CHAPTER - 6

EFFORTS TO REDUCE POLITICAL TENSION IN SOUTH ASIA

6.1 INTRODUCTION

Object of this chapter is to find out those efforts which have been made to reduce tension in the South Asia.

It would try to find out efforts made at any level. Bilateral efforts as well as multilateral efforts would be studied.

An attempt would be made to find out efforts made at international level. Role of United Nations Organisations and World Bank in this matter would be studied properly.

South Asian countries have attempted to club together in a regional institution which was given a concrete shape in 1985.

In this respect origin, functioning, achievements as well as limitations of South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation need to be investigated.

Chapter would attempt to know current status of SAPTA and SAFTA. It would also try to know the reasons which have hampered true realisation of SAPTA and SAFTA in the region and up to which extent they could be a medium for the reduction of political tension in the region.

Non Governmental efforts as track II and track III diplomacy is also active in helping to reduce the political tension in the region. In this respect role of these will also be studied.
6.2 **BILATERAL**

South Asian states have several evidences of bilateral efforts which have attempted to reduce tension in the region.

Interaction at President, Prime Minister and Foreign Minister and other political level have been a routine practises. These interactions are an effort to defuse the tension in the region.

Though this interaction is minimal between India and Pakistan but still it has played its positive role in lowering the tension between the member states.

Bilateral efforts have sometimes presented a successful framework for the resolution of political problems between the states. Shimla agreement can be referred in this respect which is reproduced here briefly.

(i) "That the principles and purposes of the charter of the United Nations shall form the basis of the relations between the two countries."
(ii) That the peaceful means through bilateral negotiations or by any other peaceful means mutually agreed upon by them would be used.

(iii) A commitment by both the countries (India and Pakistan) to peaceful coexistence, respect for each other's territorial integrity and sovereignty and non interference in each other's internal affairs.

(iv) That they shall always respect each other's national unity, territorial integrity, political independence and sovereign equality.\(^1\)

It was an effort to reduce political tension in the region by two major states, India and Pakistan. Though this bilateral conflict resolution mechanism could not endure with the time but it brought in to focus potential of bilateral approach to the conflict resolution.

This spirit was repeated by India with Pakistan by Lahore bus
Yatra, Lahore declaration can be stated as extension of the Shimla Agreement.

Though it did not succeed due to acute political differences between both countries. Agra summit was also a bilateral effort to resolve the disputes as PM Atal Behari Vajpayee stated that "besides Musharraf's visit it should be used to seek avenues for durable peace and cooperative friendship with Pakistan." Thus interaction at bilateral level was emphasized, it was an effort used to show that the broad based framework of dialogue could be developed," so that progress could be made on all outstanding bilateral issues."

Thus bilateral interaction has been attempted to resolve bilateral disputes between the South Asia's member state, though it may not have succeeded to resolve major outstanding disputes between the two countries but it has definitely provided a framework for conflict resolution.
Bilateral efforts have been successful to resolve several contentious issues between India and other member state, as ‘Chakma problem’ between India and Bangladesh was resolved by bilateral negotiations, in the same way, bilateral mechanisms has been applied to resolve question of Tamil citizenship issue between India and Srilanka.
Due to conflict prone nature of South Asian region since the partition of India and Pakistan. Several international efforts have been attempted to resolve the bilateral problems in the regions. As clear from outset, main political tensions have existed between India and Pakistan, therefore main focus of international mediation has been at Indo-Pak relation pattern.

International efforts to reduce political tension can be classified in two level, first at global level, second at country level. At institutional level, role of United Nations Organisations & World Bank is noteworthy.

India decided to lodge a complaint in security council. When tribal invasion took place in Kashmirrah in October, 1947 under article 35 on 1st January 1948 on the ground that it was supported by Pakistan, as invaders were allowed transit across Pakistan territory, used Pakistan as a bank of operations and obtained material help as equipment supplies and physical help as training, guidance from Pakistan.

Security Council decided to send a mission UNCIP (The United Nation Commissions for India and Pakistan) which was later replaced
by the United Nations representative General McNaughton, United Nations kept a close watch on the developments in Kashmir and according to circumstantial needs, representatives were replaced. An eminent Australian jurist Dixon followed General McNaughton who failed in his efforts.

Commonwealth Prime Minister also proposed an alternative plan “that the troops of Pakistan and India in Kashmir should be replaced by troops from New Zealand and Australia, or by troops raised locally by Plebisite administrator.”

Though these proposals and efforts of UNO proved unsuccessful as they were prejudicial to India’s national interest, they more or less took Pakistani interest more into account and initially opinion gained ground “that imposition by the security council of any solution was impossible, the parties had to tackle the issue by direct negotiations.”

UNO efforts in reducing extent of Kashmir dispute were not much
successful but disputes occurring in the utilization of the waters of India and its tributaries by India and Pakistan was ultimately resolved through medication by the World Bank. World Bank proposed the draft of a treaty which was signed by Pt. Nehru and Ayub Khan on 19th September 1960, the most noteworthy feature of this resolution was that the on persuasion of world Bank.

"The Governments of Australia, Canada, West Germany, New Zealand, the United Kingdom and the United States." gave money for construction of storage dams on western rivers.

International level efforts have remained partially successful in defusing the political tension in the region, in view of this the individual members also attempted to defuse the tension as then U.S.S.R. and U.S.A. tried to help in resolving certain problems in the region.

During the 1965 Indo-Pak war, a Security Council resolution called for a cease fire on Sep 20, 1965. Subsequently U.S.S.R. organised a summit from January 3rd to 10th, 1966 in order to formalise peace between India and Pakistan. Tashkant agreement was signed by P M
Shashtri and President Ayub in presence of Soviet Prime Minister on Jan 10th, 1966. In the words of P.M. Shashtri, "It was a unique experiment in international diplomacy."

Though Tashkant experiment could not maintain its vigour due to hard political realities between India and Pakistan but it suggested a way 'that just and honest' approach from any quarter can be helpful in resolving the disputes between the nations.

After emergence of South Asia as a nuclear flash point, U.S.A. has influenced the warring parties to come to the resolution to their problems. Its pressure on Pakistan to terminate Kargil misadventure and to impress upon India and Pakistan to start negotiations which frutified in the form of Agra Summit. These steps by big powers, through marginally successful, efforted to reduce political tension in the region.

In this respect role of Norway can not be less emphasised which has attempted to resolve intrastate ethnic conflicy in Sri Lanka, solution of which was elusive till now.
6.4 **SAARC**

6.4.1 **GENESIS**

SAARC was envisaged as response to changed economic global situation as North South dialogue was almost broken in 1980’s with its negative impact upon South Asian economics. Moreover fall of the Shah in Iran, Iran-Iraq and Soviet intervention in Afganistan in 1979 compelled South Asian countries to think about new ways and means for the survival of their economics and to resolve dilemma of their security concerns in global prespectives. Although some scholars view, “action of Ziaur Rehman at the instance of USA and SAARC was an attempt by Rehman to leagalise its military government by getting acceptability of the people.” What so ever be the reason but it was an original effort of Mr. Rahman in the region.

In such background and after appreciating the realites of the region, late President of Bagladesh Ziaur Rahman took an initiatives in May 1980 to launch a regional organisation in the region with an
aim. "At promoting the welfare of its people, improving their collective self reliance."\(^2\)

The first most noteworthy step in the genesis of SAARC was the meeting of the foreign secretaries of the seven countries in Colombo in early 1981. On 1-2 August 1983, foreign ministers of seven countries assembled in New Delhi. Where declaration on South Asian Regional Cooperation (SARC) was adopted which help to launch the (IPA) i.e. Integrated Programme of Action

The Technical Committee worked actively to produce report on different topics at Agriculture, Rural development, Health and Population, Telecommunications, Scientific and Technological cooperation, Transport, Postal services, Meteorology, Sports, Arts and culture, Their reports prepared a base on which cooperation was launched, it was now clear that member countries would be highly benefited if the interaction takes place in the demarcated area of the operation.
This realisation dawned upon the member states of the South Asian region and "on 8th December 1985, SAARC was born in Dhaka with the signing of the Charter of the association of the Head of the States or Government of member states during their first summit".3

Thus the regional group very first time came in to existence in South Asia. Origin of SAARC is unique in itself as it does not follow any set pattern of emergence of regional group. It is clear and distract from EEC, COMECON, ASEAN, GCC, as these organisation had critical input from the great powers, i.e. they were helped by great powers directly or indirectly, either at the initial or at later stage.

Genesis of SAARC suggest that it is different from Arab League or Organisation of African Unity (OAU) as these organisation were symbol of strong ideological stimuli of expressing their regional identity in response to the strong and tough international challenges. Cause of genesis of SAARC is different from such organisations but its
genesis proved that hard political realities realizing the requirement of fulfillment of economic needs as well. SAARC is no doubt have attempted to mitigate the miseries of its people. Genesis of SAARC exhibited sanity of the ruling elite of the region and, "With the creation of SAARC, South Asia has emerged as a regional entity for the first time in international political systems"
6.4.2 OBJECTIVES

SAARC has sufficient potential to reduce political tension in the region by elevating the economic cooperation among the member countries. It aims to develop mutual confidence and cooperation among the member countries. It wants to integrate with global political dynamics by interacting with other regional organisations. Its main objectives can be elucidated in the following manner.

* "To promote the welfare of the South Asia and to improve their quality of life,

* To accelerate economic growth, social progress and cultural development in the region and to provide all individuals the opportunity to live in dignity and to realise their full potentials,

* To promote active collaboration and mutual assistance in the economic, social, cultural, technical and scientific fields,

* To strengthen cooperation with other developing countries,

* To strengthen cooperation among themselves in international forums on matters of common interests, and

* To cooperate with international and regional organisations with similar aims and purposes."
6.4.3 ATTAINMENTS

Several years have passed since the first meeting of SAARC in Dhaka. It is no less time to any regional organization to consolidate itself but due to political disequilibrium among the member states SAARC has not achieved desired results.

Its limitations are still existing but in certain areas it has been successful in projecting itself.

One of the earliest areas of SAARC cooperation is in the sphere of integrated programme of activities (IPA), it includes 12 affected areas of cooperation, each being covered by a designated technical committee, as agriculture, communications, education, culture and sports, environment and meteorology, health and population activities, prevention of drug trafficking and drug abuse, rural development, service and technology, tourism, transport, women development etc.

These technical committees have helped to foster cooperation among the member countries.

As for in the sphere of agriculture
The 12 agreed areas of crops based disciplines have been finalized for networking which includes rice, wheat, horticulture, livestock etc.

But the most important achievements of SAARC has been in the economic sphere where SAPTA and SAFTA has been envisaged. Through progress in their attainment remained slow but it is credit of SAARC that in such tense political environment, it has created a framework for economic cooperation in the region. It is true that “operationalisation of SAPTA will herald the beginning of a new and significant process of regional cooperation and would lead strength to SAARC as an institution for promoting the welfare of the peoples of South Asia.”

Its major achievements can be classified in the following manner.

POVERTY ERADICATION

1991 : Sixth SAARC summit (COLOMBO) decided to establish an independent South Asian
Commission on poverty alleviation

(ISACPA)

1993: Seventh SAARC Summit (Dhaka) adopted consensus on poverty eradication

PROMOTING PEOPLE TO PEOPLE CONTACT

1986: Second SAARC Summit (Banglore) laid special emphasis on promoting people-to-people contact in the region and approved the following five initiatives

1. SAARC audio-visual exchange (SAVE) programme
2. SAARC documentation centre (SDC)
3. SAARC scheme for promotion of organizing tourism.
4. SAARC chairs, fellowship and scholarship scheme.
5. SAARC youth volunteers programme (SYVOP)
OTHER INITIATIVES INCLUDE

1. SAARC visa exemption scheme (initiated in 1988)

2. SAARC Asian festivals (9-24 October 1999, India)

3. Role of Non Governmental Organizations (NGOs)

4. Association of SAARC speakers and parliamentarians.

5. SAARC Chamber of Commerce and Industries (SCCI)

6. SAARC Law

The easing of travel and business restrictions within the SAARC region is a visible and enduring achievement of SAARC. This has directly and indirectly resulted in increased economic and social benefits to people in all member countries.

SAARC REGIONAL INSTITUTIONS

1. SAARC agriculture information centre (SIAC), Dhaka/Bangladesh.
2. SAARC tuberculosis centre (STC), Baktapur/ Nepal.

3. SAARC meterological research centre (SMRC), Dhaka/ Bangladesh.

4. SAARC documentation centre (SDC), New Delhi/ India.

**REGIONAL CONVENTIONS/ AGREEMENTS**

1. Agreement on establishing the SAARC food security reserve (SFSR) - third SAARC summit (Kathmandu, 1987).

2. SAARC regional convention on supression of terrorism- third SAARC summit (Kathmandu, 1987).


4. Agreement on SAARC preferential trading arrangement (SAPTA) seventh SAARC summit (Dhaka, 1993) has been ratified by all member states.
SAARC FUNDS

1. SAARC fund for regional projects (SFRP) established in 1991.

2. SAARC- Japan special fund established on 27 September 1993, Kathmandu.

3. South Asian development fund (SADF) approved by the fifteenth session of the council of ministers (New Delhi, 1995).”

Although these achievements of SAARC may not appear to be very influential but they have definitely attempted to reduce political tension in South Asia. We can say that it is just a beginning.
SARRC countries are least developed countries with per capita GNP ranging between 150 to 500 $, while the world per capita GNP for the same year i.e. 1987 stood at 3010 $ for developed country. Their share in world trade is quite as small accounting for only about 0.6 percent of world exports and only 1.3 percent of global imports. In such background they realized the fact that there exist "immense opportunities for expansion of trade based on known complementarities in structure of production and demand pattern, for co-operation in up gradation of technology and harmonization of investment plans among developing countries," SAARCC countries decided to "examine the Srilankan proposal to establish a SAARCC preferential Trade Aggrement [SAPTA] by" during sixth SAARCC Summit, Colombo 1991.

Subsequently during Seventh SAARCC Summit in Dhaka "Heads of State of Government expressed their deep satisfaction over the signing of the framework agreement."

Thus SAPTA came in to existance, which provided a basis for step by step liberalization of trade with in the region. It also called for periodic round of trade discussion for exchange of trade concessions.
on tariff and related matters, it had to be governed by certain principles as:

* SAPTA shall be based on the principles of overall reciprocity and mutuality of advantages in such a way as to benefit equitably all contracting states, taking into account their respective levels of economic and industrial development, the pattern of their external trade, trade tariff policies and system.

* SAPTA shall be negotiated step by step and improved and extended in successive stages with periodic reviews.

* SAPTA shall recognize the special needs of the Least Developed Countries (LDCs) and provide the concrete preferential measures in their favour,

* SAPTA shall include all commodities in their raw, semiprocessed and processed forms.

During Seventh Summit, each SAARC country gave preferential tariff to other member countries by reducing tariffs on specific commodities.

**SAPTA (I) CONSOLIDATED NATIONAL SCHEDULE OF CONCESSIONS**
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Total Commodities offered for Concession</th>
<th>Commodities for Non-LDCs</th>
<th>Commodities for LDCs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>India</td>
<td>106</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bangladesh</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sri Lanka</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pakistan</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nepal</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bhutan</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>04</td>
<td>07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maldives</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>226</strong></td>
<td><strong>126</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The consolidated schedules under SAPTA were submitted in March 1997, it listed all important Non-Tariff Barriers (NTB) with reference to quantitative restrictions due to implementations of SAPTA II trade among the SAARC nations increased from $1937 million in 1997-1998 to $2567 million in 1998-1999. The third meeting of the inter-governmental group on trade liberalization was organized in Kathmandu in November 1998. During the meet India again gave the maximum number of items (1917) for preferential access. During SAPTA III further non-tariff barriers were relaxed.

But political adverse relationships particularly between India and Pakistan have hampered genuine progress of SAPTA, as both are major resourceful countries, able to direct trade, commerce in the region. In reality "SAPTA has been in effective in boosting regional
trade. Firstly, SAPTA is based on a commodity by Commodity approach. Though these are indication towards sectoral approach. But the biggest shortcomings of both of these is that they have not ensured adequate trade coverage. "This raises strong doubts about the progress in trade liberalization in the SARRC region." 

It is true that SAPTA is yet to go a long way because, as of 2002, "Only a total 5553 tariff lines at H 56 digit levels have been brought under preferential regime if concessions given by all member states are taken into consideration." This is an indication that still the large number of tariff lines are to be brought under the preferential regime by all member states as a first necessary step for realising a true free trade area. Realisation of SAPTA appears difficult due to fact that "there is vast difference in the number of items notified by different member countries to be covered for preferential trading, second most of items of in the list do not have a demand in the potential importing countries of the, region but most important is demand by Pakistan and Bangladesh that political disputes between India and these two countries must be resolved before any meaningful economic cooperation can take place."
The Heads of State or Government during Ninth SAARC Summit, Male in 1997 “recognized the importance of achieving a free trade area by the year 2001. They agreed that the third round (of SAPTA) should deepen tariff concessions along with the removal of non-tariff barriers and structural impediments in order to move speedily towards the goal of SAFTA.” Subsequently a Group of Eminent Persons (GEP) was constituted which submitted its report in 1999, specifying Implementation of South Asian Free Trade Area (SAFTA), then South Asian Custom Union (SACU) and finally South Asian Economic Union (SAEU) by the year 2020. The SAFTA had to be created through comprehensive inter-governmental treaty in conformity with article xxiv of the WTO. According to the GEP report, Its implementation should be initiated in the beginning of the year 2000 to be completed by 2020 in the case least developed member states, and by 2008 in case of other member states.” SAFTA was formally operationalised in 2006.

The main benefit of SAFTA would be to eliminate both tariff and non-tariff barriers in the region, SAFTA would remove non-tariff barriers as quantitative restrictions, which is a stumbling block to the
flow of trade through formal legal channel. The main advantage of SAFTA would be in trade increase due to removal of tariff barrier to zero and shift towards official trade from unofficial trade.

**TABLE 1 : INDIA’S OFFICIAL TRADE WITH SOUTH ASIA:**

($ million)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Export (X)</th>
<th>Import (M)</th>
<th>Trade Balance (X-M)</th>
<th>Total Trade (X+M)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bangladesh</td>
<td>349.1</td>
<td>7.8</td>
<td>341.3</td>
<td>356.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sri Lanka</td>
<td>174.5</td>
<td>11.5</td>
<td>163.0</td>
<td>186.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pakistan</td>
<td>157.2</td>
<td>36.1</td>
<td>121.1</td>
<td>193.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nepal</td>
<td>47.7</td>
<td>14.9</td>
<td>32.8</td>
<td>66.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bhutan</td>
<td>7.0</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>10.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


**TABLE 2 : INDIA’S UNOFFICIAL TRADE WITH SOUTH ASIA:**

($ million)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Export (X)</th>
<th>Import (M)</th>
<th>Trade Balance (X-M)</th>
<th>Total Trade (X+M)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bangladesh</td>
<td>299.0</td>
<td>14.0</td>
<td>285.0</td>
<td>313.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sri Lanka</td>
<td>142.8</td>
<td>121.0</td>
<td>21.8</td>
<td>263.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pakistan</td>
<td>n.a</td>
<td>n.a</td>
<td>positive</td>
<td>2000.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nepal</td>
<td>n.a</td>
<td>n.a</td>
<td>negative</td>
<td>626.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bhutan</td>
<td>31.3</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>30.1</td>
<td>32.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A comparative analysis of above tables suggest that much trade is taking place unofficially, SAFTA may help to cause a shift in it.

But reality stands somewhere else, so for SAPTA has not been successful completely. Political disputes among the member states have forced them not to club as a group but at bilateral level as India have, "Proceeded to sign bilateral trading arrangements. Bhutan and Nepal are already having zero Tariff barriers with India. While India and Sri Lanka have recently concluded Free trade across."5 Bangladesh is too following the same path.

Realisation of SAFTA was delayed till 2005 due to political economic impediments. Still it is a major brake through that such hard political bitterness in the region has not been successful in preventing emergence concept of SAPTA and SAFTA. Now they must accept in totality that "economic cooperation leads to sinking the political differences. "6 no doubt it is a time tested experience in international politics.
6.7 NON-GOVERNMENTAL INITIATIVE

Non-governmental organisations are sincere efforts by the people of South Asian region who are genuinely concerned about the detoriating political environment of the region. They concentrate their individual efforts, in most cases without Government control and decision, and have contributed significantly in eliminating and arresting the minor causes of conflict by bringing and unofficial, people's perception about the existing problems.

SAARC since inception had recognized the importance of such bodies. It clearly, "emphasized the need for strengthening intergovernmental efforts with increased people to people contact through greater participation of NGOs, including professional bodies in the private sector, to promote socio-economic and cultural development in South Asia."¹

SAARC has formulated guidelines and procedures for granting Regional Apex bodies recognition, it has been in process to grant recognition bodies of professionals as architects, accountants, university, women etc.
The SAARC has recognised the importance of such non-governmental bodies to help in the resolution of bilateral problems in the region, thus they are working as appendage of track-II diplomacy.

In fact South Asian leadership had rightly identified potential of NGO since starting therefore, "they decided to take steps to create awareness and public opinion in the region." by increasing people-to-people at various levels.

Thus a beginning of a number of initiatives aimed at exchanges between countries through NGO started. Such NGOs included academics, retired Government officials, Journalist, lawyers, women and environmental activist and even common concerned people as their member who have had sole objective of reducing tension in more or less manner, in general or specific field of their choice. As 'International Center for Peace Initiative' is aimed to promote peace and peace-making activities in the region. 'Independent Group in South Asian Cooperation' is a different type of NGO, which is related to Track II diplomacy, in which participants engage in a dialogue and arrive at solutions. Their primary focus is deliberation not research. Their report was acclaimed in April 1993 at the Heads of Government Summit at Dhaka.
In the same manner, India Pakistan Forum for Peace and Democracy annually organises a programme, under which in a year a hundred Pakistanis visit one of the city in India and live with Indian families. These meetings alternate in India and Pakistan Center for Policy Research, New Delhi and ‘the coalition for Action for South Asia Cooperation’ are other NGOs wielding considerable influence in the region.

Certain NGOs of India, Pakistan and Bangladesh are concentrated to strategic studies and analysis. Their coordination is maintained by ‘The Regional Center for Strategic Studies.’ It has been discovered that there is a greater need of such mechanisms so that instead of replication of projects, groups can be filled which may help in improving functioning of NGO.

These NGO have foreign linkage as well, German, Japanese and American foundations have played a catalytic role in organising cultural exchanges, Youth programmes and conventions of grass-root level public interest groups.
Certain NGOs has emerged out from the SAARC itself, as South Asian Association for Speakers and Parliamentarians and SAARC law (an association of lawyers).

Contribution of NGOs cannot be qualified. But it is true that they have, "opened lines of communication that have not existed before. Many of the dialogues in the region have significantly altered popular perception, countered prevailing stereotypes and enemy images, and have this improved the atmosphere with which contentious issues in Indo-Pakistan relations are addressed."³
6.9 CONCLUSION

Research finding suggest that at bilateral level certain efforts have been carried on. Shimla agreement between India and Pakistan is a note worthy example of it, Lahore Bus yatra and Lahore declaration are also efforts to reduce political tension in the region.

At multilateral level, emergence of SAARC in South Asia is a major institutional level in the region. It is true that SAARC has not relised its potential yet but its presence and it economic demision as SAPTA and SAFTA are its big achievements. Due to acute political tension in the region, SAPTA and SAFTA have not played its role in a very effective manner.

Still such institutional economic arrangement in the region have created a feeling among the member states that they have definite objective, towards which they have to move.

Research finding have discovered the role of Non Governmental initiative in helping to reduce the tension in the region. It has found the need of such efforts more than ever as track II and track III diplomacy is not much visible but its under current working has helped to shape a different opinion in the politically tense environment.

Research findings have discovered that such efforts have not succeeded effectively but they have at least presented a mechanism to resolve the political differences the member state.