Two weeks from now, members of the south Asian diaspora will gather in Singapore to listen to eminent speakers talk about a resurgent region and the opportunities that abound there.

They will come together as part of the South Asian Diaspora Convention (SADC) organised by the Institute of South Asian Studies (ISAS). Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong will deliver the opening address of the convention on July 21 and among the highlights of the two-day programme will be a dialogue with Mr Lee Kuan Yew.

Chairman of ISAS and chairman of the SADC organising committee Gopinath Pillai said that South Asia’s economic upsurge in recent years makes it an exciting economic prospect.

“The theme of the convention, Linking The South Asian Diaspora, highlights the potential importance of the diaspora in this enterprise,” he said.

Added former finance minister of Pakistan and former vice-president of World Bank Shahid Javed Burki: “The 50 million strong South Asian diaspora scattered over different continents can help South Asian economies overcome burdens of history and integrate closely. Most of the diaspora communities work well with each other outside boundaries of their homelands. They can employ those experiences to promote regional development in South Asia.” Mr Burki is one of the speakers.

The convention will highlight South Asia’s future economic prospects, the role of the diaspora in expanding the region’s business links within Asia and how Singapore can be a springboard in bonding South Asia with South-east and East Asia.

Speakers at the convention include former US deputy secretary of state Richard Armitage, former South Korean prime minister Han Seung Soo, DBS chief executive Piyush Gupta, Singapore Management University chairman Ho Kwon Ping and former chief mentor of the Confederation of Indian Industry Tarun Das.

The convention will be held at Resorts World Sentosa.