



Minister Rukman Senanayake in conversation with Dr. Kalus Toepfer and Surendra Shrestha

UNEP and SACEP agree for mutual cooperation

By Gagani Weerakoon

The United Nations Environmental Programme (UNEP) and the South Asia Co-operative Environmental Programme (SACEP) entered into a landmark agreement for mutual cooperation at the recently concluded 22nd governing council meeting held in Nairobi, Kenya.

"Minister of Environment and Natural Resources Rukman Senanayake being the current chairman of SACEP governing council, led the South Asian Environment Ministers Delegation to a meeting with UNEP executive director Kalus Toepfer" an Environment and Natural Resources Ministry spokesman said.

Minister of Environment and Forest, Bangladesh Jafrul Islam Chowdury, Minister of Environment, Bhu-

tan Dasho Nadu Rinchen, Minister of Population and Environment, Nepal Kamal Prasad Chaulagain, Minister of State for Environmental, Pakistan and Secretary of the Ministry of Environmental and Forest, India K.C. Misra were other South Asian Ministers attended the UNEP Governing Council.

UNEP Executive Director, Kalus Toepfer and SACEP Director General Mahboob Elahi signed the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) and associate with this MoU, Surendra Shrestha was appointed as the UNEP Regional Director for Asia and the Pacific.

UNEP would provide assistance towards the capacity building activities, implementation of the multilateral environmental agreements through re-

gional cooperation and promoting the public awareness through the MoU. UNEP would also assist to achieve a strategy plan for the implementation of the secretariat's activities for endorsement by the regional governments.

SACEP was established to promote regional cooperation and collaboration to address the pressing environmental issues. Environmental Law, Education Training, Sustainable Development through the environment window, transboundary issues under the Air Pollution Declaration achieved in Male (1998), Global Programme of Action to address the Marine Pollution through the Land Based Activities and Development of Regional Oil Spill Contingency Plan under the South Asian Seas Programme.