CHAPTER – III

THE BANGALORE SUMMIT

Following the principles laid down in the SAARC Charter, (which have been discussed in the preceding chapter) it became evident to the member nations that an annual summit meeting of the Heads of State or Government was necessary for the smooth functioning of the organisation. Consequently, after an interval of eleven months, the time was ripe for the holding of a second summit meeting of the Heads of State or Government of the seven South Asian nations. One of the major tasks of the second summit, which was held in Bangalore in November 1986, was to give real meaning and content to an organisation which had so far been functioning in a loose administrative framework provided by its initial Charter.¹

As an aftermath of the meeting between the Prime Minister of India, Rajiv Gandhi and the Pakistani President, Zia-ul-Haq on 17 December 1985, a friendly atmosphere was created in the South Asian scenario.² Delighted by the atmosphere of goodwill prevailing in South Asia, the leaders of SAARC expected that the second summit in Bangalore would be able to further consolidate and carry forward the objectives of SAARC. As against this optimistic view shared by some South Asian leaders, there were the sceptics who merely apprehended that the second SAARC summit might not be able to achieve the desired goals. The root of their apprehension lay in the fact that never before in the history of South Asia, so many Heads of Government agreed to meet with so little in common among them to generate the hope that the answer to all common evils of South Asia lay in regional cooperation and that regional cooperation was bound to grow and flourish.

The Bangalore summit (16 - 17 November 1986) was held against the tensed background of serious ethnic turmoil in Sri Lanka with its harmful impact on Indo-Sri Lanka bilateral relations. Just before the opening ceremony of the

¹ The Hindustan Times, 9 November 1986
² See Ibid, 8 November 1986
summit, an information was received by the Western media that Pakistan had successfully launched a nuclear device on its soil. This obviously made the Indian side apprehensive of Pakistan’s intentions and the bilateral relations between the two most prominent members of SAARC, namely, India and Pakistan received a severe blow and deteriorated. As a result of all these complications, it was presumed beforehand that unlike the first summit of the SAARC countries held in Dhaka in December 1985, the Bangalore summit would turn out to be a low-key affair. Launched barely a year earlier, SAARC was still in its nascent state and required proper nourishment with profound care.

**Prelude to the Summit**

According to the schedule prepared earlier, the pre-summit work commenced with the holding of the meeting of the SAARC Programme Committee on 11 November 1986. The meeting of the SAARC Programme Committee was to be followed by the sittings of various Standing Committees. The meeting of the Council of Ministers was scheduled for 14 and 15 November.⁴

The focus of the SAARC session and the topics that were figured at the meetings of the Programme Committee and the Standing Committee were outlined by Muchkund Dubey, chief coordinator of SAARC, at a press conference on 10 November 1986. The issues were, namely, terrorism, international economic situation etc.⁵

The Programme Committee of the SAARC, which concluded its two-day talks on 12 November, did not deal with the contentious issue of terrorism. The reason behind this was that on the very question of defining terrorism, India, Pakistan, Nepal, Bangladesh, Bhutan and Maldives failed to arrive at a consensus.⁶ Recommendations were made by the committee for the setting up

---

of four more regional institutions to foster greater cooperation. Senior officials of the Programme Committee decided to make recommendations for the setting up of centres on telecommunications, software, tuberculosis eradication, transport and shipping.  

The committee also finalised the assessment report of SAARC activities during the last one year and chalked out a calendar of projects for 1987. It also suggested specific guidelines for the future course of SAARC events.  

Moreover, it was also decided by the committee that no SAARC events would be given official status unless approved by the Standing Committee of Foreign Secretaries. It recommended that the administrative structure and the governing council of the meteorological centre, to be set up in New Delhi, should be finalised and put forward for approval by the member countries within February 1987.  

The Foreign Secretaries of SAARC countries held their meeting on 13 November 1986 with the hope that the Bangalore summit would be a grand success. The Foreign Secretaries elaborately dealt with the measures to prevent, control and eliminate the menace of drug abuse and illegal drug trafficking in the South Asian sub-continent. They also held extensive discussion on the definition of terrorism and on the issue of extending cooperative activities on the basis of recognised international principles for prevention of terrorism. They also dealt with the matter of bearing the expenses of the SAARC Secretariat. The recommendation of the Programme Committee relating to streamlining and improvement of work programme under the Integrated Programme of Action (IPA) and a calendar of activities during 1987 were adopted by the Foreign Secretaries.  

On the eve of the summit conference, the Council of Ministers formally met on 14 November 1986 and appreciated the progress of work and

7. Ibid
8. Ibid
recommendations made by the Standing Committee. The Foreign Ministers approved of the draft declaration to be adopted at the second SAARC summit. The Council of Ministers did not face much difficulty in approving the draft declaration since the main contentious issue of terrorism had been sorted out. Following Sri Lanka's suggestion, some editing of the draft declaration was undertaken by a group. At one stage, Sri Lanka expressed surprise over the fact whether there was a need for a Bangalore declaration since SAARC countries had already adopted the Dhaka declaration in December 1985 at its first summit. In this context, it was pointed out by Pakistan that while the Non-Aligned summits issued declaration, the summits of industrialised nations did not. However, it was realised by the leaders of the participating countries that the matter should be decided by the host country, i.e. India. So, the ministers decided that there would be a "Bangalore declaration".10 Pakistan, on its part, tried to introduce in the declaration a concept on disarmament that drew the distinction between a nuclear weapon test and a peaceful nuclear explosion. At the same time, it agreed not to press for its amendment when India pointed out that it had a different view on this issue.

Pakistan was also in favour of greater financial nexus between SAARC and other countries and world institutions. It also made suggestions for an ASEAN type approach which would give this regional grouping a Western orientation. India was, however, reluctant to adopt this approach and repeatedly emphasised the need for collective self-reliance and generation of internal resources. In other words, it did not allow SAARC to look for external financial help for the implementation of its projects. Moreover, India believed that by asking for external assistance, SAARC would be deviating from the goals of self-reliance and self-dependency.11

Terrorism was a crucial issue before the Foreign Ministers of SAARC countries during the preparatory phase of the Bangalore summit. Foreign

---

10. The Times of India, 16 November 1986
11. Ibid
Secretaries of the seven SAARC countries failed to reach an agreement over the question of terrorism. Although the member countries of SAARC unanimously agreed that combined action must be taken against all forms of terrorism, India and Sri Lanka differed from one another on the definition of terrorism. While defining terrorism as an extraditable offence, Sri Lanka altogether ignored the political and human rights aspects. It also submitted a list of offences, which were to be labelled as terroristic and not political for the purposes of extradition.\(^\text{12}\) While expressing its anxiety over the problem, India had a different view regarding the measures that the member-states of SAARC should adopt in this context. India tried to draw the attention of South Asian states to a number of international conventions on terrorism that it had signed. For instance, the Montreal, Tokyo and Hague Conventions. Nevertheless, India made it clear that it was ready to join hands with other members of SAARC, in adopting a follow-up action on the recommendation of the expert groups.\(^\text{13}\)

After failing to arrive at an agreed definition of “terrorism”, the Foreign Ministers resolved the issue by taking a decision to absorb the spirit of U. N. resolution 2625.\(^\text{14}\) They agreed that their states should not assist, instigate or organise terrorist activities on their territory against another country and cooperate with others in combating terrorism.

The Foreign Ministers finalising the draft declaration on 15 November also agreed upon the location and funding pattern of the SAARC Secretariat. It was also decided by the SAARC Foreign Ministers that the association’s head

\(^\text{12. The Times of India, 21 November 1986}\)
\(^\text{13. See Ibid, 14 November 1986.}\)
\(^\text{14. The United Nations (U.N.) General Assembly unanimously condemned all acts, methods and practices of terrorism and suggested steps to wipe out the menace. Thus, the U.N. resolution 2625 was adopted by the 159 member House on 9 December 1985, through consensus. It declared that terrorist acts “wherever and by whomever committed,” were “criminal”. It urged governments to sign existing global treaties against terrorism and take steps to eliminate the problem. Moreover, the resolution 2625 also urged governments to fulfil their assumed international obligations and refrain from “organising, instigating, assisting or participating in terrorist acts in other states or acquiescing in” activities within their territory directed towards such purposes.}\)
quarter would be set up in Kathmandu and a distinguished diplomat of Bangladesh would hold the post of its Secretary General for two years.\textsuperscript{15}

The second summit is remarkable for two significant documents adopted by the SAARC leaders after a lot of discussions, namely, the Bangalore declaration and a Memorandum of Understanding for the establishment of the SAARC Secretariat in Kathmandu.\textsuperscript{16}

\textbf{The Bangalore Declaration}

The seven Heads of State or Government who assembled at the second SAARC summit in Bangalore on 16 and 17 November 1986, adopted the Bangalore declaration\textsuperscript{17} on 17 November 1986.

Following the footsteps of Dhaka declaration, the leaders, who were present at the Bangalore summit, emphatically stressed upon the fact that they were very much enthusiastic and keen about the idea of promoting peace, stability and progress in the region. In this connection, they made it clear that the South Asian countries engaged in the task of promoting peace and socio-economic development of the South Asian region, should obey the principles of the United Nations Charter.\textsuperscript{18}

The Heads of State or Government reiterated the desire of the inhabitants of South Asia and the Governments to work unitedly in accordance with the SAARC Charter and to adopt common policies and approaches for solving problems which all of them had to encounter in the adverse international

\textsuperscript{15.} \textit{Patriot,} 13 November 1986
\textsuperscript{16.} See P. K. Mishra, n.3, p.56
\textsuperscript{17.} For the text of the Bangalore Declaration, see \textit{Dhaka and Bangalore Summits: Declarations and Joint Press Releases}, SAARC Secretariat, Kathmandu, 1986, pp.8–20.
\textsuperscript{18.} To enable the United Nations fulfil its avowed intention of saving the succeeding generations from the scourge of war, the framers of the Charter deemed it necessary to lay down certain principles in Article 2. The major principles to be followed by the organisation and its members are respect for the principle of sovereign equality of all its members, non-use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any State and non-interference in the internal affairs of other states and pacific settlement of disputes.
economic environment.

As in Dhaka, here too, the leaders once again reiterated that the primary objective of SAARC was to promote the well-being of the masses of the entire region, to enhance the pace of economic growth as well as social and cultural upliftment of the region and to provide all individuals with an opportunity to lead a dignified life and to realise their potentialities fully. The leaders also highlighted the fact that the countries of South Asia had been brought under a common umbrella by a number of factors, such as, geographical proximity and ancient cultural, social and historical legacies. These common features provided a strong edifice for the South Asian regional cooperation for fighting the economic and social evils unitedly.

The seven leaders recalled that in terms of population, SAARC was the largest amongst all the regional groupings in the world, and that all the seven constituent states of SAARC were in possession of substantial human and natural resources. They expressed their strong desire to achieve maximum utilisation of these resources by identifying their cooperative activities, keeping in mind the large amount of present and potential complementarities among their economies. They were very sanguine that the countries of South Asia, which had been the cradle of human civilisation, acting in unison, could once again play their due role in the family of nations.

The Heads of State or Government stated that like all movements of cooperation, the South Asian cooperation would fail to attain its cherished goals unless and until the masses of South Asia were involved in it. To this end, they suggested promotion of people-to-people contact as a must.

The Summiteers expressed happiness about the steady and progressive implementation of SAARC Integrated Programme of Action. In the Bangalore declaration too, they made it clear that they were bent on consolidating and streamlining further the implementation of the IPA. In this context, they emphasised the significance of expanding cooperative activities under SAARC.
The leaders welcomed the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding on the establishment of the SAARC Secretariat by the Council of Ministers and their decision to locate the SAARC Secretariat in Kathmandu and appoint Ambassador Abul Ahsan of Bangladesh as the first Secretary General of SAARC.

Since the development of children was absolutely essential, the leaders attached highest priority to the needs of children in national development planning. They felt that the people of South Asian countries should be made conscious of the rights of children. In this context, they asked for the conclusion and adoption of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child at the earliest. Furthermore, they advocated the realisation of the goals of universal immunisation, universal primary education, maternal and child nutrition, safe drinking water and adequate shelter before 2000 A. D.

They reiterated their profound commitment to the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter and their unequivocal support to the U. N. as the most effective global forum for addressing the issues of peace, disarmament and development and an essential instrument for ushering in an equitable international political and economic order. In order to preserve and strengthen the U. N., they decided to concert their activities in all the multilateral agencies within the U. N. system.19

In Bangalore, once again the leaders expressed their firm devotion to the principles and objectives of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) and

19. During 1985-86 the United Nations faced an unprecedented financial crisis as a result of the accumulated deficit in the U. N. budget due to the refusal of many member countries to pay their respective share of contribution. Although more than half of the 159 countries comprising the U.N. were lagging behind in their allocated contributions, including the Soviet Union, the crisis mainly arose from the U.S. warning to curtail its contributions by five percent to the U.N. as it wanted 'weighted voting' to be incorporated in budgetary matters, i.e., a change from the one-country one-vote system to proportional voting according to the financial contributions. The then U. N. Secretary-General, Javier Perez de Cuellar appealed to the member states to stop withholding their U.N. dues and accused the U.S. of trying to cripple the world organisation by its decision to cut off U.S. contribution from 25 to 20 percent. Thus, the very existence, stability and the smooth working of the U.N. had been greatly jeopardised.
highlighted the significant role played by the movement in strengthening international peace, stability and progress. They offered unconditional support to the decisions adopted at the Harare summit\textsuperscript{20} of the Non-aligned countries and asked for their immediate implementation.

The South Asian leaders were very much aware of the fact that without a peaceful atmosphere, the South Asian countries could not achieve their much desired goals of growth and stability. But the prevailing atmosphere at that time was not at all suitable for the fulfilment of their cherished goals. The realm of international politics was marred by tension due to the superpower rivalry and their unhealthy policies and practices of domination, intervention, use of force, aggression, occupation, economic coercion and interference in the domestic matters of other countries by violating the purposes and principles of the U.N. Charter.\textsuperscript{21}

The leaders expressed their disappointment over the fact that the resolutions adopted by the Reykjavik summit could not be implemented in practice. Nevertheless, they satisfactorily noted that the proposals adopted by the summit were still on the table. They earnestly hoped that the negotiations would be resumed immediately in order to realise the ultimate goal of eliminating nuclear weapons. They also pressed for the early conclusion of the Comprehensive Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT).\textsuperscript{22}

\textsuperscript{20} The eighth Non-Aligned Summit was held at Harare in 1986. The summit adopted a concrete plan to assist the African Frontline States facing hardships due to the policies of South African racist regime.

\textsuperscript{21} Since the Cold War days, the Superpowers had often been interfering in the internal affairs of the Third World countries, applying pressure tactics in order to enlist their support on various international issues and exploiting their economies in various ways. Latin America, Central America and South America were nominally independent – but virtually under the domination of the U.S. economic control. The U.S.A. intervened in the affairs of all the nations to which it had given military and economic assistance. The U.S. armed intervention in Cuba, Guatemala and Dominican Republic are worth mentioning. After the promulgation of the Monroe Doctrine, the U.S.A. annexed Texas in 1845, waged war upon Mexico and forcibly snatched away almost half of its territory. Similarly, the Soviet Union intervened in the affairs of the East European countries so that the Communists could retain control over them.

\textsuperscript{22} The CTBT is one of the most significant arms control measures of the nuclear weapons era. It is also quite elusive. Its central objective is a multi-lateral and effectively verifiable treaty that should lead to nuclear disarmament worldwide. However, it should be noted that disagreements prevail among nations about the CTBT. For example, India has rejected the U.S. – backed CTBT text as being easy on the nuclear-haves but not so on the have-nots.
The Heads of State or Government were very much worried about the prevailing world economic crisis, with particularly harsh and severe consequences for the economic and developmental prospect of the developing countries. They endorsed the declaration of the SAARC Ministerial Meeting on International Economic Issues held in Islamabad in April 1986 and its analysis of the exceptionally adverse external economic environment which posed an obstacle to the growth prospects of the South Asian and other developing countries. They particularly expressed their concern over the negative factors such as depressed commodity prices, rising trend of protectionism, global recession, lower export earnings, net outflow of financial resources from developing countries and an aggravated debt burden. The leaders noted that the rates of growth had fallen much faster than what was previously projected and that the future growth prospects in these countries were not at all bright. Further, they pointed out that the implications of these trends for the development prospects of the developing countries were not at all encouraging.

The Summiteers strongly recommended that “the recent retreat from multilateralism should be reversed through a revival of North-South dialogue”. They also added that such dialogue must be directed to initiating a process of reform of the monetary and financial systems. Moreover, in their opinion, in the quest for revival of global growth, priority must be given to exploiting the huge potential for expanded production, consumption and trade which exists in the developing countries.

The summit leaders were happy with the resolution adopted by the SAARC Ministerial Meeting on International Economic Issues. At this meeting, identification of a number of objectives to be pursued by the SAARC countries was attempted, namely, widening the amount of concessional assistance, doubling the rate of financial flows for the development of developing countries, ameliorating official debts, liberalising trade policies

23. A two-day ministerial conference of the SAARC countries on international economic issues was held in Islamabad on 4 – 5 April 1986. It was inaugurated by Pakistani Prime Minister M.K. Junejo.
especially in textile and agriculture, ensuring stability in the prices of commodities, transferring technology and special treatment for the least developed SAARC countries. The Heads of State suggested effective measures such as regular consultation and cooperation in relevant global economic conferences and institutions for the fulfilment of the above mentioned goals.

The leaders opined that the deliberations made by the New round of Multilateral Trade Negotiations posed a challenge as well as an opportunity to promote their development prospects through the expansion of their exports.

The Summiters were of the view that the Bangalore summit had helped in consolidating the gains of regional cooperative efforts so far launched by SAARC and simultaneously exploring new avenues and possibilities for such cooperation. The Bangalore summit made an important contribution towards strengthening and streamlining the basis for such cooperation.

The Heads of State expressed their willingness to expand and strengthen their cooperative efforts under SAARC. They also expressed their faith in SAARC. In their opinion, SAARC reflected a revival of South Asian consciousness which had inspired the inhabitants of this region over the years. The leaders also exhibited their firm belief that the SAARC would not only exert a favourable impact on bilateral relations between the countries of the region, but also impart a new vigour and stability to these relations.

Welcoming the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding, which led to the establishment of the SAARC Secretariat, they strongly believed that the Secretariat would assist in the coordination of SAARC activities and more fruitful implementation of its programmes and objects.

A Memorandum of Understanding on the setting up of the SAARC Secretariat was signed by the Foreign ministers during the closing session of the Bangalore summit.24

The Memorandum covered issues such as the Secretariat’s functions, service matters, cost etc, which were already covered in the recommendations of the SAARC Standing Committee meeting held in Dhaka on 11 August 1986.

**Achievements of the Bangalore Summit**

The second summit held in Bangalore in November 1986 was another milestone in the history of regional cooperation in South Asia. The Bangalore summit had made an important contribution to strengthen and streamline the institutional basis of SAARC. In other words, it provided a solid foundation for the functioning of SAARC by setting up a Permanent Secretariat in Kathmandu. The seven Foreign Ministers signed a Memorandum of Understanding on 17 November 1986 for the establishment of a Secretariat in Kathmandu with the Secretary General at its head who would be assisted by seven directors, one from each state. The summit also requested the Secretary General to assume his office from January 1987. The signing of the Memorandum of Understanding relating to the setting up of the Permanent Secretariat in Kathmandu induced an optimism that the spirit of sharing and joint striving would soon become a corporate habit with the member countries.

The Bangalore Declaration clearly identified a close connection between SAARC and bilateral relations. Indeed, many South Asian leaders used the informal meetings in SAARC to discuss their bilateral problems. That the modalities of the SAARC summits both at Dhaka and at Bangalore were conducive to informal confabulations touching on bilateral issues can itself be described as a constructive development.

Bangalore declaration voiced the urgency of a peaceful global atmosphere without which all developmental activities, whether they related to children, agriculture or telecommunications, would be devoid of any real substance.

Dhaka summit saw the birth of SAARC. Bangalore reaffirmed the commitment of the SAARC leaders to regional cooperation and gave the organisation a new impetus.\(^7\)

A creative and progressive approach to the future development of SAARC was evident in the deliberations of the second SAARC summit. It was hoped that by putting emphasis upon similarities rather than on differences, on their rich heritage rooted in a common historical background and on the immense possibilities of regional cooperation, SAARC could in the forthcoming years lead to increasing extension and intensification of cooperation beneficial to all the peoples of the region. It was thought that the implementation of the decisions taken at the Bangalore summit would certainly strengthen the initiatives towards this end.

It was evident from the proceedings of the first South Asian summit conference that to enable regional cooperation achieve its desired goals, people-to-people contacts at various levels were urgently required. Keeping this in mind, the leaders who assembled at the second summit, approved of five additional areas for the realisation of this end. The five new areas identified at the second summit in Bangalore were – (a) establishment of regional broadcasting system; (b) a documentation centre; (c) institution of SAARC chairs, fellowships and scholarships; (d) organised volunteers programme and (e) promotion of tourism.\(^8\)

SAARC Audio-visual Exchange Programme (SAVE) had been an effective medium for promoting South Asian consciousness amongst the masses of the region and for establishing people-to-people contact.\(^9\) Regular television and radio programmes had been telecast on the 1st and 15th of each month respectively under SAVE. As a result of these programmes, inhabitants of the

\(^7\) Abul Ahsan, "South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation in Historical Perspective", \textit{SAARC Perspective}, SAARC Secretariat, Kathmandu, vol. 2 No. 4, December 1988, p. 29.


seven SAARC countries became familiar with the cultural traits and heritages of each other. The SAVE quiz programme also evoked keen interest amongst the youth of the region. Previously, the programmes were mostly on social and cultural issues but now-a-days attempts are being made to prepare programmes on developmental themes. SAVE programmes also incorporate co-productions on designated SAARC Year Themes.

Considering the fact that the radio had reached even the remotest corners of the region and television was well within the reach of the majority of the people of the region, the leaders at Bangalore had demonstrated their political farsightedness by formulating SAVE programmes. Save Programme also embarked on bridging the information gap that had so long separated the people from one another.

SAARC Documentation Centre had been set up with the sole aim of providing instant access to reliable and up-to-date findings on technical, scientific and developmental matters. It was set up at the Indian National Scientific Documentation Centre (INSDC) in New Delhi and it was to start functioning by the middle of 1994. The SAARC Documentation System (SDS) is the main instrument of SDC. In order to cope with the requirement of the member-states for ready access to scientific and technical information, SDC would highlight the documents published in the constituent states of SAARC, documents concerning global data bases in the fields of biological, physical, chemical, engineering and life sciences as well as matters relating to development. 30

The SAARC Chairs, Fellowships and Scholarships Scheme (SCFSS) was instituted with the objective of providing increased cross-fertilisation of ideas through greater interaction among students, scholars and academics in the SAARC countries. Later, the scheme was brought under the purview of the

Technical Committee on Education and Culture.

The main aim of the SAARC Youth Volunteers Programme (SYVOP) was to harness the idealism of Youth for regional cooperation programmes by enabling them to work in other countries in the field of agriculture and forestry extension work. SYVOP was brought under the purview of the Technical Committee on Rural Development in 1989.

In order to be acquainted with the life-styles of the neighbouring SAARC countries, people of South Asia should be given facilities for travelling. With this end in view, the leaders initiated the SAARC Scheme for Promotion of Organised Tourism. It was also assumed that the scheme would, in particular act as a step to facilitate development of intra-regional tourism. The Technical Committee was entrusted with the task of taking necessary action to ensure speedy implementation of the scheme.\(^{31}\)

Since children are the future of any country, the Summiteers realised that they should be accorded highest priority in national developmental planning. The leaders also wanted to make it sure that towards the end of the twentieth century, no child should die or be denied development for lack of adequate financial resources in the family. To realise this goal, the leaders suggested an early conclusion and adoption of the UN Convention on the rights of the child and extended their support to the goals of universal primary education, provision of safe drinking water, universal immunisation by the year 1990, material and child nutrition and adequate shelter by the year 2000 AD. A decision was taken by them that the Standing Committee would undertake annual surveys on the situation of the children in South Asia and monitor programmes relating to the development of children.

Apart from the resolution on terrorism, the leaders, without any hesitation, condemned all acts, methods and practices of terrorism as criminal and condemned their harmful impact on political stability, regional and global

\(^{31}\) Ibid, pp. 23 – 26

80
peace, cooperation and socio-economic development.

The Summiteers were contented with the implementation and progress of the Integrated Programme of Action. They appreciated the establishment of the Technical Committee on Women in development, and on the prevention of drug trafficking and drug abuse. The report of the SAARC Ministerial Meeting on International Economic Issues was also discussed at the second summit and the major objectives identified in the report such as enlarged economic assistance, amelioration of official debts, special treatment for least developed countries, trade liberalisation, price stabilisation, transfer of technology etc. were endorsed.

Thus, it cannot be denied that the Bangalore summit had not only unfolded a new horizon for SAARC but had provided India with an unparallel opportunity “to lead SAARC along the path of growing trust and confidence in unity in diversity and closer cooperation in improving the standard of living of the masses of the region”.

Apparently, however, the immediate result of the second summit at Bangalore was not so remarkable. Yet, the very process of reaffirming faith in organised regional cooperation for raising the standard of living of the one-fifth of humanity who inhabit the sub-continent, had a positive value. That the leaders of the seven South Asian countries resolved to cooperate in combating and eliminating terrorism from the entire region was indeed a great achievement.

**Failures of the Bangalore Summit**

It was very unfortunate to note that the second summit of the SAARC countries at Bangalore did not engender any great expectation regarding regional cooperation in the Indian sub-continent. The showy cavalcade and high-pressure publicity campaign could not succeed in establishing the SAARC identity in the South Asian people’s collective consciousness.
Owing to the unavailability of the rhetorics at the Bangalore summit meeting, the Summiteers had merely reiterated their unanimous stand which they had adopted eleven months prior to their first formal summit in Dhaka. The Bangalore declaration, in most part, was nothing more than an exercise in paraphrasing the SAARC Charter itself. In most cases, it was devoid of any practical value.

On the burning topic of terrorism in the region – the leaders condemned it as criminal without identifying the accused and endorsed the U. N. resolution 2625, asking each state to “refrain from organising, instigating, assisting or participating in” such acts against another state, but abstained from making any practical suggestion that could initiate joint effort to banish this scourge totally from the region.

The most important task undertaken by SAARC was the removal of poverty of the inhabitants of South Asia and improving the quality of life of the region. But, the Bangalore declaration did not specify or direct the priority of the projects to be undertaken in order to realise this goal. The most outstanding omission had been the absence of the proposal by India that SAARC concentrated on what is called the core sector of trade, industry, energy, money and finance.

Failure of the second summit can be attributed to the bilateral relations between the two major countries of SAARC, namely, India and Pakistan. Bilateral relations between India and Sri Lanka were also not cordial during the summit. This factor quite naturally hampered the achievements of SAARC at Bangalore.

Although it is a well-known fact that a peaceful environment in the South Asian region depends on the development of harmonious relationship between the two South Asian neighbours, namely, India and Pakistan, yet it was found that during the year 1986, i.e., at the time of the Bangalore SAARC summit,

34. Ibid
the two countries were at logger-heads with each other.\textsuperscript{35} This adversarial ‘Cold-war type’ relationship between India and Pakistan affected the smooth proceedings of the SAARC summits. The Bangalore summit also experienced this general trend. On major global issues like the zone of peace proposal, Kampuchea, Afghanistan, the ethnic turmoil in Sri Lanka, the role of the Superpowers in the region – the two countries were poles apart from each other.\textsuperscript{36}

Indo-Pakistan relations which were never cordial in the aftermath of the partition in 1947 deteriorated in 1986. Although no efforts were spared by the Indian and Pakistani Prime Ministers to improve the relations between the two countries, their endeavours were marred by the happenings at Karachi – the seizure of a Pan American plane by the hijackers, the sheer lack of professionalism on the part of the Pakistani commandos in dealing with a delicate situation, massive loss of Indian lives and the conflicting reports made by the Pakistani Press in this connection.\textsuperscript{37}

A month before the second SAARC summit at Bangalore, India and Pakistan clashed at the United Nations over the issue of Kashmir when a Pakistani delegate brought it up in a debate over people’s right to self-determination. The Indian representative clarified that Kashmir was an integral part of independent and sovereign India and there was no question of self-determination of its people.\textsuperscript{38}

The success of the Bangalore summit was marred by Indo-Pakistan conflict on


\textsuperscript{36} \textit{Patriot}, 30 September 1986.

\textsuperscript{37} The leaders of India and Pakistan tried their best to solve the prevailing bitterness in their relations. This is testified to by the New Delhi meeting between Rajiv Gandhi and Zia-ul-Haq, held on 17 December 1985. During this meeting they took a major confidence building measure by agreeing not to attack each other’s nuclear installations and speed up discussions on a comprehensive peace treaty. Here, the question of terrorism in Punjab had been discussed at length and General Zia had assured Rajiv Gandhi that Pakistan was totally against terrorism of any kind. On the question of clashes in the Siachen glacier, Gandhi and General Zia had agreed that Indian and Pakistani Defence Secretaries would meet and find a way of avoiding these conflicts. Regarding Kashmir, General Zia said that the issue would be solved in the spirit and letter of Shimla agreement at an appropriate time.

\textsuperscript{38} \textit{The Times of India}, 12 October 1986
various issues. One of the main irritants between the two countries was the nuclear issue and the issues pertaining to the regulation of armaments and mutual reduction of defence equipments. India’s acquisition of nuclear capability leading to its nuclear explosion at Pokhran in 1974 constituted a potential source of tension between India and Pakistan, since India’s nuclear explosion at Pokhran\(^{39}\) inevitably led to an arms race between the two countries with Pakistan trying hard to match India by manufacturing a nuclear bomb. In this context, it should be mentioned that in early November 1986, Pakistan’s accumulation of sophisticated weapons on a massive scale, had clouded the atmosphere prevailing in the sub-continent.\(^{40}\) Though Pakistan tried to give this impression that the armaments acquired by Pakistan from the United States would be deployed by it on the Afghan front, India could not reconcile itself to such argument. India’s suspicion about Pakistan’s motives arose out of the fact that on numerous occasions in the past, Pakistan had received arms intended to be used elsewhere but they had been used against India.

On the eve of the second summit in Bangalore, it became evident that Pakistan had mastered the technology of making a nuclear bomb. That Pakistan possessed 'both the designs and materials for making nuclear weapons' at a politically relevant moment was no longer a secret. Information was also received by the Indian mediamen that the gas centrifuge uranium enrichment plant at Kahuta near Islamabad had the ability to produce U-235 of requisite purity of over ninety percent for being used in the production of nuclear

---

39. In 1974, India exploded its nuclear weapons at Pokhran in Rajasthan. India’s detonation of nuclear device took the West by surprise as India’s foreign policy is usually marked by an orientation towards peace and cooperation with other countries. Indira Gandhi announced that this explosion of India was essentially a peaceful nuclear explosion and that India sought to utilise the development of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes and to raise the level of economic development. Pokhran explosion created a consternation in the leadership of Pakistan and this provoked Pakistan to enter into an arms race with India. So the effects of Pokhran were two - 1) the beginning of Indo-Pakistani arms race and 2) the urge among the Pakistani leaders to manufacture a nuclear bomb to match India.

India also expressed anxiety over the issue of Pakistan acquiring Airborne Early Warning and Control System Aircraft (AWACS)\(^{41}\) from the USA. Talking to the mediamen on the eve of the second summit, Foreign Secretary of Pakistan, Abdus Sattar, stated that regarding AWACS, India’s concern was baseless. He also made it clear that Pakistan had not placed any order for acquisition of electronic surveillance aircrafts. He explicitly denied the allegation that Pakistan was manufacturing weapon-grade uranium at its nuclear plants. He stated that what Pakistan was actually doing was ‘development of low-level fuel-grade enriched uranium to develop the capacity of production of reactor fuel’.\(^{42}\) He also declared that Pakistan was ready to accept any bilateral, regional or global inspection of its nuclear plants on a non-discriminatory ground to prove the peaceful intentions behind its nuclear programme. The then Prime Minister of India, Rajiv Gandhi, outrightly rejected the suggestion made by Abdus Sattar for joint inspection to verify the allegations of terrorists’ training centres in Pakistan.\(^{43}\)

However, it should be stated here that despite mutual bickerings during this period, there had been no troop movements on the Indian side of the border with Pakistan and uptill early November 1986, no prior notification of troop movement by India had been received by the Pakistani Press from New Delhi. It was learnt that the Indian Government had assured Pakistan that if there was any troop movement, it would immediately inform the latter. This assurance

---

41. AWACS is considered to be the most sophisticated airborne surveillance system in the world. It is a command and a communication platform built inside the airframe of a Boeing 707. It operates at the height of 29,000 feet and has a range of nearly 470 kilometers. It can detect, track and identify all aircrafts flying within that range. The supply of AWACS to Pakistan by the U.S. in early eighties was designed mainly to counter any possible infiltration of Soviet army in to Pakistan. But this constituted a severe threat to India’s security interests as Moscow was undergoing a crisis of leadership coupled with the dismal economic condition of the country and also due to the fact that Moscow was now not as committed as it had been during the Brezhnev era to act in defending India’s interests. So, the US supply of AWACS to Pakistan encouraged India to diversify the sources of its arms acquisition from external countries and sought to rely on France, Britain and Germany for acquiring modern weapons.


43 *Patriot*, 18 November 1986.
had helped to remove Pakistan apprehension regarding troop movement to a certain extent.44

At the end of the two-day summit at Bangalore, the late Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi, had to answer various types of questions, most of which pertained to the strained relations between India and Pakistan. Rajiv Gandhi regretted that the process of normalisation, which started at the initiative of President Zia-ul-Haq could not proceed uninterrupted at a fast speed as was earlier anticipated because of a number of problems between India and Pakistan. The Indian Prime minister was extremely disappointed by General Zia’s inability to keep even half of the promises he had made during their meeting in New Delhi eleven months ago.45

Strained Indo-Sri Lanka relations had also affected the smooth proceedings of SAARC summits. The Bangalore summit was not an exception to this general trend. Relations between India and Sri Lanka had never been very cordial since the days of liberation. A host of important factors were responsible for a set-back in India-Sri Lanka relations. Of them, the problem of statelessness of the Indian Tamils in Sri Lanka and the resultant ethnic turmoil was one of the major irritants in Indo-Sri Lanka relations.

Behind the pomp and grandeur of banquet diplomacy and cordial talks at Bangalore, however, things were not so simple as they were made out to be. Differences of opinion on the issue of terrorism and the scope for expansion of SAARC programmes between India and its neighbours were clearly visible.46

While India was trying to divert the threat of terrorism, Sri Lanka wanted to proclaim a declaration on the topic. Due to India’s unwillingness, Sri Lanka was unable to make a declaration on the subject. Because, one of the principles of SAARC meeting is that all the decisions must be unanimous. Likewise, India’s insistence on extending SAARC programmes to trade, industry, energy, money and finance had not been approved by other member

44. See The Hindustan Times, 15 November 1986.
45. Ibid, 8 November 1986
46. The Statesman, 16 November 1986
countries.

The Ministerial level talks between India and Sri Lanka did not make much headway. The Indian Foreign Minister, N. D. Tiwari, asked his Sri Lankan counterpart to take necessary steps to restore peace in the island state and to ensure that peace efforts were not thwarted by violence on innocent civilians. In response to this request, the Sri Lankan Foreign Minister described the atrocities unleashed by Tamil militants on innocent civilians, particularly the Sinhalese.

During the two-day summit, Rajiv Gandhi and the Sri Lankan President J. R. Jayewardene, had extensive talks on the island's ethnic problem. Jayewardene was of the view that there was no substitute to the ongoing peace talks and expressed his country's faith in India as a mediator. On the burning question of linking the Northern and Eastern provinces to form a single Tamil linguistic state to which power could be devolved, Jayewardene pointed out the difficulties involved as the territory was not contiguous to the large number of Sinhalese and Muslim settlements in Trincomalee district wedged between the predominantly Tamil districts of Mullaitivu and Batticaloa, and the Amparai district where the Tamils were in the minority.

Indian Foreign Minister, N.D. Tiwari raised the issue of fresh bouts of fighting in the northern parts of the Jaffna peninsula taking a heavy toll of civilian lives and put emphasis on the cessation of hostilities to restore peace in the region.

A notice was given by some local Tamil organisations to hold a black flag demonstration in front of the Vidhan Saudha, venue of the summit conference, when President Jayewardene would be arriving there. India was vehemently criticised by the Sri Lankan Government for this incident.

47. Ibid
48. Ibid
49. Ibid
Concluding Observations

As a consequence of the serious ethnic confrontation in Sri Lanka, the political environment of South Asia was very tensed at the time of the second SAARC summit in Bangalore. Relations between Pakistan and India were also not friendly. It had been alleged by the Indian Government that Pakistan was assisting the Sikh terrorists. Moreover, the regional political scene was further vitiated by the nuclear power issue. Being informed by the mediamen that Pakistan had been steadily increasing its nuclear stockpiles with U.S. assistance and had successfully launched a nuclear device, India became apprehensive of Pakistani intentions and in turn, also started manufacturing nuclear arms with assistance from the Soviet Union.⁵⁰

Despite such a turbulent political atmosphere prevailing in South Asia, the proceedings of the Bangalore summit passed off peacefully. The second SAARC summit was a remarkable event in the onward journey of SAARC for the adoption of two significant documents, viz., the Bangalore declaration and a Memorandum of Understanding for the establishment of the SAARC Secretariat in Kathmandu.

The Bangalore summit made a remarkable contribution to strengthen and streamline the institutional basis of SAARC. The seven Foreign Ministers signed a Memorandum of Understanding on 17 November 1986, dealing with the setting up of a SAARC Secretariat in Kathmandu headed by a Secretary-General. Indeed, it was aptly commented by many scholars that the Bangalore summit provided a solid foundation to SAARC by establishing a Permanent Secretariat in Kathmandu.

A careful analysis of the deliberations of the second SAARC summit revealed a creative and progressive looking approach to the future development of SAARC. The South Asian leaders tried to prove the fact that by shifting the emphasis from differences to similarities, from past anomalies to their rich heritage, rooted in a common historical background, and to the immense

⁵⁰. Shamsul Haq, n.29, p. 15
possibilities of regional cooperation in various fields, SAARC could in the future bring about extension and intensification of cooperative activities extremely beneficial to all the people of the South Asian region. The Bangalore summit also identified five new areas for expanding and strengthening the cooperative programmes under SAARC.

The second SAARC summit, however, could not achieve the desired success due to the strained bilateral relations amongst the South Asian neighbours, particularly between India and Pakistan and India and Sri Lanka. For instance, on the controversial issue of terrorism – the leaders were unable to achieve much since they differed among themselves on an unanimous definition of terrorism.

The utmost significance that SAARC attached to the task of uplifting material conditions of the people, more specifically removing poverty and thereby improving the standard of living of the people, remained a distant dream since the Bangalore declaration did not specify the projects to be undertaken on a priority basis in order to realise the target.51 Moreover, a detailed analysis of the Bangalore declaration manifested that the leaders had merely reiterated the points which they had unanimously adopted at Dhaka.

Nevertheless, despite certain loopholes, it must be admitted that the Bangalore summit had opened up a new horizon for SAARC. Furthermore, it provided India with a novel opportunity to lead SAARC amidst growing trust and confidence in raising the quality of life of all the people of the region.

51. See Patriot, 19 November 1986.