our analysis of poverty and the lessons we have learnt from the South Asian experience of the past nearly half a century will be considered in our recommendations for action.

The 17 member delegation of the commission also called on the President of Bangladesh Abdur Rahman Biswas. President Biswas said the poverty alleviation programme should be given an institutional shape in consonance with the liberal market economy. He said poverty is the prime concern in the regional countries and that common political commitments was essential for its eradication.

# News from Our Missions

## KUWAIT

Categories of skilled manpower will soon gain employment in Kuwait. A team of seven persons led by Dr. Ahadi Al Ganim, Director of Health Services of Kuwait visited Sri Lanka on 12 July 92, to recruit Nurses to Kuwait. They were in Sri Lanka from the 12 to 16 July 1992. The team has interviewed fifty Nurses and fourteen have been selected. They had also interviewed 24 Pharmacists and 12 Laboratory Technicians during their visit here, though originally they had not intended to recruit these persons. The selections regarding these categories will be made once the recruiting team gets back to Kuwait. The recruiting team has been very satisfied with the quality of the candidates presenting themselves for the interview.

The visit of the team is a direct outcome of the discussions held during the Prime Minister's official visit to Kuwait in January this year. The Prime Minister brought to the attention of the authorities in Kuwait the availability of skilled manpower in professional categories. This follows the desire of the Government to send more and more of the trained professional categories overseas. The Government wishes to move away from the traditional semi-skilled and non-skilled categories, which in the past was the mainstay of the Sri

Lankan work force overseas. A number of training institutes have been set up to equip the youth with skills that would come in handy when seeking employment overseas. The Government is also keen to send more males than females. The latter has been the preponderant category that went out for employment in the past.

The visit is considered significant as it marks a recognition on the part of that country of the availability of skilled manpower in Sri Lanka. In Kuwait itself a large number of workers from Sri Lanka are female domestic aides. The figure before the war was as high as 70% of the 90,000 odd Sri Lankans who work there. The demand for skilled categories in contrast to the domestic aides is increasing and will continue to do so in the future.

The arrangement for the Kuwaiti team's visit was made by the Sri Lanka Bureau of Foreign Employment. The Bureau arranged for the advertising of the vacancies, publicity of the team's visit and arrangements for the interviews. The Bilateral Co-operation Unit co-ordinated the necessary activities concerning the visit between the SLBFE, the Foreign Ministry and the Mission. The Foreign Ministry also rendered protocol assistance to the team.

## ITALY

A fourteen member Italian Buddhist Delegation which visited Sri Lanka in July called on the President Premadasa on 14 July 92 at the Presidential Secretariat. The delegation was led by Ven. Ajhan Thanavaro, an Italian Buddhist priest who was ordained in Thailand. The visit was organised by the Vihara Santa Cittarama in Rome and the Sri Lanka Cultural Association in Italy. Ven. Parakaduwe Saranankara of the Asoka Vihara at Kalutara made all the local arrangements for the visit.

The Sri Lanka Embassy in Rome took an active interest in seeing to the success of the tour. The visit is significant as it is the first ever Buddhist Delegation from Italy to visit Sri Lanka. The delegation during their stay visited places of Buddhist worship in Anuradhapura, Polonnaruwa, Kandy and Kalutara among other places. It is expected that this visit will lead to more efforts of this nature designed to foster relations between Buddhists of Italy and Sri Lanka. Besides, it will help to project Sri Lanka to Western countries such as Italy.

## LONDON

An apparel Export Promotion Mission sponsored by the Export Development Board visited London from 1st to 8th June 1992. All arrangements for the visit and the co-ordination for it was done by the Sri Lanka High Commission in London.

During the visit meetings were organised for the eight Sri Lanka Apparel Exporters who were in the delegation with major UK buyers, Mail Order Houses and Retail Chain Outlets in London and Manchester.

The visit of the Mission is success and the exporters have been able to transact business worth approximately US\$ 600,000. Further orders worth US\$ 1 million are under negotiation at present.

The High Commission also organised, in collaboration with the EDB, Sri Lanka's participation in the International Trade Exhibition (INTRADE) 92. This Exhibition was held from 23 to 25 June at the Wembley Export Centre. A large number of trade inquiries were received on products displayed at the Exhibition.

## SOUTH KOREA

A large Sri Lanka Investment Promotion Delegation visited South Korea recently. The delegation comprised of nine officials and twenty three businessmen representing twenty two Sri Lankan Companies. It was led by Deshabandu Karu Jayasuriya, Chairman of the Organising Committee of EXPO '92 and Vice Chairman of Sri Lanka Korea Economic Co-operation Committee. Ambassador Lalith Pedris inaugurated the seminars which were jointly sponsored by the GCEC and the Sri Lanka Embassy in Seoul. Organisation of the Seminar was done by UNIDO, Small and Me-

dium Industries Promotion Corporation of Seoul and IPS Seoul.

The Seoul Seminar was attended by 88 Korean businessmen. It was followed by 68 individual meetings out of which 22 turned out to be positive.

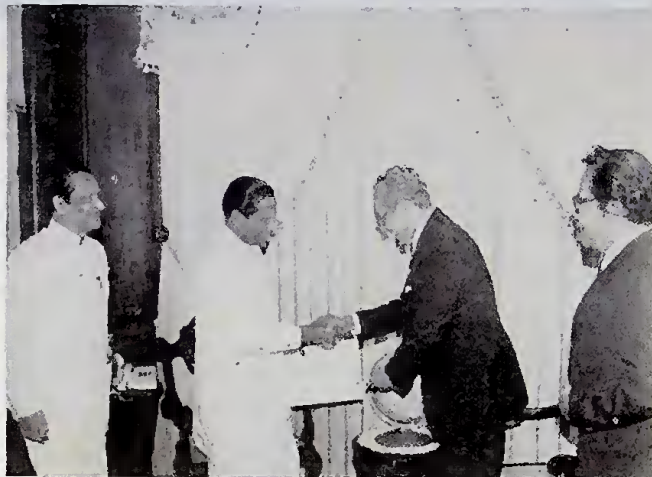
The Seoul Seminar was followed by one in Pusan. the Pusan Chamber of Commerce and Industries was also associated with the organising of this Seminar. There were 56 participating in this Seminar representing 33 Companies. There were 11 individual meetings held after the Seminar.



(Ambassador Pedris inaugurates Seminar)

# Visiting Sri Lanka

## CONSULTATIONS ON 10TH NAM SUMMIT



The Foreign Minister of Indonesia Dr. Ali Alatas visited Sri Lanka from 7-9 July 1992. During a call on President Ranasinghe Premadasa at the Presidential Secretariat, Dr. Alatas handed over an invitation to the President from President Suharto of the Republic of Indonesia to the Tenth Conference of the Heads of State/Government of Non-Aligned Countries to be held in Jakarta from September 1st to 6th, 1992. He also discussed matters concerning the Non-aligned movement with President Premadasa.

The Indonesian Foreign Minister also had separate talks with Foreign Minister Harold Herat regarding the forthcoming NAM Summit. Minister Herat who visited Indonesia in May this year participated in the Ministerial Meeting held in preparation for the Non-Aligned Summit.

Given the present international situation, where the end of the cold war has brought about a host of new conditions, the forthcoming summit assumes added significance. The agenda items for the Summit place a great deal of emphasis on economic issues. Other issues that are to be addressed include the role of the Non-Aligned Movement in the changed global situation, restructuring and revitalization of the UN, development and trade issues, environment and sustainable development and abuse of human rights. The Jakarta Summit will also review the working methods of NAM in a bid to enable it to be more functional and businesslike.

The Tenth NAM summit to be held in Indonesia is also significant given that the origin of the movement itself can be partly traced to the Afro-Asian Conference which took place in Bandung, Indonesia in April 1955 and was the first major Third World Forum of the post-war period. Thirty countries including Sri Lanka participated in this meeting.



REFERENCE

(Special issue of the "Milan Weekly" on the SAARC Summit was presented to President Ranasinghe Premadasa recently by its Editor/Publisher Yadunandan Bhandari. "The Milan" which is a Nepal based magazine has earlier brought out similar special issue on the Kathmandu, Islamabad and Male' SAARC Summits. Foreign Secretary B.P. Tilakeratna is also in the picture)