Functioning of the SAARC and Indian Contribution

The functioning of SAARC is to be studied through its various agencies because these agencies execute the decisions made at the highest level of the decision making agency termed as ‘Summit’. Summit is held once a year to review the implementation of last year’s decision in reality and realise its success or problems in detail and to find out the solution of problems while charting out the plans and programmes primarily giving importance to the principles and objectives to be achieved. The principles and objectives set by summits are programmed through various agencies under the council of ministers which acts as permanent body to take decision in absence of Summit. The standing committee, programming committee, technical committee and action committee carry out the details related to their committees from the decisions taken by the council of minister.

Administrative responsibility of the SAARC is bestowed on Secretariat situated at Kathmandu. Secretariat works under Secretary General. Secretary General is assisted by Directors. They carry out the supervision work of the co-ordination, monitoring, servicing meetings, channel of communication and linkage with other international organisations departments. There are sub-divisions which also function under Secretariat. Important among them are information and media wing, library, women’s cells, SAARC LAW, Association of SAARC speakers and Parliamentarian SAVE, South Asian Festival Scholarship Scheme etc. All the above mentioned offices of the SAARC carry out the work of the staff Agencies.
At the time of launching of SAARC in 1983-84 Six founder members namely India, Pakistan, Nepal, Bhutan Bangladesh and Maldives contributed as given in the following Chart No.3.

Chart No.3.

Contribution by the Member States in 1983-84

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>Million Indian Rupees</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>India</td>
<td>5.00</td>
<td>54.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pakistan</td>
<td>2.32</td>
<td>25.38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nepal</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>10.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bhutan</td>
<td>0.50</td>
<td>5.47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maldives</td>
<td>0.12</td>
<td>1.31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bangladesh</td>
<td>0.20</td>
<td>2.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>9.14</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.00</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In 1984-85 Sri Lanka joined SAARC and contributed along with other six members to meet the expenditure of that year. The figure of contribution for each member State is given in the following Chart No.4

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1. E. Sudhakar : SAARC - Origin, Growth and Future, P.P. 181

160
Chart No.4

Contribution by the Member States in 1984-85

In Million-Indian Rupees

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>Million Indian Rupees</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>India</td>
<td>7.50</td>
<td>33.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pakistan</td>
<td>8.20</td>
<td>36.58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nepal</td>
<td>1.70</td>
<td>7.59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bhutan</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>4.46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maldives</td>
<td>0.12</td>
<td>0.53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bangladesh</td>
<td>2.80</td>
<td>12.48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sri Lanka</td>
<td>1.10</td>
<td>4.91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>22.42</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.00</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In 1985-86 Member States of SAARC realised that they have to increase their contribution so as to meet the expenses of the growing activities of the organisation. Their contribution for the year 1985-86 is given in the following chart No.5

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Chart No.5

Contribution by the Member States in 1985-86

In million - Indian Rupees

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>Million Indian Rupees</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>India</td>
<td>10.000</td>
<td>37.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pakistan</td>
<td>8.700</td>
<td>32.59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nepal</td>
<td>1.720</td>
<td>6.44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bhutan</td>
<td>1.500</td>
<td>5.62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maldives</td>
<td>0.118</td>
<td>0.44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bangladesh</td>
<td>3.360</td>
<td>12.59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sri Lanka</td>
<td>1.300</td>
<td>4.87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>26.698</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.00</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From the above charts it is clear that there is progressive increase in expenditure as the years passed. Once the SAARC started the work undertaken by it, every member state had to increase its share of finance i.e. India contributed Rs 5 millions in 1983-84, Rs. 7.5 million in 1984-85 and Rs. 10.0 million in 1985-86. Thereafter it continuously increased due to the implementation of various Integrated Programme of Action. Every programme is studied in detail in the following sub-chapters.

1. E. Sudhakar : SAARC - Origin, Growth and future, P. P. 182
I) Launching of the Integrated Programme of Action:

The SAARC Charter has chalked out a four-tier institutional set up to carry out the work. At the apex level there are Heads of States or Governments. The second tier of the institutional structure is the Council of Ministers. This is the most important organ of the SAARC from the functional point of view. The third tier is the Standing Committee, comprising of the foreign secretaries of the member states. The fourth tier or at the ground level of the SAARC are Technical Committees, which implement programmes of regional co-operation in various areas identified for that purpose.

The first meeting of foreign ministers was held in New Delhi in Aug., 1983, and an Integrated Programme of Action for South Asian Regional Co-operation was launched in nine areas namely Agriculture; Health and Population activities; Meteorology; Postal Services; Rural Development; Sports; Arts and Culture; Science and Technology; Telecommunications and Transport. Nine Technical Committees were established. One for each area to implement, coordinate and monitor the programme of co-operation. It was also decided to continue co-operation among the National Planning Organisations and Academic Institutions of the Countries of the region.

The scope of regional co-operation was further expanded by setting up two more Technical Committees one for Women in Development and the other Prevention of Drug Trafficking and Abuse. While the first one was established by the First Session of the Council of Ministers at Dhaka in August 1986 and the second one was set up by the Second Session of the council of ministers at Bangalore in November 1986.
Intensive work began at the technical level for the implementation of the agreed programmes of cooperation within the SAARC framework. From Oct. 1983 to January 1984, nine Technical Committees held their meetings and their reports were considered by the Standing Committee of Foreign Secretaries in their meeting in New Delhi at the end of February, 1984. Such exercises also continued in subsequent years.¹

Following study groups have been set up and countries identified as coordinators in respective fields:

1. Agriculture - Bangladesh
2. Rural Development - Sri Lanka
3. Telecommunication - Pakistan
4. Meteorology - India
5. Health and Population Activity - Nepal
6. Transport - Maldives
7. Postal Services - Bhutan
8. Scientific and Technological co-operation - Pakistan

India is a co-ordinator for Meteorology. The expertise attained by Indian Meteorology Departments/Institutes is utilised in the development plans of SAARC region. Much progress is attained in this region due to the India's contribution in establishing meteorological study centres in some of the member States. The Indian

¹ Doc. SAARC : Lok Sabha Secretariat, P.P. 31
² Ibid, P.P. 31
knowledge is utilised for the benefit of all the member States. India successfully shouldered the responsibilities bestowed upon it by SAARC.

ii) Agriculture Sector:

Agriculture Sector is given a prominent place in Integrated Programme of Action of the SAARC, because food is the basic problem of the SAARC Region. Traditional Society and its backwardness is to be removed so as to increase the food production of the region. To achieve this objective scientific and technical exchange of information and material of research conducting seminars, workshops and training programmes are the main activities taken up in the field of Agriculture by the SAARC.

'Scientific and technical-know -how' is being exchanged as regards to various crops, particularly for improving the methods of cultivation, improvement of seeds, use of pesticides insecticide etc. Furthermore the activity as regard to maintenance, development and the protection of livestock's is also carried out and scientific information in this regard is exchanged among the member States. The member States are always in search of undertaking joint venture to improve agriculture potentiality, to achieve it they arrange the meetings of scientists and surveyors of the member States, also.

Bangladesh was the first member state to call a meeting of the sub-committee on the exchange of Scientific and Technical publication on 3rd to 5th January, 1986. Thus actual working of the SAARC was initiated with this meeting. Agriculture sector being the common and most prominent sector is given priority by the member states. To increase the per hectare production of agricultural crop, the member states exchanged scientific knowledge, workshop on agricultural research, conducted seminars in December 1986 (21st to 25th December). In December 1986 (28-29th
(December) a meeting of scientists on Rise Hispa Control was organized. On 5-6 January 1987 a meeting regarding Multi Location Trials on rice was successfully organised by Bangladesh and the conclusion of all the above endeavor were reported through the SAARC gazette.

Pakistan successfully shouldered the responsibility of the arranging a seminar on, "Farm level water Management" during, October 19-24, 1986. Pakistan also arranged a training course on Entomology, in respect to Identified Crops during September 14th to Oct. 4th of 1987.

Nepal organised a meeting of multi-location trials on ‘Rape Seeds and Mustard Seeds’ on 9th, 10th and 11th of Dec., 1986.

Bhutan shouldered the responsibility of hosting the meeting of the sub-committee on exchange of scientific and Technical publication and a seminar on Forestry was organised from 2” to 27” of September, 1987.

In comparison to other six member States the contribution of India is more in giving the momentum to the collaboration of member States in achieving pre-planned goals. India undertook and successfully carried out the following responsibility;

1. Organised a training course on wheat production technology
   (31 March-11 April 1986)
2. Scientists meeting on live stock improvement programme (22-23 May 1986)
3. Training courses on Soil testing (3 July-14 August, 1986) and Artificial insemination
   (1-5 August, 1986)
   Multilocation Trials on Groundnut (22-23 Dec., 1986)
5. Meeting on Plant Exploration and Related Activities (26-28 May, 1987)'

1. Doc. SAARC : Lok Sabha Secretariat, P.P. 32
iii) Rural Development Sector:

Rural Development is one of the five original areas identified for cooperation under the Integrated Programme of Action. The first meeting of the committee was held in 1984. Specific activities taken up by the Technical Committee include, exchange of information and literature among member States on issues relating to rural development, preparation of research studies on selected topics, compilation of lists of experts, training institutes, and institutions involved in transfer of appropriate technology in member states with a view to exchange expertise and share training facilities within the region.

The first meeting of the Technical Committee on Rural development was held in October, 1986, at Dhaka. In this meeting it was decided to pursue research study on following four topics, namely. People's participation in rural development, impact of poverty focus programme, rural water supply and rural technology.

A study on people's participation in rural development was completed and India took initiative in organising two training courses in Jan. 1986 and June 1987 at Hyderabad on poverty focused rural development strategy. At same place a workshop on disaster Management was organised during 28 Sep. to 1st Oct., 1987. India being a big brother in SAARC organisation circulated a concept paper for the establishment of Regional Institute for Appropriate Technology.¹

¹. The Times of India, 2nd Oct. 1987
Pakistan conducted two training courses of design and appraisal of agricultural and development projects during 27th April - 6 May 1986. On 3rd - 6th February, 1986 Pakistan also organised symposium on rural energy problem.

Nepal shouldered the responsibility to study 'Rural Water Supply' in SAARC Region. From 9th to 15 November 1986. Nepal organised a meeting of technical committee of the SAARC on 'Local level Planning' at Kathmandu.

Bangladesh Organised a training course on 'Decentralized Administration' during 16th to 26th Sep. 1986 at Dhaka.

At the initiative level almost all the activities of the SAARC Technical Committee on rural development were of academic nature. Therefore only planning as per decision taken at various levels was carried out because the area which was to be covered under rural development was such a vast area and the cooperation among the member states in this area was so small which could not justify the responsibility bestowed upon it.

iv) Telecommunication sector:

Technical committee on telecommunication (TLC) was established in 1983 by SAARC. TLC, interlinking SAARC member states with one another has improved the quality of services and the area of co-operation among the member states in satellite technology, exchange of technical knowledge through organising training camp, study tours and maintenance facilities etc.

1. Pub. SAARC: SAARC in Brief, P.P. 9
India being the most advanced state in the field of TLC has taken initiative to impart technical knowledge to the other six member states of the SAARC. India organised a seminar on 'Latest trends in external Plant practices during 17th to 21st November 1986 and a seminar - cum- workshop on 'Software maintenance in developing countries during 6th to 10th Oct. 1987. India also organised a training course on 'General software development' environment and facilities during 26th Oct. to 6th November 1987.'

Sri Lanka organised a seminar on 'Network Management ' in between 17th and 20th Oct. 1986. Pakistan shouldered the responsibility of arranging a training course on 'New Technology' in TLC.

With the impetus, provided by SAARC, India had commissioned International Sub Scriber Dialing with Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Nepal and Pakistan. India has also offered its telestrial network to SAARC member states wishing to give it for transit traffic. Further more India has taken initiative and complied the activity of opening bureufax services and augmentation of inter country links in which all the seven member states of SAARC cooperating with each other.

As a result of the cooperation in this area, ISD, Services are available in all member states. The native of one member state can make use of ISD telephone and automatic telex service to have contact with the natives of other six member states. Bureaofax service is already introduced in all member states of SAARC and common collection charges and media independent tariff has been introduced in the

1. Op-Cit. P.P. 9
member states. Therefore, bringing the people of all the seven member states closer to each other and thereby strengthening the bonds of friendship among them.

v) Meteorology:

Meteorology was given prominence in SARC in 1979 India proposed to set up Regional Meteorological Centre and agreed to provide $11.6 million for its establishment. In the same year Bangladesh offered to finance the building which is to be used for regional Meteorology Centre. On this footing when SAARC came into existence and took over the work of Meteorological Sector, it constituted a Technical Committee meeting on meteorology. The first technical committee on Meteorology was held in 1984 and since then number of meetings of Technical Committees were held to realise the objective of SAARC in Meteorological Sector. Technical Committee on Meteorology has been involved in organising seminars, workshops in areas such as joint Inter - comparison of barometers, meteorological, instruments, agricultural meteorology, numerical weather prediction, crop-weather relationship and crop yield forecast, long range weather forecasting, radar meteorology etc. Training programmes have been conducted on meteorological Tele-communications, management and establishment of National Data Centres, monsoon forecasting etc. The reports on western disturbances, tropical cyclones including prediction of recurvature, thunder storms, long range forecasting of monsoon rain, short range prediction of monsoon and north-western tornadoes and water sprouts, have been completed. Expert panels have been convened on specialized fields such as Agro - Meteorology; Climatology and Data Exchange; and Instrumentation.

2. Ibid, P.P. 128
3. Pub. SAARC : SAARC in Brief, P.P. 15
India is the key member in this regard and therefore had to take lead in Meteorological Sector to provide infrastructure, technical know-how, big share of finance, administration, training and service. India conducted joint inter-comparison of instrument in April 1986 and also conducted joint inter-comparison of barometers in Feb. 1987. During September 9-23rd 1987 India conducted a training workshop on the management and establishment of National Data Centre.

Pakistan organised a seminar on meteorological instrumentation during April 27-30th 1987.

India, Pakistan, Nepal and Bangladesh are involved in preparation of forecasting Monsoon-'Long range of Prediction, Monsoon Rainfall', North-East Monsoon' etc. This arrangement was made because cyclonic disasters continued to play havoc in Bangladesh, regularly, and India too had her share of such disasters. To predict and to face such disasters SAARC has undertaken the project of Establishing Regional Meteorological Centre in India to provide special training in numerical weather prediction and mark an important area in Meteorological-technical collaboration within the SAARC framework. India is providing Meteorological Information to all member states of SAARC in regard to atmosphere, rainfall, cyclone, typhoons, drought, earthquake etc.

vi) Health and population activities:

One of the priority area of SAARC was and is 'health and population activity. The first meeting of Technical Committee of health and population activities was held in 1984 and thus the systematic planning, programming and its implementation started.
Technical Committee of health and population activity focused its attention particularly on children and health welfare of the population. The policy regarding maternal child health, primary health care, disabled and handicapped persons, controlled and eradication of major diseases in the region such as Malaria, Leprosy, Tuberculosis, Diarrhea, Rabies, Aids and Iodine deficiency disorders.

The members of the Technical Committee of health and population activity conferred with each other, how to spread awareness of health problems and their cure among the population of the member States. To achieve this aim Bangladesh organised a seminar on Rural Child Care at Dhaka on February 25-26 1986.

Nepal was and is lacking medical facility in comparison to India, Pakistan, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka. Therefore, the seminar on 'Drug Resistance Malaria' was conducted on 29th - 30th Sep. 1986 and the conference on Rabies was organised by Nepal on 29-30th March 1987.

India organised seminar on Leprosy on 2nd 5th December, 1986 then another conference on Tuberculosis was held on 5th - 9th Oct. 1987.

Nepal took initiative in establishing a Regional Centre for Tuberculosis in Nepal. Pakistan also proposed to establish a Regional Centre for Malaria in Pakistan. As per the proposal SAARC Tuberculosis Centre was set up in Kathmandu in 1992 and this centre devised a standard format for preparing annual review of the situation of children in the SAARC region; established a network for training, research .

1. Indian Express, 27th Feb. 1986
and eradication of Malaria and approved a regional approach for combating major diseases in the SAARC Region. Priority in training programme was given to train the personnel to combat Malaria, Tuberculosis, Leprosy Diarrheal Deceases, Human Rabies and Maternal Child health. Technical Committee has decided to give maximum priority to child welfare, hereafter.

Health consciousness of the region lacked behind in comparison to advanced states in the world. Therefore, to make future generation of the SAARC region about health special attention is paid in this regard. To achieve this goal the playgrounds with all sports and games facilities, parks and gardens and other facilities were to be provided along with gymnasium, primary health centre and hospitals equipped with all sorts of medicines and staff with specialists.

vii) Transport:

All the member states of the SAARC are backward in terms of transport technology. Therefore, it is a common problem which has offered a challenge to the Technical Committee to improve the mode of transport in the region. The backwardness varies from state to state in degree and quality. The most backward states in the region are Bhutan and Nepal.

The importance of Transports Sector in Nation Building and Region Building is paramount because they provide basic infra-structure for development and expansion. SAARC recognized their importance and set up Technical Committee in 1983. The work of the Technical Committee covered three major
segments of transport, i.e land transport divided into roadway and railways; sea transport subdivided into inland waterways and sea ways and air transport.

Bhutan, Nepal and Maldives don't have railway's. Nepal and Bhutan are land-locked states and thereon there is no question of sea transport.

Air transport is the major area which links all the member states of the SAARC with each other.

The majority of the activity that have taken place in the field of transport have been in the nature of conducting workshops, experts group meeting, short term training courses, exchange of data and information, preparation of status papers, compilation of data base and directories of consultants centre for transport section.

Seminars and workshops have covered areas such as material and cost of road construction, maintenance of road, rural roads, road transportation and safety, urban transportation, in land water transportation, maritime transport and railway transport.

Training courses have included corporate planning for railway sector, highway and bridge engineering etc.

India organised a seminar on railway transport on 11th-13th August 1987. India also conducted meeting on airlines technical sub-committee on 18th

1. SAARC : Brief Report, 1983
19th August 1987 on 16th-17th September 1987 India organised a meeting of experts of the member States on air traffic control and communication.\(^1\)

Bangladesh organised a Seminar on road transportation and safety on 2nd & 3rd December 1986.\(^2\)

Sri Lanka took initiative and arranged workshop on regional study on 'Traffic Flow and Intermeddle Distribution in the Region' on 4th -5th December 1986.

Sri Lanka has offered to set up an Institute of Transport Technology and impart training in association with its existing National Institution.

Activities held under the transport Sector of the SAARC, so far, have helped in fostering better cooperation among member countries and resulted in the disseminations and exchange of data, expertise, information and experiences.

Transport is a vital area in providing access to the products of industries to markets; especially now with the signing of agreement on SAARC Preferential Trading Arrangement (SAPTA). This sector will play more crucial role in intra - SAARC Trade.

viii) Postal Services :

The SAARC established Postal Services Technical Committee in 1983\(^3\) with a view of bringing about an over all improvement in this regard in the region.

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1. Doc. SAARC : Lok Sabha Secretariat, P.P. 41
3. Pub. SAARC : SAARC in Brief, P.P. 9
The programme in this postal sector included seminars, workshops, training consultancy, technical assistance international money-order systems, international air letter mail and international surface mail etc. SAARC Technical Committee organised many training programmes to train the postal staff to effectively serve the people of the region.

New Delhi hosted a seminar in April 1984 on Postal Development in South Asia.' In this seminar common postal problem was main theme of the discussion and suggestions were asked from the participants to solve it. India presented a theme paper on the postal development in South Asia along with another specialised paper on 'Postal Mechanism - Problems and Prospects'.

A proposal was placed before Technical Committee on postal services as regard to the establishment of South Asian Centre for postal research and development. However this is not yet finalised. India organised training course on post office savings Bank in February 1986, which was attended by all member states. Pakistan organised a training course for 'Middle Grade Officer on Postal Management and International Postal Services' during March 1986. Pakistan also arranged a study on 'Exchange of Commemorative Postage Stamps' by SAARC Postal Administration.'

India organised a seminar on September 12th-13th 1986, on 'Agency Functions and Financial Services in the Post Office. India also organised a training course on 'International Mail Accounting And Routing' during 9th March to 3rd April 1987.

1. Doc. SAARC : Lok Sabha Secretariat, P.P. 36
Bangladesh organised a seminar on ‘Mechanisation of Postal Service’, from 3rd - 10th December 1986. Maldives held a seminar on ‘Letter Writing Competition’ in August 1986 and India followed it by organising a letter writing competition for young people on “The Post Man as a Friend of Society” on 28th September, 1986.

Technical Committee on postal services which functions separately and independently since 1983 was amalgated with Technical Committee on communication with effect from 1993 and is referred as communication - TCO2.

The attitude of the member states of the SAARC to depend upon telecommunication has reduced the importance of postal services. Governmental and non-governmental agencies make use of ISD, Fax, E-mail etc. and therefore the area of operation of the postal services is reduced and today it serves primarily in the field of delivery of letters, money-orders, parcels and postal savings etc. Today common resident of the region is a benefactor of the postal services of the SAARC. The quality of the postal service varies from member state to member state; for example the postal service in India is for better than the postal service in Nepal and Bhutan. SAARC is eagerly working to overcome this disparity among the member states. But the geographical setting of Nepal, Bhutan and Maldives is a biggest handicap in this regard. These three countries don’t have well organised postal services and therefore their relation with other member states in this regard mainly depend on Air Postal Services.

ix) Science and Technology:

To march along with the new world the people of the SAARC region are to be science and technology conscious. The traditions and customs which
exist have a memorized information passed from generation to generation. To test this information on scientific footings and convert it to an organised knowledge was task taken up to relieve the natives of the SAARC region from social dogmas and beliefs. Thus the object of realising scientific knowledge in natesday to day life became priority and thus 'Science and Technology' is taken as an area to be introduced and developed in the education of the people of the region.

Energy used for cooking food was the first target because traditional energy resources were on the decline therefore it became utmost necessary to introduce energy resources on scientific line for cooking food and house hold use. Science and technology Technical Committee was established in 1983.'

The Technical Committee on science and technology has decided in 1985 to search economically viable alternative for traditional energy resources; thus this committee has undertaken a wide range of activities such as seminars, workshops, training programmes, joint research projects survey etc.

Seminars/ workshops/ meetings of experts held so far were on:
Post Harvest and Food Technology; Renewable Energy Resources; Photovoltaics; Pesticides; Instrumentation; Maintenance and Calibrations, Cultivation and Processing of Medicine on Aromatic Pains, Delivery Systems of Improved stove for Rural Users; Low Cost Housing Technology Diffusion in rural area; Treatment on Drinking water in rural and urban areas; Science Policy; Low Cost Scientific Educational Equipments; Bio-fertilizer Technology; Bio-Mass Gasification; Recycling of Waste Water and Development of Technology for Preventing Pollution; information and its linkages;

1. SAARC Report, 1983
Biological control of plant pests; Immunodiagnostics; Ore Beneficiation; every modeling
Techniques, solar Thermal Technology; Technological aspects of low cost housing;
examination of operational systems of Rural Electrification Cooperative; and short
Courses on Technology Assessments and Technological Diffusion.

Training programmes were organised for scientists and technologists on sanitary waste management, low cost housing, Development of Prawn Hatcheries; Electronics and Molecular biology. In addition, joint research project on Design and manufacturing of food processing, Equipment and Appropriate Post Harvest, Food Technology for Perishable Items have been carried out.

Status reports have been completed on biogas; mineral resources exploration; producer gas; application of remote sensing techniques and use of organic fertilizers. The complete report on building materials and technology, integrated management of sanitary waste; selected Rural technology; Food processing technologies and handicrafts; Local Electronic Product in the SAARC region and Biotechnology, is submitted to the SAARC. Directories are being prepared on specialised analytical instrumentation facility and techniques; process engineering / pilot plan facilities in Agro food processing.

Networking arrangements are being established in field of Bio- Technology, and Genetic Engineering, Energy modeling techniques, technology information and low cost Housing and building technology.

India prepared fact-finding report on technology for Bio-gas and submitted the draft on mineral resources exploration; Sri Lanka submitted a report on producer gas and Bangladesh submitted the draft report on producer gas and
Bangladesh submitted the report on application of remote sensing techniques for natural resource surveys; Sri Lanka also submitted draft report on the use of Organic Fertilizer in Agriculture.

Pakistan organised a workshop on renewable energy resources on 8th to 10th April 1986. India organised a workshop on an expert group meeting on Solar Energy, Bio-gas and photovoltaics on 18th 19th & 20th August 1986.

The Working Technical Committee on science and Technology brought about the consciousness of modern knowledge in the minds of the natives of the SAARC region. They realised their backwardness by acquiring new scientific and technological knowledge in use in the other parts of the world and to be at par with them they have to change their traditional attitude and embrace scientific knowledge in their life.

x) Sports and culture:

The people of the seven member states of the SAARC cooperated with each other in organising various programmes in the field of Sport, Arts and Culture. This area of operation has provided the best opportunity to the people of the region come to gather and share the joy and happiness.

Technical Committee on sport, arts and culture was established in 1983. This committee has taken initiative to establish a link among the member states to develop the sporting attitude of the people. As the part of regional cooperation activity

1. National Herald, 21st Aug. 1986
in sports. Coaching camps / clinics have been conducted in table tennis, squash, hockey, base ball, swimming, athletics and wholly-ball. SAARC has organised basket ball and football/ tournamens for the member states; Marathon has been also organised.

SAARC established technical committee on education in 1989 and carried out the responsibility till 1993. In 1993 technical committee on education and technical committee on sport, arts and culture were amalgamated in to a Single Technical Committee on Education and Culture from 1993. This committee was renamed in 1995 as Technical Committee on Education Culture and Sport.

The priority themes identified for co-operation in the field of Education and Women Education; Universal Primary Education literacy; Post Literacy and continuing education, Education Research, science and Technical Education, Education for the under served areas and distant education; short term activity in the field of Education includes, expert group meeting; workshops / seminars on the priority themes; modernisation of curriculum; environmental Education including Population Education; Planning and Management of Education; Teachers Training; Higher Education and Book production and Marketing. Short terms activity in the field of culture include South Asian Archeological congresses; History conferences; work shops / trainings / seminars on conservation of wall paintings, documentation of Musical and Oral traditions, Archives and photographic exhibition on monuments, National Heritage and an expert group meeting on preservation of monuments and archeological materials. In the field of Art and exhibition handicrafts, workshops in sea based crafts and artisans at work, and SAARC painters camps have been organised.

1. Pub. SAARC : SAARC in Brief, P.P. 16
India organised south Asian Archaeological Congress in New Delhi on 23rd January 1986 in which archaeological discovery, conservation of structural, monuments paintings were discussed.

India conducted coaching camps and clinics on athletics, swimming and basket ball on 5th to 14th October 1987. Pakistan organised a seminar on preservation of oral traditions on 6th to 20th October 1987.

The on going activities in the section of ports, art and culture include: Exchange of publications on sports, Exchange of facilities for the Archives, Exchange of Micro films and photocopies of papers of historical and research values, Exchange of Catalogue of Ancient Manuscript and Fostering the Study of Art, objects and antiques.

As the structural functional activities of the SAARC, gathered experience it had to expand the areas of co-operations to overcome the hindrances and the obstructions in achieving its aims and objectives.

Drug abuse and Drug trafficking are found to be the common course among the people of the member states and this has caused a social problem to the society of the SAARC Region. Thus the member states have decided to fight it out and cure the society from this curse. To achieve this aim Technical Committee on Prevention of Drug Trafficking and Abuse was established is 1987.

1. Doc. SAARC Lok Sabha Secretariat P.P. 40
Women in the SAARC member states contributed meager share in the development of society and its culture. To make the enclosed women in the 'Four Walls' free and to utilise their services by making them to realise the responsibility towards society and states and putting their labour in the nation and society building thus to activate women in the seven member of the SAARC, SAARC has established 'Technical Committee on Women in Development' in 1986.

Terrorism has acquired global recognition and SAARC region is also affected with the problem of terrorism and the Governments of the seven member states are facing this problem. Time is already ripened to fight terrorism locally and international terrorism collectively. Thus SAARC has established Technical Committee to find out solution and implement it to eradicate terrorism or to minimise the onslaught of terrorism in the region.

Environment preservation has become essential to the region of SAARC because this region is identified as a region having forest and is not abused as the western States are abused for deforestation and therefore Technical Committee to preserve forests was established in 1992 to preserve environment in its natural settings. India, Nepal, Bhutan and to some extent Pakistan and Maldives provide a very good setting for the establishment of Tourism as an enterprise. To study and realise it in reality SAARC has set up a Technical Committee to preserve forests in 1991 and propagated to attract tourists from all over the world. In this regard Sri Lanka and Bangladesh also cooperated with other five member countries.

1. Op-Cit, P.P. 42
India led the SAARC in satellite and telecommunication technology to serve the natives of the SAARC region. India took initiative to establish cooperation among the member states in the field of Radio and TV broadcasting. TV and Radio are used to educate and entertain the people of the SAARC region. To organise this activity Technical Committee was set up and is named as SAARC Audio-Visual Exchange Committee (SAVE). This Technical Committee is successfully working since its inception.

The zeal and enthusiasm with which SAARC was established by its member states is diminishing slowly and steadily. SAARC is also turning to be an International Organization which serve as a platform for member states to propagate their foreign policy and to make publicity of their contribution in successfully completing the task undertaken by them. This fact is realised when researcher has evaluated the work carried out by various Technical Committees for last fifteen years. It is found that the work carried out by each and every Technical Committee is primarily of academic nature. The decisions taken Summit level are executed by the Technical Committees. Two organs of SAARC administration namely Staff Administration and Line administration has a wide gap and therefore most of the plans and programmes exist on paper and not executed in reality. One of the most important cause for this is financial incapability of SAARC to convert plan into reality and the rivalry and non belief among its members. Until and unless SAARC does not work as one unit to achieve the aims and objectives it declared through its Charter it can not achieve the place of honour in the Community of Nations. Therefore, it has become the first task of SAARC and particularly it Secretary - General to reinforce faith and belief among its members and force them to work in unity to realise plans and programmes in reality.