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Content

1 PERSPECTIVES ON THE STUDY OF INDIAN SOCIETY

- Indology (G. S. Ghurye)
- Structural functionalism (M. N. Srinivas)
- Marxist sociology (A.R. Desai)

WHAT IS INDOLOGY?

Indology is branch of social sciences dealing with interpretation of ancient texts and linguistic studies of problems of ancient Indian culture. It becomes more comprehensive if supplemented by archaeological, sociological, anthropological, numismatic and ethnographic evidence and vice versa. Available data in each of these fields are to be augmented by a great deal of honest and competent field work. None of the various techniques can, by itself, lead to any valid conclusion about ancient India; combined empirical operations are indispensable (Siddiqi).

FEW MARKED CHARACTERISTICS OF INDOLOGICAL APPROACH

- The Indological approach rested on the assumption that historically, *Indian society and culture are unique. This uniqueness of Indian society could be grasped better through the texts.*
- Indological approach refers to the historical and comparative method based on Indian texts in the study of Indian society.
- Indologists use ancient history, epics, religious manuscripts and texts etc. in the study of Indian social institutions.
- The texts which indologists refer basically included the classical ancient literature of ancient Indian society such as Vedas, Puranas, Manu Smriti, Ramayana, Mahabharata and others. Indologists analyse social phenomena by interpreting the classical texts.
- Apart from Sanskrit scholars and Indologists, many sociologists have also used extensively traditional text to study Indian society. Therefore, it is called as "textual view" or "textual perspective" of social phenomena as it depends upon texts.

Thus, *textual variety of sociology that emerged in the late 1970s marks a noticeable shift from the European to the American tradition of social anthropology. The studies conducted during this period cover a wide range of subjects, such as social structure and relationships, cultural values, kinship, ideology, cultural transactions and symbolism of life and the world.* Most of these studies are based on textual materials either drawn from epics, legends, myths or from the folk traditions and other symbolic forms of culture. Most of them have been published in 'Contribution to Indian Sociology' edited by T.N. Madan. A good number of studies following this method have been done by foreign-based scholars.

An Indological and culturological approach has also been the hallmark of several sociologists. They have hammered against the acceptance of theoretical and methodological orientations of the western countries. *These scholars emphasized the role of traditions, groups rather than individual as the basis of social relations and religion, ethics and philosophy as the basis of social organization.*

- **Yogendra Singh** has argued that when field studies in many areas of their interest in India became difficult, textual analysis, either of classics or ethics or field notes from an earlier data, represented a fruitful basis for continued analysis of Indian structure and tradition in the 1970s and 1980s.

- **R.N. Saxena** agrees which this Indological or scriptural basis of studying Indian society. He stressed on the role of the concepts of Dharma, Artha, Kama and Moksha.

- **Dumont and Pocock** emphasize the utility of Indological formulations. Indology is representative of people's behaviour or that guides people's behaviour in a significant way.

- The use of the Indological approach during the early formative years of Indian sociology and social anthropology is seen in the works of **G.S Ghurye, Louis Dumont, K.M. Kapadia, P.H. Prabhu and Irawati Karve** have tried to explore Hindu social institutions and practices, either with reference to religious texts or through the analysis of contemporary practices.

- Initially, Sir William Jones established the Asiatic Society of Bengal in 1787 and also introduced the study of Sanskrit and Indology.

G. S. GHURYE

Govind Sadashiv Ghurye is remembered for his marked contribution in the field of Indian sociology. He has often been acclaimed as the 'father of Indian sociology', 'the doyen of Indian sociologists' or 'the symbol of sociological creativenesses. Ghurye had been engaged in building up; almost single-handedly, the entire first generations of Indian sociologists in post-independence period. M.N. Srinivas has rightly said, "Nothing disguises the fact that Ghurye was a giant".

Two aspects of Ghurye's work are worth inquiring into :

- *First,* his role in promoting and directing the course of research in diverse fields of Indian society (as a teacher, as an institutions builder and as a scholar); and

- *Second,* his own substantive writings, his theoretical postulates, his vision of the role of sociology, etc.

Efforts of individuals, who have variously been regarded as the 'founding fathers', 'pioneers' 'first-generations sociologists' etc., constituted the most important factor in the growth of Indian sociology. These pioneers provided direction to shape the future of sociology in India. And, of all these, none did as much for sociology in India as Ghurye.

Ghurye excelled in both of them. We will discuss these things in this chapter.

THEORETICAL APPROACH OF GHURYE

Ghurye's rigour and discipline are now legendary in Indian sociological circles. In the application of theories to empirical exercises or in the use of methodologies for data collection that legendary rigour is not somehow reflected. To put it differently, *Ghurye was not dogmatic in the use of theory and methodology. He seems to have believed in practicing and encouraging disciplined ecclecticism in theory and methodology.* Despite his training at Cambridge under W.H.R. Rivers and his broad acceptance of the *structural-functional approach, Ghurye did not strictly conform to the functionalist tradition when interpreting the complex facets of Indian society and culture, which he chose to, investigate.*

The pioneers of Indian sociology were 'armchair' or 'lecture-ism' sociologists. But

Ghurye had conducted village, town and community studies.

- *Srinivas and Panini are of the view that "Ghurye insisted on fieldwork, though he himself was an armchair scholar".* This was not intended as a pejorative comment, but it reflected the tremendous premium placed on single-handed 'anthropological fieldwork'. Therefore, it may be said that *although trained in the craft of Indology, Ghurye was not averse to the fieldwork traditions of social and cultural anthropology. His field survey of 'Sex Habits of Middle Class People' in Bombay and the monograph on the Mahadev Kolis demonstrated Ghurye was far from promoting an armchair textual scholarship.* He was an empirical field worker also. Later generations of Indian sociologists and social anthropologists uses Ghurye's inexhaustible themes for their researches.

FEW MARKED CHARACTERISTICS OF GHURYE'S THEORETICAL APPROACH

- *Ghurye was a practitioner of 'theoretical pluralism'.* Basically interested in inductive empirical exercises and depicting Indian social reality using any source material – primarily Indological – his theoretical position bordered on laissez-faire.

- Similarly, *when Ghurye conducted survey-type research involving primary data collection, he did not conform to accepted methodological canons.* He often ventured into generalization on the basis of scanty and unrepresentative evidence, e.g., Social Tensions in India.

- *Ghurye's flexible approach to theory and methodology in sociology and social anthropology was born of his faith in intellectual freedom,* which is reflected in the diverse theoretical and methodological approaches that his research students pursued in their works.

- Ghurye also *used historical and comparative methods in his* studies which have also been followed by his students.

Ghurye was *initially influenced by the reality of diffusionist approach of British social anthropology but subsequently he switched on to the studies of Indian society from indological and anthropological perspectives.* He emphasised on Indological approach in the study of social and cultural life in India and elsewhere. This helps in the understanding of society through literature. Ghurye utilized literature in sociological studies with his profound knowledge of Sanskrit literature, extensively quoted from the Vedas, Shastras, epics, and poetry of Kalidas or Bhavabhuti to shed light on the social and cultural life in India. *He made use of the literature in vernacular, e.g.,* Marathi, and cited from the literature of modern writers like Bankimchandra Chatterjee as well.

Ghurye's Works : *Pramanick has divided Ghurye's writings into six broad areas. These are-*

- Caste
- Tribes
- Kinship, family and marriage
- Culture, civilization and the historical role of cities
- Religion
- Sociology of conflict and integration

Besides these, *there are a number of important writings of Ghurye, which could not be fitted into the above scheme.* We would briefly discuss here the important works of Ghurye.

CASTE

Ghurye in his Caste and Race in India *cognitively combined historical, anthropological and sociological perspectives to understand caste and kinship system in India.* He tried to analyze caste system through textual evidences using ancient texts on the one hand and also from both structural and cultural

perspectives, on the other hand. Ghurye studied caste system from a **historical, comparative and integrative perspective**. Later on he did *comparative study of kinship of Indo-European cultures.* In his study of caste and kinship, Ghurye emphasizes two important points:

- *The kin and caste networks in India had parallels in some other societies also.*
- *The kinship and caste in India served in the past as integrative frameworks.*

The evolution of society was based on the integration of diverse, racial or ethnic groups through these networks. Ghurye highlights **six structural features of caste system** as follows:

- Segmental division
- Hierarchy
- Pollution and purity
- Civil and religious disabilities and privileges of different sections
- Lack of choice of occupation
- Restrictions on marriage.

Besides the above characteristics Ghurye laid particular stress on endogamy as the most important feature of the caste system. Any effective unit of the caste hierarchy is marked by endogamy. Every caste had in the past segmented into smaller sub-divisions or sub-castes. Each of these sub-castes practiced endogamy. For example, Vaishya castes are divided into various sub-castes such as Agrawal, Maheshwari etc.

- *Caste is also linked with kinship through caste endogamy and also clan (gotra) exogamy.* Gotra has been treated as thoroughly exogamous unit by the Brahmins and later by the non-Brahmins. *The basic notion here is that all the members of a gotra are related to one another, through blood, i.e., they have rishi (sage) as their common ancestor. Therefore, marriage between two persons of the same gotra will lead to incestuous relationship.* It will lead the lineage of the gotra to near extinction:

- *The relationship between caste and kinship is very close because –*
- Exogamy in our society is largely based on kinship, either real or imaginary, and
- The effective unit of caste, sub-caste is largely constituted of kinsmen.

To Ghurye, *there are three types of marriage restrictions in our society, which shape the relationship between caste and kinship. These are endogamy, exogamy and hypergamy. Exogamy can be divided into parts:*

- Sapinda or prohibited degrees of kin, and
- Sept or gotra exogamy.

The gotra were kin categories of Indo-European cultures which systematized the rank and status of the people. These categories were derived from rishis (saints) of the past. These rishis were the real or eponymous founder of the gotra and charna. *In India, descent has not always been traced to the blood tie. The lineages were often based on spiritual descent from sages of the past. Outside the kinship, one might notice the guru-shisya (teacher-student) relationship, which is also based on spiritual descent.* A disciple is proud to trace his descent from a master.

Likewise, caste and sub-caste integrated people into a ranked order based on norms of purity-pollution. The rules of endogamy and commensality marked off castes from each other. This was *integrative instrument,* which organized castes into a *totality or collectivity.* The *Hindu religion provided the conceptual and ritualistic guidelines for this integration. The Brahmins of India* played a key role in legitimizing the caste ranks and orders through their interpretation of Dharmashastras, which were the compendia of scared codes.

TRIBE

Ghurye's works on the tribes were *general as well as specific.* He wrote a general book on Scheduled Tribes in which *he dealt with the historical, administrative and social*

dimensions of Indian tribes. He also wrote on specific tribes such as the Kolis in Maharashtra. Ghurye presented his thesis on tribes at a time when a majority of the established anthropologists and administrators were of the opinion that the separate identity of the tribes is to be maintained at any cost.

Ghurye, on the other hand, believes that most of the tribes have been Hinduized after a long period of contact with Hindus. He holds that it is futile to search for the separate identity of the tribes. They are nothing but the 'backward caste Hindus'. Their backwardness was due to their imperfect integration into Hindu society. The Santhals, Bhils, Gonds, etc., who live in South-Central India are its examples.

There has been fierce debate between G.S. Ghurye and Verrier Elvin. Elvin in his books Loss of Nerve said that tribals should be allowed to live in isolation, whereas Ghurye argued that tribals should be assimilated into Hindu castes.

Thus, Ghurye hold the view that a grand historical process of merger between two communities has almost been completed. Consequently, tribes, now, may be regarded as 'backward Hindus'. The incorporation of Hindu values and norms into tribal life was a positive step in the process of development. The tribes in India had slowly absorbed certain Hindu values and style of life through contact with the Hindu social groups. Today, it is being considered a part of Hindu society. Under Hindu influence, the tribes gave up liquor drinking, received education and improved their agriculture. In this context, Hindu voluntary organizations, such as Ramakrishna Mission and Arya Samaj, played a constructive role for the development of the tribes. In his later works of north-eastern tribes, Ghurye documented secessionist trends. He felt that unless these were held in check, the political unity of the country would be damaged.

Ghurye present a huge data on the thoughts, practices and habits of the tribes inhabiting the Central Indian region. He quotes extensively from various writings and reports to show that Katauris, Bhuiyas, Oraons, Khonds, Gonds, Korkus etc. have substantially adopted Hinduism as their religion. Ghurye suggests that the economic motivation behind the adopted of Hinduism is very strong among the tribes. They can come out of their tribal crafts and adopt a specialized type of occupation, which is in demand in society.

RURAL-URBANIZATION

Ghurye remained occupied all through his life with the idea of rural-urbanization securing the advantages of urban life simultaneously with nature's greenery. Therefore, he discusses the process of rural-urbanization in India.

- He views that the urbanization in India was not a simple function of industrial growth. In India, the process of urbanization, at least till recent years, started from within the rural area itself.

- He traced Sanskrit texts and documents to illustrate the growth of urban centres from the need for market felt in a rural hinterland. Development of agriculture needed more and more markets to exchange the surplus in foodgrains. Consequently, in many rural regions, one part of a big village started functioning into a market. This led to a township, which, in turn, developed administrative, judicial and other institutions.

- In the past, urban centres were based on feudal patronage, which had demands for silk cloths, jewellery, metal artifacts, weapons etc. This led to the growth of urban centres such as Banaras, Kanchipurum, Jaipur and Moradabad etc.

In brief, it may be said that Ghurye's approach to 'rural-urbanization' reflects the indigenous source of urbanism. During colonial times, the growth of metropolitan centres altered the Indian life. The towns and cities were

no longer the outlets for agricultural produce and handicrafts but they became the major manufacturing centres. These used rural areas for producing raw materials and turned into a market for selling industrial products. Thus, the metropolitan economy emerged to dominate the village economy. Therefore, *the urbanization started making inroads into the rural hinterland in contrast to previous pattern. A large* city or metropolis also functioned as the centre of culture of the territory.

For Ghurye, the large city with its big complexes of higher education, research, judiciary, health services, print and entertainment media is a cradle innovation that ultimately serves cultural growth. *The functions of the city are to perform a culturally integrative role, to act as a point of focus and the centre of radiation of the major tenets of the age.* Not any city, but large city or metropolis having an organic link with the life of the people of its region can do this work well.

According to Ghurye, an urban planner must tackle the problems of:

- Sufficient supply of drinking water,
- human congestion,
- traffic congestion,
- regulation of public vehicles,
- insufficiency of railway transport in cities like Mumbai,
- erosion of trees,
- sound pollution,
- indiscriminate tree felling, and
- plight of the pedestrians.

CULTURE AND CIVILIZATION

In general, there are two conflicting views about the growth and accumulation pattern of culture. One theory maintains that in any community culture grows quite independently of similar events happening elsewhere or predominantly with reference to local needs and local situation. The other group believes that culture grows by diffusion. Single invention or discovery is made at one place and ultimately this cultural trait diffuses throughout the world. Sir G.E Smith was the most ardent advocate of the diffusion theory.

According to Ghurye, *culture constitutes the central or core element for understanding society and its evolution. In fact, culture is a totality involving the entire heritage of mankind. Ghurye's abiding interest was to analyze the course of cultural evolution and the nature of heritage which mankind has denied from the past.*

Culture relates to the realm of values. It is a matter of individual attainment of excellence and creativity. Ghurye had a strong faith in the power of man to preserve the best of his old culture, while creating from his own spirit of new culture. He was more concerned with the process of evolution of Hindu civilization, which has been termed as a 'complex civilization'. And, Ghurye thought for analyzing the dynamics of culture in such a long historical civilization. In this context, *the process of acculturation is more relevant than the process of diffusion.* He thinks that the challenging task of a sociologist is to analyze this complex acculturation process in India. According to him, India has been the home of many ethnic stocks and cultures from pre-historic times. In his analysis of caste, Ghurye refers to how caste system was developed by the Brahmins and how it spread to other sections of the population. The operation of the process of Hinduization also provides the general backdrop of his analysis of the total phenomenon.

Ghurye was promoted by the belief that there is a "common heritage of modern civilization" and that civilization is a *"collective endeavour of humanity".* He holds that behind the rise and fall of civilization, there has occurred a steady growth of culture. Cutting across the vicissitudes of civilization growth, there are certain values, which have been established as final. These values have been termed by Ghurye as the *'foundations of*

culture'. He delineates five such values or foundations of culture. These are :

- Religious consciousness
- Conscience
- Justice
- Free pursuit of knowledge and free expression
- Toleration.

According to Ghurye, *"civilization is the sum total of social heritage projected on the social plane"*. It is also an attribute of the society. Different societies can be differentiated with reference to their civilizational attainment. Ghurye makes four general conclusions with regard to the nature of civilization :

- Firstly, as yet, there has been no society, which has been either completely civilized or very highly civilized.
- Secondly, Ghurye believes in the law of continuous progress.
- Thirdly, gradation of civilization is also correlated with the distribution of values. In a high civilization, the humanitarian and cultural values will be accepted by a wide cross-section of population.
- Fourthly, every civilization, high or low, possesses some distinctive qualities.

SOCIOLOGY OF RELIGION

Religion is fundamental to man and society. Man becomes conscious of some power beyond his comprehension almost at the dawn of civilization. This field has drawn the attention of sociologists like Weber and Durkheim. *Ghurye thinks that religion is at the centre of the total cultural heritage of man.* He gives the five foundations of culture as mentioned earlier in the description of culture and civilization, out of which *'religious consciousness'* is most important. *It moulds and directs the behaviour of man in society.*

Ghurye made original contribution to the study of Indian religious beliefs and practices. He wrote six books to bring out the role of religion in society. These are: Indian Sadhus, Gods and Men,

Religious Consciousness, Indian Accumulation, Vedic India and The Legacy of Ramayana. All these works reflect Ghurye's interest related to the sociology of religion:

- In Gods and Men, *Ghurye discusses the nature of the Hindu ideas of Godhead and the relations, if any, between the climate of an age and the type of Godhead favoured.*

- In Religious Consciousness, Ghurye analyses the three oldest human civilizations, viz., *the Mesopotamian, the Egyptian and the Hindu, in their various aspects of mythological beliefs,* speculation, cosmology, life after death, view of Godhead, temple architecture, etc.

- *In the Indian Sadhus, Ghurye considers the genesis, development and organization of asceticism in Hindu religion and the role ascetics have played in the maintenance of Hindu society.* Indian Sadhus is an excellent sociography of the various sects and religious centres established by the great Vedantic philosopher Shankaracharya and other notable religious figures. In this work, Ghurye *highlights the paradoxical nature of renunciation in India. A sadhu or sannyasi is supposed to be detached from all castes, norms and social conventions, etc. He is outside the pale of society. Yet strikingly enough, since the time of Shankaracharya, the Hindu society has more or less been guided by the sadhus. These sadhus were not the lonely hermits. Most of them belonged to monastic orders, which have distinctive traditions.* The monastic organization in India was a product of Hinduism and Buddhism. The rise of Buddhism and Jainism marked the decline of individual ascetics like Viswamitra. *Indian sadhus have acted as the arbiters of religious disputes, patronized learning of scriptures and the sacred lore and even defended religion against external attacks.*

NATIONAL UNITY AND INTEGRATION

Ghurye had interest in contemporary Indian situations. As a sociologist, *he had been extremely concerned with the concept of integration, the process of national unity in India, and the contemporary challenges to the situation.* This concern became apparent even at the time he wrote 'Caste and Race in India' and 'The Aborigines'. However, this concern with the present 'disturbing trends' in Indian society has come back in a big way in later writings of Ghurye (Pramanick). There are three books of Ghurye, known as his 'triology' in this field, which are relevant in this connection. These are 'Social Tensions in India', 'Whither India' and 'India Recreates Democracy'. *In these books he has developed a theoretical framework to explain unity at the social or cultural level.*

Ghurye holds that though groups play an integrational role in society, this is true only up to a certain extent. In modern society, there are five sources of danger for national unity coming as they do form a sense of excessive attachment with groups :

- The Scheduled Castes
- The Scheduled Tribes
- The Backward Classes
- The Muslims as religious minority groups
- The linguistic minorities.

As we know, *the main focus of Ghurye's writings is on culture. He thinks that it is largely as a result of Brahminical endeavour that cultural unity in India has been built up.* All the major institutions of Hindu society originated among the Brahmins and gradually they were accepted by other sections of the community. *Though Ghurye calls it process of acculturation, it was basically a one-way flow, in which the Brahminical* ideas and institutions infiltrated among the non-Brahmins. It is the background of such an approach that Ghurye analyses the problems and prospects of Indian unity in contemporary India.

- *Ghurye's concept of cultural unity is new one and is not secular in orientation. He is concerned with India of 'Hindu culture' and uses the terms 'Indian culture' and 'Hindu culture' synonymously.*

- *He is concerned with India, he says provided an excellent normative base for maintaining social and political unity in the country.* Hinduism had brought within its fold widely different groups in India. The various sects of Hinduism constitute vast mosaic holding together millions of people in different parts of India.

- *He analyzed the normative structure of Hinduism, and the teaching of sacred religious texts such as the Vedas, the Upanishads, and the Brahmans etc.,* to show how they provide the common cultural foundation.

- *The role of such great Hindu thinkers as Panini, Patanjali and Tulsidas etc.,* in strengthening unity has also been discussed by Ghurye.

He blames the political leader for disunity in India. According to Ghurye, society is not just an aggregation of isolated individuals but that group life, which provides the bridge between the individual and society. An individual acquires social attributes and is socializes through groups. This is the function efficiently, integration is achieved. Tensions in the process of this integration in India arise today because the various groups of people have failed to transient their narrow group loyalties. Religious and linguistic minorities are the most potential source of danger to the unity in modern India. Religion and linguistic groups are the prime areas which cause disintegration to India's cohesion.

Ghurye gives great importance to the role of language in the process of nation-building in India. Even, in case of tribes, tribal life and culture can be improved only when the pick up developed language of a neighbouring community. Ghurye hold the view region. The regional

languages ensure the unity of territory at the local level and all efforts should be made to improve.

BRIEF ASSESSMENT OF GHURYE'S WORK

During his creative period of writing, Indian *sociology was engaged in the debate on tradition and modernity.* Ghurye neither entered into this controversy, nor he took up the issue of the role of tradition in Indian society. Critics argued that,

- *Ghurye stressed that Indian traditions are actually Hindu traditions.* One must know the Hindu traditions to understand Indian society. In fact, Ghurye created a special kind of Hindu sociology. The traditions of India are only Hindu traditions. He did not define traditions.

- *He also did not discuss the impact of modernity. His main concern was the core of Hindu society. In* this sense, the traditions of Indian society have its roots in scripture, which is a very narrow vision about Indian society.

- *It has been argued that the most of Ghurye's works are based on textual and scriptural data.*

- The choice of scripture and the way of writing may have bias towards one section of society to another.

- *Ghurye further fails to recognize that qualitative change has occurred in modern India. Past is important for present. The question is that how much of the past is useful.* Some argue that Ghurye did not have this realization as his knowledge of the India's past, instead of helping him, stood in his way of analysis.

However, Ghurye was not only concerned with the past evolution of Indian society but also with its present tensions and problems. The task of sociologists, according to him, is to explore the social history of past. He says, one cannot understand the present without the reference of the past. Ghurye introduced a down-to-earth empiricism in Indian sociology and social anthropology. He was an ethnographer, who studied tribes and castes of India, using historical and Indological data. His knowledge of Sanskrit enabled him to study the religious scriptures in the context of Indian society.

CONCLUSION

Wide range of Ghurye's work and his intellectual interests has had a profound influence on the development of the twin disciplines sociology in India. Like a discreet butterfly, Ghurye moved from one theme to another with equal interest, erudition and ability. He showed India to an inexhaustible mind where sociologists could conduct endless explorations. He indicated innumerable but unexplored dimensions of Indian society, culture and social institutions, which would occupy social analysis for decades if they had both the desire and the ability to know.

The range of Ghurye's scholarly interests and research is astounding. Exploration of diverse aspects of Indian culture and society through the use of Indological sources permeated Ghurye's otherwise shifting intellectual concerns and empirical research pursuits. His erudition and versatility, therefore, are substantiated by the wide range of his research from Sanskrit text, through interpretation of Indian culture and society.

This rare spirit of inquiry and commitment to advancing the frontiers of knowledge was one of Ghurye's precious gifts to Indian sociology. His diversified interests are also reflected in the great variety of works of his research students produced on themes ranging from family, kinship structures, marriage, religious sects, ethnic groups, castes and aboriginals, their customs and institutions, to social differentiation and stratification, caste and class, education and society, the Indian nationalist movement, social structure and social change in specific villages or religious of India, and also urbanization, industrialization and related social problems in India.

The range of Ghurye's interests is encyclopaedic. His abiding interest is in the course of world civilization, in general and in Hindu civilization, in particular. He has analyzed various aspects like the origin and evolution of caste, the evolution of Indo-Aryan family structures and its connections with the Indo-European family structure, and specific institutions like gotra etc. Analysis of the diverse aspects of the evolution of Indian social history and culture thus constitutes the major preoccupation of Ghurye.

STRUCTURAL-FUNCTIONAL PERSPECTIVE

Understanding Structural Functionalism : This perspective focus on understanding the 'ordering' and 'patterning' of the social world. The focus of attention is mainly the 'problem of order' at a societal level. The theoretical and empirical analyses have generally been based on the assumption that societies can be seen as persistent, cohesive, stable, generally inherited wholes, differentiated by their culture and social structural arrangements.

Regarding this perspective, **A.R. Radcliffe-Brown** says that the total social structure of a society, together with the totality of social usages, constituted a functional unity, a condition in which all parts work together with a sufficient degree of harmony or internal consistency.

Structural-functionalism is brought into sociology by borrowing concepts from biological sciences. Structure in biology refers to organisms meaning a relatively stable arrangement of relationship between different cells and the consequences of the activity of the various organs in the life process of the organism as their function.

Spencer goes further and points out that not only analogy exists between the body social and body human but the same definition of life is applied to both.

Durkheim insisted on the importance of structure over elements. He has pointed to the importance of social morphology or structure.

Srinivas is of the view that a new departure was marked in the thirties of the 9th century by the works of a number of British social anthropologists.

Evans-Pritchard describes social structure in terms of persistent social groups and Radcliffe-Brown indicates that social structure is based on network of relations of person to person through genealogical connections.

According to Srinivas, "In the recent British social anthropology, the two important concepts-Structure and function – imply that every society is a whole and that its various parts are interrelated. In other words, the various groups and categories which are part of a society are related to each other".

- *This perspective of society stresses the element of harmony and consistency not those of conflict and contradiction.*
- The functional unity of a system is defined in terms of social order.
- In defining society in holistic terms, structural-functional implies that as everything within the system is necessarily functional for the whole.
- They are the believers of the fact that society is a relatively persisting configuration of elements and consensus is a ubiquitous element of the social system.
- It treats changes as slow, cumulative process of adjustment to new situations.
- Its explanation consists essentially of pointing out how the different types of activity fit on top of one another, and are consistent with one another, and how conflicts are contained and prevented from changing the structure.

M.N. Srinivas started structural-functional analysis in sociological and social anthropological research in India. The structural-functional perspective relies more on the field work tradition for understanding the social reality so that it can also be understood as **'contextual' or 'field view'** perspective of the social phenomena.

M.N.SRINIVAS

Srinivas occupies an éminent place among the first-generation sociologists of India. He belongs to the galaxy of G.S. Ghurye, R.K. Mukherjee, N.K. Bose and D.P.Mukerji. Srinivas has initiated the tradition of macro-sociological generalizations on micro-anthropological insights and of giving a sociological sweep and perspective to anthropological investigations of small-scale communities. *Srinivas wanted to understand his countrymen not on the basis of western textbooks or from indigenous sacred texts but from direct observation, field study and field experience*. He made intensive *field study of Coorgs between* 1940-42. In his study, *he describes the concept of functional unity by Coorgs, mainly Brahmins (priests), Kaniyas (astrologers and magicians)* and Bannas and Panikas (low castes). In the context of the study of Rampura also, *he describes that the various castes in a village are interdependent.*

Srinivas studies of caste and religion highlighted not only their structural-functional aspects, but also the dynamics of the caste system in rural setting. He proposed conceptual tools like 'dominant caste', 'sanskritisation-westernization' and 'secularization' to understand the realities of inter-caste relations and also to explain their dynamics. The concept of 'dominant caste' has been used in the study of power relations at the village level. Srinivas presents the results of a number of studies on the structure and change in the village society. Srinivas has written articulates n the 1940s on Tamil and Telgu folk-songs.

Srinivas explains two basic concepts to understand our society :

- **Book view (bookish perspective) :** Religion, Varna, caste, family, village and geographical structure are the main elements, which are known as the bases of Indian society. The knowledge about such elements is gained through sacred texts or from books. Srinivas calls it book view or bookish perspective. Book view is also known as Indology, which is not acceptable to Srinivas and he emphasised to the field view.

- **Field view (field work):** Srinivas believes that the knowledge about the different regions of Indian society can be attained through field work. This he calls field view. Consequently, he prefers empirical study to understand our society. Srinivas took the path of small regional studies rather than the construction of grand theories. In this context, field work plays an important role to understand the nativity of the rural Indian society.

Srinivas also realized the need for a mathematical and statistical orientation in sociology. His self-analysis underlines this point. There are cogent reasons of both an ideological and a practical nature which explain why the secondary level of analysis described above is not usually pursued by scholars. The practical considerations are easy to detect. Perhaps, more in the past than at present, the fear of mathematics derive many brilliant and diligent scholars to the 'humanistic' disciplines like sociology.

Writings of Srinivas

Srinivas has written on many aspects of Indian society and culture. He is best known for his work on religion, village community, caste and social change He was influenced by Radcliffe-Brown's notion of structure, who was his teacher at Oxford. He studied Indian society as a 'totality', a study which would integrate "the various groups in its interrelationship, whether tribes, peasants or various cults and sects" (Patel). His writings are based on intensive field work in South India in general and Coorgs and Rampura in particular (Shah).

- Social change: Brahminization, sans-kritisation, westernization and secularization
- Religion and society
- Study of village
- Views on caste
- Dominant caste

Social Change

'Social change' as a theme continues to be a significant concern of Indian sociologists. This hold true not only for the pre-independence phase but also for post-independence period. Srinivas attempted to construct a macro-level analysis using a large number of micro-level findings on the processes of 'sanskritisation', 'westernization' and 'secularization'. Interestingly enough, Srinivas returned to his micro-empirical setting – a village– after nearly a quarter of century and in a diachronic frame highlighted the nature of social change in that village over period of time.

Religion and Society

Srinivas work 'Religion and Society among the Coorgs of South India' led him to formulate the concept of **Brahminization** to represent the process of the imitation of life-ways and ritual practices of Brahmins by the lower-caste Hindus. The concept was used as an explanatory device to interpret changes observed in the ritual practices and life-ways of the lower castes through intensive and careful field study. The notion of Brahminization, however, had implicit possibilities of further abstraction into a higher level concept, **Sanskritisation**, which Srinivas introduced because his own field data and those of many others indicated limitations of using only Brahminic model as frame of reference. Later, sanskritisation, as a concept, thus, replaced Brahminization at a more abstract level.

Srinivas achieved this through enlarging the meaning of sanskritisation and by distinguishing it from another concept, **westernization**, using both terms in a systematic manner to explain the processes of social change in India. This conceptual scheme, though referring mainly to the processes of cultural imitation, has a built-in structural notion, that of hierarchy and inequality of privilege and power, since the imitation is always by the castes or categories placed lower in social and economic status. We find a systematic placed lower in social and economic status.

We find a systematic formulation of the two concepts in Srinivas's 'Social Change in Modern India' , wherein he defines 'sanskritisation' as the process by which a 'low' caste or tribe or other groups takes over the custom, ritual, beliefs, ideology and style of life of a high and, in particular, a 'twice-born (dwija), caste. The sanskritisation of a group has usually the effect of improving its position in the local caste hierarchy. The major emphasis in study of social change through concepts of sanskritisation and westernization and of the levels of traditions is on the changes in cultural styles, customs and ritual practices.

There are, however, some presuppositions in the processes of both sanskritisation and westernization, which do imply precedent or concomitant structural changes, such as improvement in economic position of the sanskritizing caste, superiority and dominance of the caste being emulated and psychological disenchantment among the low castes from their own position in the caste hierarchy. Nonetheless, sanskritisation brought changes within the framework of Indian tradition whereas westernization was a change resulting from the contact of British socio-economic and cultural innovations. Along with these concepts, Srinivas has used the term 'secularization' to denote the process of institutional innovations and ideological formulation after independence to deal with the question of religious groups and minorities. This became a national ideology.

Srinivas considers village as the microcosm of Indian society and civilization. It is the village, which retains the traditional composition of India's tradition. He conducted field work among Coorgs. Dumont and Pocock consider this work as a classic in India's sociology. It is in this work that Srinivas provides a basic structure of India's traditions :

- In Religion and Society, Srinivas was concerned with the spread of Hinduism. He talked about 'Sanskritic Hinduism' and its values.

- Related to this was the notion of 'sans-kritisation' which Srinivas employed "to describe the process of the penetration of Sanskritic values into the remotest parts of India. Imitation of the way of life of the topmost, twice-born castes was said to be the principle mechanism by which lower castes sought to raise their own social status".

- Curiously, Srinivas did not take up for consideration the phenomenon of the persistence of the masses of Hindus of low or no status within the caste system. For him, the most significant aspect of the history of the Coorgs, worthy of being recorded, was the history of this incorporation into the Hindu social order.

- Srinivas thinks that the only meaningful social change is that which takes place among the weaker sections for attaining higher status by imitating values of twice-born. And, those of the lower castes and tribal groups, who fail in this race of imitation, are doomed to remain backward.

What Srinivas spells out about the imitating lower castes seems to be the announcement of a new age. If we attempt to identify traditions of Indian society, according to Srinivas, these are found among the higher castes – the twice-born. In other words, the traditions, rituals and beliefs, which are held and shared by the Brahmins, the Baniyas, and the Rajputs, constitute Indian traditions. And, the beliefs of the lower sections of society, the untouchables and the tribals, do not have any status as tradition. For him, Indian traditions are high-caste Hindu traditions lower-caste traditions are no Indian traditions. Obviously, but he anchors traditions into sanskritisation, Srinivas was actually interested in caste. He considered it to be the 'structural bases of Hinduism'. He was not fascinated by Hinduism in its holistic form. He looked for it in the caste system. Thus his thesis of Indian traditions runs something like this: "Indian traditions are Hindu traditions, and Hindu traditions are found in caste system. Holistic Hinduism is beyond his scope of discourse".

Study of Village

Besides religion and caste, the third traditions component of Srinivas' Study is village. Srinivas got the seed idea of studying India's villages from his mentor Radcliffe-Brown in. He conducted the study of Rampur – a Mysore village – which gave him the concept of 'dominant cast'. The study has been contained in the Remembered Village; it is here only that Srinivas takes some time to discuss social and economic changes, which have taken place in Rampura. He informs that the technological change occupied a prominent place in the life of the people of Rampura soon after independence. Technological change, of course, went hand in hand with economic, political and cultural changes.

- The main aim of Srinivas has been to understand Indian society. And, for him, Indian society is essentially a caste society.

- He has studied religion, family, caste and village in India. Srinivas search for the identity of traditions makes him infer that the Indian traditions are found in caste, village and religion.

- Ideologically, he believed in status quo: let the Dalits survive and let the high castes enjoy their hegemony over subaltern. For him, it appears that Indian social structure is on par with the advocates of Hindutva, say, the cultural nationalism.

- Srinivas though talks about economic and technological development, all through his works he pleads for change in caste, religion and family.

- Even in the study of these areas he sidetracks lower segments of society. They are like 'untouchables' for him.

- Srinivas has extensively talked about the social evils of the caste society; he pleads for change in caste system and discusses westernization and modernization as viable paradigms of changes. But his perspective of change is Brahminical Hinduism or traditionalism.

For him, Indian traditions are those, which are manifested in caste and village. His traditions are Hinduised traditions, and in no sense secular ones. Srinivas, in a straightforward way, rejects secularism and stands in favour of Hindu traditions. In his critique of Indian secularism, which appeared in a short article in the Times of India in 1993, he finds secularism wanting because he believes that India needs a new philosophy to solve the cultural and spiritual crises facing the country and that philosophy cannot be secular humanism. It has to be firmly rooted in God as creator and protector. Srinivas' to Hindutva ideology of cultural nationalism. At this stage of discussion, Doshi comments regarding India's traditions, it can be said that any tradition emanating from caste system cannot be nation's tradition as the constitution has rejected caste.

Srinivas concentrated on the study of some vital aspects of Hindu society and culture and his study did it explore the dimensions of interaction and interface between the Hindu and non-Hindu segments. The area that he studied did not have a large non-Hindu presence. He hoped that other sociologists would take up the study of the non-Hindu segment of Indian society and culture without which an Indian sociology, Indian in the sense of being comprehensive and authentic and hence truly representative of the plurality and complexity of India, would not emerge. In this context, **Joshi** viewed that Srinivas' self-definition and self-perception was never that of a Hindu sociologist but that of an Indian sociologist studying Hindu religion and its social institutions in a specific area through intensive field work at the ground level.

Views on Caste

Srinivas views caste as segmentary system. Every caste, for him, is divided into sub-castes which are:

- The unit of endogamy;
- Whose members follow a common occupation;
- The units of social and ritual life;
- Whose members share a common culture; and
- Whose members are governed by the same authoritative body, viz., the Panchayat.

Besides these factors of the sub-caste, for Srinivas, certain other attributes are also important. These are:

- Hierarchy: To Srinivas, hierarchy is the core or the essence of the caste system. It refers to the arrangements of hereditary groups in a rank order. He points out that it is status of the top-most or Brahmins and the bottom-most or untouchables, which is the clearest in terms of rank. The middle regions of hierarchy are the most flexible, who may be defined as members of the middle ranks.

- Occupational differentiation: Srinivas finds a close relationship between a caste and its occupation. He says that caste is nothing more the "systematization of occupational differentiation". Castes are known by their occupations and many derive their name from the occupation followed, e.g., Lohar, Sonar, Kumhar, Teli, Chamar etc. He also stresses that occupation are placed in a hierarchy of high and low.

- Restrictions on commensality, dress speech and custom are also found among castes. There is a dietic hierarchy and restrictions on acceptance of food.

- Pollution: The distance between castes is maintained by the principles of pollution. Srinivas too, argues that the castes must not come into contact with anything that is polluted whether an object or being. Any contact with polluted renders a caste impure and demands that the polluted caste undergo purification rites. If pollution is serious such as when a high caste person has sexual relations with an untouchable, the person involved may be removed from his or her caste.

- Caste Panchayats and Assemblies: Besides the above mentioned attributes of a caste,

every caste is subject to the control of an order maintain body or a Panchayat. Elder of each caste in a village together maintain the social order by exercising their authority collectively. Further, every caste member in answerable to the authority of its Caste Assembly. The authority of a Caste Assembly may extend beyond village boundaries to include in its jurisdiction of caste in other villages.

From the above, we can infer that the attributes of a caste definitely determined the nature of inter-caste relations. There attributes or customs of caste also determine the rank of a caste. This becomes obvious in the work of Srinivas on caste mobility or sanskritisation.

Sanskritisation

We have seen above that how every caste is assigned in the caste rank order on the basis of the purity and impurity of its attributes. In his study of a Mysore village, Srinivas finds that at some time or the other, every caste tries to change its rank in the hierarchy by giving up its attributes and trying to adopt those of castes above them. This process of attempting to change one's rank by giving up attributes that define a caste as low and adopting attributes that the indicative of higher status is called 'sanskritisation'. This process essentially involves a change in one's dietary habits from non-vegetarianism to vegetarianism, and a change in one's occupation habits from an 'unclean' to a 'clean' occupation. The attributes of a caste become the basis of interaction between caste. The creation of pattern of interaction and interrelations is best expressed in Srinivas' use of the concept of 'dominant caste'.

Idea of Dominant Cast

Besides caste, Srinivas looks for yet another source or manifestation of tradition. He found it in the notion of 'dominant caste'. He first proposed it in his early papers on the village of Rampura. The concept has been discussed and applied to a great deal in work on social and political organization in India. He had defined dominant

caste in terms of six attributes placed in conjunction:

- sizeable amount of arable land;
- strength of numbers;
- high place in the local hierarchy;
- western education;
- jobs in the administration; and
- Urban sources of income.

Of the above attributes of the dominant caste, the following three are important:

- numerical strength,
- economic power through ownership of land, and
- Political power.

Accordingly, a dominant caste is any caste that has all three of the above attributes in a village community. The interesting aspect of this concept is that the ritual ranking of caste no longer remains the major basis of its position in the social hierarchy. Even if a caste stands low in the social hierarchy because of being ranked low, it can become the dominant ruling caste or group in a village if it is numerically large, owns land and has political influence over village matters. There is no doubt that a caste with relatively higher in ritual rank would probably find it easier to become dominant. But this is not the case always.

In his study of Rampur village, there are a number of castes including Brahmins, peasants and untouchables. The peasants are ritually ranked below the Brahmins, but they own lands and numerically preponderant and have political influence over village affairs. Consequently, despite their low ritual rank, the peasants are the dominant caste in the village. All the other castes of the village stand in a relationship of service to the dominant caste, i.e., they are at the back of the dominant caste.

Srinivas was criticized for this concept with the charge that is was smuggled from the notion of dominance, which emerged from African sociology. Repudiating the critique, Srinivas

asserted that the idea of dominant caste given by him had its origin in the field work of Coorgs of South India. His field work had impressed upon him that communities, such as the Coorgs and the Okkaligas, wielded considerable power at the local level and shared such social attributes as numerical preponderance, economic strength and clean ritual status. He further noted that the dominant caste could be a local source of sanskritisation. Sanskritisation and dominant caste are therefore representation of Indian tradition. And, in this conceptual framework, the traditions of the lower castes and Dalits have no place, nowhere in village India; the subaltern groups occupy the status of dominant caste.

Assessment of Srinivas's Work

The life mission of Srinivas has been to understand Indian society. But he is criticized on following lines :

- He though talks about economic and technological developments but in the study of these areas sidetracks lower segments of society.

- In his endeavour for promoting sanskritisation he has marginalized and alienated religious minorities.

- For him, Indian traditions are those, which are manifested in caste and village. His traditions are Hinduised traditions and in no sense secular ones.

- The construction of sanskritisation and dominant caste put him closer to Hindutva ideology of cultural nationalism. One can say that his understanding was more elitist or presents only upper caste view.

The indigenous concepts of social change prevailing among sociologists in the 1950s and in the 1960s were formulated by M.N. Srinivas under the labels 'sanskritisation' and 'westernization'. He regarded these two processes as "limited processes in modern India and it is not possible to understand one without reference to the other". Srinivas had evolved the concept of sanskritisation

while preparing his doctoral dissertation under the guidance of Radcliffe-Brown and Evens Pritchard at Oxford. He finally formulated the concepts as denoting the process by which a 'low caste people, tribal or other group, changes its customs, rituals, ideology, and way of life in the direction of a high and frequently 'twice-born caste'.

Srinivas posited the concept of westernization as follows: "The British conquest of India set free a number of forces – political, economic, social and technological ... (which) affected the country's social and cultural life profoundly and at every point, and that the withdrawal of the British from India not only did not mean the cession of these forces but, meant on the contrary, their intensification".

- According to Mukherjee now, as a summary of certain characteristics spontaneously observable in society, these concepts cannot claim any originality.

- What Srinivas characterized as sanskritisation in the idiom of sociology currently fashionable, had been described by the proto-sociologists Lyall and Risley as 'Aryanization' and 'Brahminization'. Possibly, sanskritisation is a more precise expression of the process under reference, as is claimed by Srinivas who does not deny the antecedents to his concept.

- The pioneers also were not unaware of the two processes and took particular note of them in the context of their respective value preferences, theoretical formulations and research orientation (e.g., Coomaraswamy, and D.P. Mukerji).

- The two processes have respectively, two levels of meaning – 'historic-specific' and 'contextual-specific', as Yogendra Singh has remarked regarding sanskritisation.

CONCLUSION

Despite above mentioned criticism, Srinivas stands tall among the first-generation sociologists of India. His focus on 'field view' over the 'book view' is a remarkable step in understanding the

reality of Indian society. This reflects sociology of nativity. His field work among the Coorgs relates his approach as structural-functional and represents an exposition of the complex interrelationship between ritual and social order in Coorgs society. It also deals with the crucial notion of purity and pollution as also with the process of incorporation of non-Hindu communities into the Hindu social order. This refers to the concept of 'sanskritisation' which he used to describe the process of the penetration of Sanskritic values into the remotest parts of India.

MARXIST PERSPECTIVE

The dialectical-historical orientation is related primarily to Marxist methods and propositions for the analysis of social reality. Yogendra Singh has used the term dialectical and not Marxist because in Indian sociology, Marxist approach comprises several adaptive models; many innovations have been made on classical Marxist formulations for the study of Indian society. Also, among Indian sociologists, there is a growing awareness that Marxist categories and paradigms will have to be reformulated and tested against societal realities of various historical origins to validate them as universal or particular categories in sociology. In this perspective, *when we look at the growth of dialectical-historical orientation in theory, we find that comparatively it is a less developed branch of Indian sociology. Most basic Marxist thinking in India was done in the forties and fifties by non-sociologists (Singh, 1943, 1977).*

Methodology

Among Indian sociologists one who has consistently advocate and applied dialectical-historical model in his sociological studies is A.R.Desai. Desai closely studied the works of Marx and Engels and the writings of Leon Trotsky by whom he was very much influenced. He may *be regarded as one of the pioneers introducing the modern Marxist approach to empirical investigations involving bibliographical and field research.* Following facts are worthmentioning about Desai :

- Desai alone among Indian sociologists has consistently applied Marxist methods in his treatment of Indian social structure and its processes. He is a doctrinaire Marxist.

- He rejects any interpretations of tradition with reference to religion, rituals and festivities; it is essentially a secular phenomenon. Its nature is economic and it originates and develops in economic. He finds it in family, village and other social institutions. He also does not find the origin of tradition in western culture.

- His studies mainly of nationalism and its social configuration, his examination of community development programmes for economic development in villages, his diagnosis of the interface between state and society in India or the relationship between polity and social structure, his treatment of urban slums and their demographic problems, and finally his study of peasant movements are all based on a Marxist method of historical-dialectical materialism.

- He considers that the emerging contradictions in the Indian process of social transformation arise mainly from the growing nexus among the capitalist bourgeoisie, the rural petty-bourgeoisie and a state apparatus, all drawn from similar social roots. This thwarts the aspirations of the rural and industrial working classes by sheer of its power and of its skilful stratagems. The contradiction, however, is not resolved. It only takes new cumulative forms and re-emerges in the form of protests and social movements. The social unrest is rooted in the capitalist path of development followed by India, bequeathed to it as a legacy of the national movement.

Analysis of Indian Society through Marxist Approach

Marx pointed out that different sub-formations within a society could not be understood adequately if seen in the context of the historical level. Thus,

- *The Marxist approach endeavors to locate, within a specific society, the forces which preserve and forces which prompt it to change, i.e., the forces driving to take a leap into a new or a higher form of social organization, which would unleash the productive power of mankind to a next higher level.*

- *Further, Desai argues that the methodology adopted by social scientists is apt to understand social reality from the ideology of capitalism.* But that is a false finding. He further argues that changes need to be interpreted from the perspective of production relation. And it is precisely the method he has applied.

- The Marxist approach further considers that focusing on the type of property relations prevailing in the Indian society as crucial-axial element for properly understanding the nature crude reducing of every phenomenon to economic factor; *it also not denies the autonomy, or prevalence of distinct institutional and normative features peculiar to a particular society.* For instance, according to Desai, it does not deny the necessity of understanding institutions like caste system, religions, linguistic or tribal groups or even specific cultural traditions which are characteristics of the Indian society.

- *The Marxist approach, in fact, endeavors to understand the role and the nature of the transformation of these institutions in the larger context of the type of society, which is being evolved.* This approach understands these institutions in the matrix of underlying overall property relations and norms implicit therein, which pervasively influence the entire social economic formation.

- *Desai feels that adoption of the Marxist approach will be helpful in studying the industrial relations, not merely as management-labour relations, and also in the context of the state wedded to capitalist path of development, shaping these relations.*

- *Similarly, it will help understand the dynamics of rural, urban, educational and other developments, better as it will assist the exploration of these phenomena in the larger context of the social framework, which is being created by the state shaping the development on capitalist path of development.*

- *The Marxist approach will also assist in understanding why institutions generating higher knowledge-products, sponsored, financed and basically shaped by the state, pursuing a path of capitalist development.* This understanding will expose the myth spread about state as welfare neutral state and reveal it as basically a capitalist state.

- *The constitution evolved its bourgeois constitution and the leadership is representing capitalist class and is reshaping the economy and society on capitalist path.* The slogan of socialistic pattern is a hoax to create illusion and confuse the masses. The real intentions and practices are geared to the development on capitalist lines.

- *According to Desai, the bourgeoisie is the dominant class in India.* The Indian society is based on the capitalist economy. The dominant culture in our country is therefore the culture of the dominant capitalist class.

- *Indian capitalism was a by-product of imperialist capitalism.* Indian capitalism was born during the declining phase of world capitalism when, due to the general crisis of capitalism, even in advanced capitalist countries, the ruling bourgeoisie, not cognizant of the cause of the crisis, have been increasingly abandoning rationalism and materialist philosophies and retrograding to religio-mystical world outlook.

- *Desai argues that Indian bourgeoisie built up a fundamentally secular bourgeois democratic state, which has been imparting modern scientific, technological and liberal democratic education.*

- *This class and its intelligentsia have been, in the cultural field revivalist and more and more popularizing supporting and spreading old religious and idealistic philosophic concepts among the people.* The idealistic and religio-mystical philosophies of the ruling bourgeois class, further reinforced by crude mythological culture rampant among the masses, constitute the dominant culture of the Indian people today.

- *The social role played by this culture is reactionary since it gives myopic picture of the physical universe and the social world, a misexplanation of the fundamental causes of the economic and social crises, opiates the consciousness of the masses and tries to divert the latter from advancing on the road of specific saluting of their problems.*

Important contributions of Desai on major themes are :

- Village structure
- Transformation of Indian society
- Social background of Indian nationalism
- Peasant struggles
- State and society.

Village Structure

It is viewed that Indian village was a self-sufficient unit in pre-British period. The village population was mainly composed of peasants. The peasant families enjoyed traditional hereditary right to possess, and cultivate his holding from generation to generation. Therefore, village was based on agriculture carried on with the primitive plough and bullock-power and handicraft by means of the primitive equipment.

The village council was the de facto owner of the village land, which represented the village community. All exchange of product produced by the village workers, was limited to the village community. The village did not have any appreciable exchange relations with the outside world. Further, the pre-British Indian society almost completely subordinated the individual to the caste, family and the village panchayat. The culture of pre-British India was feudal in nature, which was predominantly mystical in character. This was due to the fact that the society was economically on a low level, stationary and socially rigid. Whatever changes occurred was quantitative and not qualitative in character.

Transformation of Indian Society

The transformation of the pre-British India from feudal economy to capitalist economy was a result of the British conquest of India. The British government adopted the capitalist path of development in their political and economic policies at three levels, viz., trade, industry and finance.

- The introduction of new economic reforms of the British government disrupted the old economic system. Consequently, it destroyed the old land relations and artisans with the emergence of new land relations and modern industries.

- In place of village commune appeared modern peasant proprietors or zamindars, as private owner of land.

- The class of artisans disappeared with modern industry. New classes like the capitalist, industrial workers, agricultural labourer, tenants, merchants etc., emerged. Thus, the British impact not only led to the transformation of the economic anatomy of Indian society, but also its social physiognomy.

- Further, the new land revenue system, commercialization of agriculture, fragmentation of land etc., also led to the transformation of Indian village.

- At higher level, this resulted in growing polarization of classes in agrarian areas, poverty in rural areas and exploitations by the owners of land. It give rise to new class structure in agrarian society with categories like zamindars, absentee landlords, tenants, peasant proprietors, agricultural labourers, money lenders and merchant class.

- Similarly, in urban society, there were capitalist industrial working class, petty traders, professional classes like doctors, layers, engineers etc.

The British government also introduced railways, postal services, centralized uniform law, English education, modern industry and many more, which brought qualitative change in Indian society. It is said that although the British government had various exploitative mechanisms in India, but unintentionally these efforts led to unification of Indian society. The role of railways and press is significant in this direction. It has brought the scattered and disintegrated Indians into the mainstream. The implication was social movements, collective representations, national sentiments, and consciousness among Indian people and formation of unionism at various levels. Such a social infrastructural set-up gave rise to nationalism, freedom movement and awakening of Indian nationalism.

Social Background of Indian Nationalism

Desai applies the Marxist approach to the study of 'nationalism' in India during the British rule. He spells out historical-dialectical materialism and applies it to the study of various types of movements – rural and urban, caste and class structure, social mobility, education and other aspects of Indian society.

Desai's first full-length work *The Social Background of Indian Nationalism* was a trendsetter not only for its Marxist academic orientation, but also for the way in which it cross-fertilized sociology with history. Quite like other Marxists, he employer production relations for the explanation of traditional social background of Indian nationalism in his classical work.

- The book is an excellent effort to trace the emergence of Indian nationalism from dialectical perspective.

- According to Desai, India's nationalism is the result of the material conditions created by the British colonialism. The Britishers developed new economic relations by introducing industrialization and modernization. This economic relationship is predominantly a stabilizing factor in the continuity of traditional institutions in India, which would undergo changes as these relations would change.

- Desai thinks that when traditions are linked with economic relations, the change in the latter would eventually change the traditions. It is in this context that he thinks that caste will disintegrate with the creations of new social and material conditions, such as industries, economic growth, education etc.

- Desai's definition of tradition is a watershed. He does not trace it from caste, religion or ritual. The dialectical history of India that he presents very clearly shows that traditions have their roots in Indian economy and production relation. Despite merits of dialectical approach applied by Desai in the definition of tradition, Yogendra Singh argues that the merits are not without weaknesses. What is wrong with Desai is that he was very profound when he applies principles of Marxism in analyzing Indian situation but fails at the level of empirical support. In other words, his theoretical framework can be challenged by the strength of substantial data.

- In his works, Desai developed the Marxian framework to outline the growth of capitalism in India. He provided an analysis of the emergence of the various social forces, which radically altered the economy and society in India within the context of colonialism. The state which emerged in India after independence, he postulated, was a capitalist state. To him, the administrative apparatus of the state performed the twin functions of protecting the

propertied classes and suppressing the struggle of the exploited classes.

- In 'India's path of Development' he took on the traditional communist parties and the Marxian scholars who spoke of the alliance with the progressive bourgeoisie, of semi-feudalism, of foreign imperialist control over Indian economy, and who postulated a 'two-stages theory of revolution' or accepted a 'peaceful parliamentary road to socialism' in India. Desai's works include a number of edited volumes on rural sociology, urbanization, labour movements, peasant's struggle, modernization, religion and democratic rights. They are a rich source of reference material for students, researchers and activists.

Peasant Struggles

In his two volumes entitled *Peasant Struggles in India* and *Agrarian Struggles in India after Independence*? Desai had complied excellent material on peasant struggles in India during colonial rule and after independence. The difference in the character of struggles then and now is highlighted. Agrarian struggles, at present, Desai suggests, are waged by the newly-emerged propertied classes as well as the agrarian poor, especially the agrarian proletariat, whereas the former fight for the greater share in the fruits of development. The poor comprising pauperized peasants and labourers belonging to low castes and tribal communities struggle for survival and for a better life in themselves. Thus, Desai maintained, progress could be achieved only by radically transforming the exploitative capitalist system of India. The theme of the state was explored in several of his studies.

State and Society

In *State and Society in India*, Desai provided a critique of the theories of modernization accepted by a large number of academic establishments. He clearly stated that in reality the concept assumed "modernization on capitalist path a desirable value premise". It, however, served as a

valuable ideological vehicle to the ruling class pursuing the capitalist path. Desai remarked on the absence of a comprehensive analysis of the class character, class role and the economic, repressive, ideological functions of the post-independence Indian state by Marxists scholars. In many of his later works he pursued the theme of the repressive role of the state and the growing resistance to it. In Violation of Democratic Rights in India, he highlights the violation of the democratic rights of minorities, women, slum dwellers in urban India, press and other media by the state (Munshi Sand Saldanha).

In his studies of nationalism, analysis of rural social structure, the nature of economic and social politics of change in India and the structure of state and society, he has consistently tried to expose the contradictions and anomalies in policies and process of change resulting from the capitalist-bourgeoisie interlocking of interest in the Indian society. According to Desai, the polarization of class interest, especially of the bourgeoisie, is the foundation of modern society in India. It has thus inherent in it the class contradictions and the logic of its dialectics. This has been thoroughly exposed by Desai in his several writings.

RELEVANCE OF MARXIST APPROACH

- *In the fifties and early sixties, American structural-functionalism and British functionalism dominated social sciences, in general and sociological researches, in particular. However, Desai undeterred by these imperialistic influences continued to write on Indian society and state from the Marxist perspective.*

- He finds that the dominant sociological approaches in India are basically non-Marxist, and the Marxist approach has been rejected on the pretext of its being dogmatic, value-loaded and deterministic in nature.

- *According to Desai, the Marxist approach is the relevant approach. It could help to study of government polices; the classes entrenched into state apparatus and India's political economy.* Desai writes, 'I wish the

social science practitioners in India break-through the atmosphere of allergy towards this profound and influential approach and create climate to study the growing body of literature articulating various aspects of Indian society, the class character of the state and the path of development."

- *According to Desai, the Marxist approach helps one to raise relevant questions, conduct researches in the right direction, formulate adequate hypotheses, evolve proper concepts, adopt and combine appropriate research techniques and locate the central tendencies of transformation with its major implications.*

- According to Desai *the Marxist approach helps to understand the social reality through the means of production, the techno-economic division of labour involved in operating the instruments of production, and social relations of production or what are more precisely characterized as property relations.* Thus, the Marxist approach focuses on understanding the type of property relations which existed on the eve of independence in India. These are being elaborated by the state as the active agent of transformation of post-Independent India. Hence, the Marxist approach will help the Indian scholars to designate the type of society and its class character, the role of the state and the specificity of the path of development with all the implications.

- *Property relations are crucial because they shape the purpose, nature, control, direction and objectives underlying the production.* Further, property relations determine the norms about who shall get how much and on what grounds. For understanding the post-independence Indian society, the Marxist approach will focus on the specific type of property relations, which existed on the eve of independence and which are being

elaborated by the state as the active agent of transformation.

In brief, *the Marxist approach gives central importance to property structure in analyzing any society. It provides "historical location or specification of all social phenomena". Moreover, "this approach recognizes the dialectics of evolutionary as well as revolutionary changes of the breaks in historical continuity in the transition from one socio-economic formation to another".* In this context, Desai tried to understand the Indian society which also reflects in his works. Desai not only did give notice to the mainstream that Marx has a place in sociology, but also, he provided a forum for radical-minded scholars to broaden their horizon of research.

However, **this approach has been criticized on many counts.** According to Yogendra Singh, the important limitation of the dialectical approach for studies of social change in India is the lack of substantial empirical data in support of his major assertion, which are often historiography and can easily be challenged. In theoretical terms, however, this approach can be more visible for analysis of the processes of change and conflict in India provided it is founded upon a sound tradition of scientific research. Despite these limitations, some studies conducted on this model offer useful hypotheses, which can be further tested in course of the studies on social change.

CONCLUSION

The works of A. R. Desai, shows that how Marxist approach can be applied in understanding Indian social reality. The Social Background of Indian Nationalism reflects on the economic interpretation of Indian society. Desai applies historical materialism for understanding the transformation of Indian society. He explains that how the national consciousness emerged through qualitative changes in Indian society. It must be observed by the concluding words that in all his writings Desai has examined the usefulness of Marxian framework to understand India's reality.

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2 SOCIAL BACKGROUND OF INDIAN NATIONALISM

— Social background of Indian nationalism
— Modernization of Indian tradition
— Protests and movements during the colonial period and Social reforms.

What is Nationalism?

Nationalism is a sense of identity with the nation. **Liah Greenfeld** has defined nationalism as "an image of a social order, which involves the people as a sovereign elite and a community of equals." The original use of the term nationalism refers to elite groups, but in modern usage it refers to a very large group, sometimes as large as empire. The relationship of members of a nation is, theoretically, an equal relationship between citizens. It develops differently in different national communities under different historical circumstances.

Like all other social phenomena, nationalism is a historical category. It emerged in the social world at a certain stage of evolution, the life of the community when certain socio-historical conditions, both subjective and objective, matured. **E.H.Carr** has remarked, "Nations" in the modern sense of world, did not emerge until the close of the Middle ages.

Before national communities, national societies, national states, and national cultures came into existence. Communities in various parts of the world generally lived through tribal, slave and feudal phases of social existence. At a certain stage of social, economic and cultural development, nations came into being. They were generally distinguished from non-national communities of previous periods of social existence by certain specific characteristics such as, an organic welding of the members of the nation,

- living in a distinct territory within a single economy, conscious of common economic existence
- generally one common language is used by them,
- a similar psychological structure among its members and a common culture evolved by it.

Though an ideal nation possessing all these traits in a state of fullest development remained an abstraction. This is because the elements of the past always survived, in a varying degree, in economy, social structure, psychological habits and culture of any nation. Still from the seventeenth century onward, national communities, in different stages of national consolidation, have appeared.

INDIAN NATIONALISM

Indian nationalism is a modern phenomenon. It came into being during the British period. This came as a result of the action and interaction of numerous subjective and objective forces and factors which developed within the Indian society, under the conditions of British rule and the impact of world forces. The process of the growth of Indian nationalism has been very complex and many-sided. This is due to a number of reasons. The pre-British Indian society had a social structure quite unique and perhaps without a parallel in history. Hinduism itself was not a homogenous religion but a conglomeration of religious cults which divided Hindu people into a number of sects. These extreme social and religious divisions of the Hindus in particular and the Indians, in general, presented a peculiar background to the growth of nationalism in India. Nationalism in other countries did not rise amidst such peculiarly powerful traditions and institutions. The self-preservative will of the past social, economic and cultural structure was stronger in India than perhaps in any country in the world.

Another very striking thing about Indian nationalism is that it emerged under conditions of political subjection of the Indian people by the British. The advanced British nation for its own purpose radically changed the economic structure of Indian society. They established centralized state, and introduced modern education, modern means of communication and other institutions. This resulted in growth of new social classes and the unleashing of new social forces, unique in themselves. These social forces by there very nature came into conflict with British Imperialism and became the basis of and provided motive power for the rise and development of Indian nationalism.

FACTORS WHICH PREPARED BACKGROUND OF INDIAN NATIONALISM

The British government, Christian mission and English education were three main sources of colonial impact on Indian society. The British government replaced the indigenous systems of administration and governance. The mission made efforts to convert Indian to Christianity. British educationists tried to spread education to bring about a change in the outlook of the indigenous population. The British community in India also had an influence on the people in different parts of the country. The port, towns and coastal areas were more affected, at least in the beginning of the British Raj. The emergence of a national consciousness, the realization of the value of organization and of the importance of agitation led to the formation of the Indian National Congress in 1885. Formation of Congress was a strong foundation of Indian nationalism.

K.M. Pannikkar notes that "the most notable achievement of British rule was the unification of India". This was done unconsciously by the British in the interest of the Indian people. They were interested in spreading and consolidating their rule throughout the country. The same argument can be made about the introduction of western education, means of transport, communication, technology and judiciary.

Y. Singh observes that "the contact of the Indian (Hindu) tradition with the West was of a different and radical sociological significance. Historically, it was a contact between a pre-modern and a modernizing cultural system". The western tradition had "the scientific and technological world-view based on rationalism, equality and freedom". Consequently, the Indian tradition, which already had a sort of 'breakdown', became further open, liberal, equalitarian and humanistic. The western tradition posed a serious challenge to the Indian tradition. Hierarchy, the principle of social ranking based on birth in a particular caste group, and holism, the 'organic' interdependence between different caste groups, based on norms relating to performances of the assigned functions and duties by various groups, were considerably affected by the western tradition.

M.N. Srinivas defines 'westernization' in terms of the change in Indian society due to the impact of British rule in India. The areas of change

include technology, dress, food and changes in the habits and lifestyles of people. Westernization takes place at three levels: Primary, secondary, and tertiary.

- At the primary level were a minority of people who first came into contact with western culture and were its first beneficiaries.
- The secondary level of westernization refers to those sections of Indian society who came into direct contact with the primary beneficiaries.
- At the tertiary level are those who came to know indirectly about the advices introduced by the British.

However, the spread of westernization has been uneven and unequal among different sections of Indian society. Though Srinivas has mentioned humanitarianism and egalitarianism as its positive features, there are others who consider westernization as a process of cultural and cognitive colonialism and as a model of an "impersonal, non-cultural and non-sovereign state".

Westernization has contributed to the re-emergence of a pan-Indian culture on new grounds. Some areas of western impact include education, law, science, technology, new forms of politicization, urbanization, industrialization, the press, means of transport and communication.

Y. Singh calls this the process of 'cultural modernization, The western impact has brought about "a new great tradition of modernization". Certainly, this poses the problem of conflict between the indigenous tradition and the western tradition on Indian soil. A synthesis between the two has occurred, particularly in regard to the elite sections of Indian society. Today, 'globalization' has far more impact on Indian society. In fact, India is in the process of becoming a global market/centre of economic and professional activities.

The British rule created a new consciousness and structure of values. As observed by **Y. Singh** westernization has created the following: the

growth of an universalistic legal superstructure expansion of education, urbanization and industrialization, increased network of communication and growth of nationalism and politicization of the society. These elements contributed to modernization throughout the country. The judiciary, law courts, legislations for prohibiting child marriage, infanticide and sati, etc., law commissions, land rights, trade, commerce, industries, labour, etc., were enacted.

- **Education:** Macaulay's policy of 1935 to promote English education and language, the emergence of missions to spread education and the first Indian Education Commission of 1882 are the highlights of the British period. The British policy put more emphasis on higher education. Education at the primary and secondary levels was considerably neglected. Even today, in terms of course contents and management of educational institutions, India continues to follow the British model. Development of education inculcated new consciousness of nationalism among masses.

- Urbanization and industrialization in India are generally concomitant. Several studies have shown that both the processes reinforce tradition. Urbanization is a slow process in India compared to the developed countries. However, urban population has increased over the years. Cities or urban centres have a concentration of all the major infrastructural facilities and highly skilled professionals. Urbanization has been uneven for different cities and regions, and so is in the case of industrialization. A number of institutional factors have hindered the rapid growth of industrialization in the past. However, studies by **Richard Lambert, Milton Singer, N. R. Seth**, etc., have shown that caste, joint family and other traditional values have not obstructed a healthy pattern of social relations in factories and industrial organizations.

- Development of transport and communication started during colonial rule has really ushered in an era of new social and cultural contacts. Newspapers, periodicals and magazines, particularly in the regional languages, postal services, movies and radio were all introduced by the British. The same is true of the railways, roadways and airways. These new devices weakened the institution of caste, notions of pollution-purity and hindrances in migration. Spatial mobility was undoubtedly a concrete gain of these means, but 'psychic mobility' also became a fact of life. These contributed a lot in the development of nationalism.

- National and social awakening was created by the British. Raja Ram Mohan Roy and Mahatma Gandhi borrowed several humanistic elements from the British tradition and used them for creating national feeling and political consciousness. The ideas of communalism, secularism and nationalism borrowed from the western philosophers proved very useful.

INDIAN NATIONALISM AND ITS CHIEF PHASES

Indian nationalism has grown and developed in a complex and peculiar social background.

It has passed through various phases of development. As it advanced from one phase to another its social basis broadened, its objective became more clearly defined and bold. Its forms of expression became more varied. As a result of the impact of forces of Indian and world development, increasing strata of the Indian people evolved a national consciousness and outlook and were drawn into the orbit of the nationalist movement. This national awaking found expression in varied spheres of national life — social, political, cultural.

As the nationalist movement grew and gathered strength, new classes increasingly organized themselves on a national scale and started various movements to remove the obstacles impeding their growth. These new classes were offspring of the new economic structure which were living under the same state regime.

FIRST PHASE

In its first phase, Indian nationalism had a very narrow social basis. The Intelligentsia was the product of the modern education imparted in the new educational institutions, established by the British in India in the first decades of the nineteenth century. They had studied western culture and greatly assimilated its democratic and nationalist ideas. They formed the first stratum of the Indian society to develop a national consciousness and aspirations. Raja Ram Mohan Roy and his group of enlightened Indians were the pioneers of Indian nationalism. They were the exponents of the concept of the Indian nation which they propagated among the people. They initiated social-reform and religious-reform movements which represented endeavours to remould the Indian society and religion in the spirit of the new principles of democracy, rationalism, and nationalism. In fact, these movements were the expression of the rising national democratic consciousness among a section of the Indian people.

These founders and first fighters of Indian nationalism stood up for democratic rights, such as the freedom of the Press, and put forth demands like the right of the nation to have a voice in the administration of the country.

SECOND PHASE

The first phase extended till 1885 and culminated in the rise of the Indian National Congress in that year. The second phase roughly covered the period from 1885 to 1905.

The Liberal intelligentsia who were at the helm of the Congress were the leaders of the Indian nationalist movement during the second phase. Their ideology and method determined the programme and forms of the movement which reflected the interest of the development of the

new bourgeois society in India. The social basis of the movement was extended during this period to the educated middle class which, by the end of nineteenth century, had appreciably grown as a result of the expansion of modern educating, and to a section of the merchant class which had developed during this period as a result of the growth of Indian and international trade. Modern industries also grew steadily during this period as a result of which the class of industrialists emerged and began to gain strength they started orienting towards the Congress which adopted the programme of industrialization of the country and in 1905 actively organized the Swadeshi campaign.

The Indian National Congress, under the leadership of the Liberals, mainly voiced the demands of the educated classes and the trading bourgeoisie such as the Indianization of Services, the association of the Indians with the administrative machinery of the state, the stoppage of economic drain etc. It also set forth such democratic demands as those of representative institutions and civil liberties. Its methods of struggle dominated by Liberal conceptions were principally constitutional agitation, effective argument, and fervent appeal to the democratic conscience and traditions of the British people.

Since the British government did not satisfy the most vital demands of the Indian nationalist movement, disillusionment set in among a section of the nationalists regarding the ideology and methods of the Liberals. A group, with a new philosophy, political ideology and conception of the methods of struggle crystallized within the Congress.

Increasing unemployment among the educated middle class youths due to the inability of the social and state apparatus to incorporate them, and further, economic misery among the people due to devastating epidemics and famines at the close of the nineteenth century, created favourable conditions for the growth of the influence of the new group, the Extremists. Various

unpopular measures during the viceroyalty of Lord Curzon, such as the Indian Universities Act and the Partition of Bengal further estranged the people from the government and made the politically conscious middle class rally round the Extremists who possessed such capable and self-sacrificing leaders as Bal Gangadhar Tilak, Aurobindo Ghose, Bipin Chandra Pal and Lala Lajpat Rai. By 1905, even some of the Liberals began to lose faith in the British government. However, they did not renounce their political philosophy and methodology of struggle.

The ideology of the Extremists was, in vital respects, the antithesis of that of the Liberals. While the Liberals had a profound faith in the mission of Britain to raise the Indian people to a high level of progressive social, political and cultural existence, the Extremists interpreted the British rule in India as the means of the British to keep the Indian people in a state of subjection and economically exploit them. Further, while the Liberals glorified the western culture, the Extremists looked back to India's past, idealized the ancient Hindu culture and desired to resuscitate it.

Again the Extremists had no faith in the political efficacy of the Liberal method of appealing to British Democracy. Instead, to secure a demand, they stood for organizing extra-parliamentary pressure on the government such as the Boycott campaign. The Extremists were also not satisfied merely with the demand of administrative reform but set forth the goal of self-government which was endorsed by the Liberals in 1906.

Political discontent, during the second phase, also expressed itself in the growth of the terrorist movements. A small section of nationalist youths organized themselves in terrorist bands and relied upon such methods such as assassination of individual officials and sometimes fomenting of mutinies in the army for achieving political freedom.

THIRD PHASE

The third phase in the development of the nationalist movement extended from 1905 to 1918.

During this phase, the Liberals were supplanted by the Extremists as the nationalist movement progressed.

In spite of the strong government repression, the nationalist movement registered an advance. The political propaganda of the Extremists instilled a feeling of national self-respect and self-confidence among the people who, instead of looking to the British for political freedom as counselled by the Liberals, began to rely on their own strength for achieving it. The movement, however, suffered from the defect that its leaders attempted to base it on a resurrected Hindu philosophy. This, to some extent, mystified the movement and weakened its secular character. It was also one of the reasons why it could not appeal to the Muslims.

During the third phase, the Indian nationalist movement became militant and challenging and acquired a wider social basis by the inclusion of sections of the lower-middle class. The agitation for Home Rule during wartime further strengthened the political consciousness of the people.

It was during this phase that sections of upper class Muslims developed political consciousness and founded their all-India political organization in 1906, the Muslim League. Due to a number of reasons, the rising political consciousness of the Muslim upper and educated middle classes took a communal form, and resulted in the formation of their organization on a communal basis.

FOURTH PHASE

The fourth phase in the evolution of the Indian nationalist movement commenced from 1918 and extended roughly up to the Civil Disobedience Movement. One striking development during this phase was that the nationalist movement gained a broad mass basis and added to its arsenal, the weapon of direct mass action. The nationalist movement, which was hitherto restricted mainly to upper and middle classes, further extended, during this phase, to sections of the Indian masses. There were a number of factors which brought about national awakening among the Indian masses during the years immediately succeeding the war. The post-war economic crisis, the disillusionment about the government promises, and the increased repression by the state had seriously affected the people including the **peasantry and the working-class** and they were in a state of great ferment.

The great events in the international world such as a number of democratic revolutions in European countries and the socialist revolution in Russia had deeply stirred the consciousness of the Indian people. The Home Rule agitation during wartime also had the effect of intensifying and extending political consciousness among the Indian people.

The Indian capitalists who had become economically stronger during the war as a result of industrial expansion, also, more actively than before, supported the Indian National Congress. The Swadeshi and Boycott slogans of the Congress objectively served the interests of industrialists who financially supported it. Gandhi's doctrine of class harmony and social peace and his support to the Swadeshi resolution at the Calcutta Congress in 1919 made sections of the Indian bourgeois support Gandhi, the Congress, and the nationalist movements organized by the Congress under Gandhi's leadership from this time onward. It was from 1918 that the Indian industrial bourgeois began to exert a powerful influence in determining the programme, policies, strategies, tactics and forms of struggle of the Indian nationalist movement led by the Congress of which Gandhi was the leader.

Another development during this phase was the growth of **socialist and communist groups** in the country. By 1928, these groups succeeded in initiating independent political and trade union movements of the working class based on the doctrine of class struggle. They further stood for a socialist state of India declaring it as the objective of the India national movement. While in the non-cooperation movement, politically conscious workers, who participated in it, lacked an independent class programme, after 1926 those who joined movements like the Simon Commission Boycott, did so with their own slogans and flag, and frequently under their own

leaders. Thus, after 1926, the **Indian working class** increasingly entered the nationalist movement as an independent political unit. This was a new phenomenon in the history of the nationalist movement.

It was during this period Congress defined its political objective from the nebulous term Swaraj to that of Independence. Various Youth and Independence Leagues which sprang up in the country also adopted Independence as their political goal. Parallel to these developments, reactionary communal forces also began to organize themselves during this period. The period witnessed a number of communal riots. The phase culminated in the Civil Disobedience Movement organized by the Congress under the leadership of Gandhi. It was the second mass movement in the history of India nationalism.

The principal gains to the Indian nationalist movement during this phase were the acquisition of a mass basis, the definition of its goal as Independence, the entry of a section of the working class into the movement as an independent political force, the growth of various Youth and Independence Leagues, and the wider participation of peasants in the movement. The factors which had a retarding influence on the movement were mainly the combining of religion with politics by Gandhi, with the result that the national consciousness was befogged and national movement confused; the increased grip of the capitalists over the congress organization and the resultant modulation of its programme and policies to serve their sectional interest at the expense of national advance; and the accentuation of communal feelings.

FIFTH PHASE

The next phase covers the period from 1934 to 1939, the year of the outbreak of World War II. There were a number of new developments during this period. A section of Congressmen lost their confidence in the ideology, programmes and methods of Gandhi and formed the Congress Socialist Party which stood for the organization of the workers and peasants on class lines. and

made them the motive force of the nationalist movement. The party, however, remained heterogeneous, being composed of groups who broke from Gandhism in varying degrees and having a petty-bourgeois social basis. There also grew up other dissident tendencies from Gandhism like the Forward Bloc led by Subhas Chandra Bose.

Another development was the steady growth of the movements of the depressed classes. The Muslim League also, organizationally and politically, grew stronger in the final years of this period. Further, a number of other Muslim organizations, both of nationalist and communal politics, also sprang up.

The rapid growth of the **Communist Party** increasingly spreading its influence among students, workers and kisans, also was another significant development. The rapid growth of the **peasant movement** was one of the striking developments during this period. Larger and larger sections of peasantry developed national and class consciousness. Further, they began to evolve their own class organization, class leadership, programmes, slogans and flags. Hitherto, the politically awakened peasants had followed the Congress leadership; henceforth, a large section of them followed its own leaders, put forth their own class demands including those of the abolition of landlordism itself and the repudiation of all debts. The All India Kisan Sabha, the organization of the conscious section of the Indian peasantry, formulated for its objective the socialist state of India. It organized independent struggles of the Kisans and joined the nationalist movement as an independent unit.

Another remarkable development during this phase was the growth of the democratic struggle of the people of the Indian states with a programme of demands such as the abolition of state monopoly, representative institutions, civil liberties, and others. The states 'peoples' movement was mainly controlled by the merchant class of these states. The Indian National Congress supported and aided the struggle of the people of these states.

Another development of importance during this period was the growing awakening among the nationalities constituting the Indian people. This awakening was reflected in their demands of the reconstitution of provinces on a linguistic basis. The movements of such nationalities as the Andhra, the Oriyas, the Karnatakis, and others, which had awakened to life and which felt and expressed the urge to be integrated into distinct political administrative zones based on common language, revealed this new development.

The rise of an independent Kisan movement, the growth of socialist forces, the movements of awakened nationalities, and other developments, however, still represented only minority tendencies within the nationalist movement. The national movement still remained essentially determined and dominated by the Gandhian outlook and Gandhi's political philosophy and leadership. It still, in the main, reflected the interests of the capitalists and other upper classes.

However, the new forces and movements had begun to exert some pressure of the Indian National Congress as a result of which the latter included in its programme a charter of fundamental rights guaranteeing civil liberties and alleviatory economic measures to the workers and peasants. The Indian National Congress, the premier national organization in the country and the principal leader of the nationalist movement, also recognized the cultural and other aspirations of awakened nationalities, stood for cultural autonomy and linguistic provinces and even recognized the right of the populations of the provinces reconstituted on the linguistic basis to secede from the Indian Federation of the future free India if they so desired.

However, a struggle that was increasingly sharpening went on among the various social classes within the nationalist movement for the hegemony of the movement. The political groups representing workers, kisans and left sections of the middle classes, were striving more and more, as they gathered more political consciousness and independent organizational strength, to influence the programme and policies of the

Congress which had hitherto been appreciably controlled by the capitalist class. The awakened nationalities were also increasingly pressing their demands vigorously for the removal of the obstacles which thwarted their free and full development.

MODERNIZATION OF INDIAN TRADITION

WHAT IS MODERNIZATION?

Modernization is a process associated with the sweeping changes that took place in the society, particularly social, economic, political and cultural changes. It represents substantial breaks with traditional society. Modernization is an idea before it is a process. As it is an idea, there is no agreement among social scientists on its meaning and interpretation. The concept of modernization, emerged as an explanation of how Western countries/ societies developed through capitalism. By providing such an explanation Western scholars desired to convince the underdeveloped countries like India that economic development was possible under capitalism.

According to this approach, *modernization depends primarily on introduction of technology and the knowledge required making use of it.* Besides, several social and political prerequisites have been identified to make modernization possible. Some of these prerequisites are:

- Increased levels of education;
- Development of mass media;
- Accessible transport and communication;
- Democratic political institutions;
- More urban and mobile population;
- Nuclear family in place of extended family;
- Complex division of labour;
- Declining public influence of religion, and;

- Developed markets for exchange of goods and services in place of traditional ways of meeting such needs.

Modernization is, thus, supposed to be the result of the presence of these prerequisites in the social system. It is clear that the term modernization has been used here in a very broad sense. We, therefore, find different views about the scope and area to be covered by the concept of modernization.

Debate on Concept of Modernization

Some sociologists limit modernization to its structural aspect, others emphasise its cultural dimension. A few studies highlight the issue of political modernization and still others analyze its psychological meaning. Of course, the treatment of the concept in terms of it being a process of social change is found in writings of many scholars.

Daniel Thorner in his essay on 'Modernization' explains the modernization in these words: *"modernization is the current term for an old process of social change whereby less developed society's acquired characteristics common to more developed societies."* He further writes *"Modernization, therefore, is the process of social change in which development is the economic component".* Obviously this understanding of the term corresponds with the meaning which we have given to the term at the beginning of our discussion. Accordingly, *modernization is a process of change, which takes a country from underdevelopment to development.* It produces social environment for economic development. The growths in industrialization, urbanization, national income and per capital *income are taken as criteria of development.*

However, *while accepting the economic criteria of development, some sociologists have added non-economic criteria to judge development.* They argue that rising output alone is not sufficient to assess the level of development. A society has to move from rising output to self-sustaining growth. Therefore, non-economic criteria such *as the level of education, function of media, growth of communication and social norms conducive to change have to be taken into consideration.*

The meaning of modernization given above incorporates, primarily, structural aspects of change. In other words, under modernization structural transformation takes place in economy, polity and social institution. It is to be noted here *that the concept of modernization has also been explained in cultural terms.* In cultural term, modernization implies change in values and attitudes. Modernity involves values and norms that are universal in nature. Explaining this aspect of modernization **Yogendra Singh** suggests that *'modernization implies a rational attitude towards issues and their evaluation from a universal viewpoint'.* Thus, technological advancement and economic growth are not the sole criterion to judge the level of modernization of the society. The commitment to scientific world view and humanistic ideas are equally important.

Moreover, the idea of modernization has also been analyzed in terms of the paired concepts of **tradition and modernity**. It has been argued that *modernity stands as opposite to tradition. In this sense, all the underdeveloped societies are characterized as traditional and the developed societies as modern. Modernization, thus, implies a change from tradition to modernity.* Change occurs according to this view, *in predicable direction.* In other words, *in order to modernize, every society has to follow the same direction and adopt a similar path.* All the existing values and structures have to be replaced by the new values and structures.

Nonetheless, sociologists from the developing countries are critical of this understanding of modernization. *They maintain that modernization does not stand as a polar opposite to tradition. Traditional values and institutions are not necessarily discarded while taking up new values in the process of change.*

Society adopts new values because they are considered more efficient and rewarding. In view of this, these sociologists hold that modernization would develop typical forms in different societies. *Patterns of modernization, thus, may vary from society to society. The discussion shows that processes of modernization involve both structural and cultural dimensions.*

WHAT IS TRADITION?

According to Yogendra Singh, tradition refers to those 'value-themes' which encompass the entire social system of Indian society prior to the beginning of modernization. These value themes were organized on the principles of **hierarchy, holism, continuity and transcendence**. These four value themes were deeply interlocked with other elements of Indian social structure:

– *Hierarchy* was engrained in the system of caste and subcaste stratification. It was also there in the Hindu concepts of nature, occupational lifecycles (ashramas), and moral duties (dharma)

– *Holism* implied a relationship between individual and group in which the former was encompassed by the later in respect of duties and rights. Here precedence was given to community or sangha, not the individual. This overshadowing of individual by collectivity persisted all along the line of traditional social structure, e.g. family, village community, caste and nation.

– *Continuity* in Hinduism was symbolized by principles of karma, transmigration of soul and a cyclical view of change. Communalism in traditional social system was reinforced through the value system of continuity.

– *The principle of transcendence* also posited that legitimating of traditional values could never be challenged on grounds of rationality derived from the non-sacred or profane scales of evaluation. It formed a super concept contributing to integration as well as rationalization of the other value themes of the tradition.

The organization of tradition based on these value-components could not be called typical only of the Indian society, since at one level similar phenomenon also existed in the traditional West. The divergence between the two traditions, however, arose from their unique social heritage, existential situation and historicity of circumstances.

Modernization of Indian Traditions :

Some sociologists make a distinction between social change and modernization in order to assess the nature of change in the traditional Indian society. *Though, social change occurred in traditional India. It was essentially pre-modern in nature. One traditional institution was just replaced by the other and no basic structural change took place in social system and culture.*

Historically, *modernization in India started from the establishment of the British rule and had continued even after the independence.* The nature and direction of modernization during these two phases have been different.

Initially, the contact with British led to growth of a modernizing sub-culture or Little tradition of Westernization, especially during the seventeenth century in Bengal, Madras and Bombay, where a small nucleus of interpreters, trader-cum-middlemen emerged who were slowly being socialized to Western ways. Subsequently, there also emerged sects which emphasised assimilation of Western cultural norms, and Western modes of learning (e.g. Brahmo Samaj, Prarthana Samaj, etc.); these also ran a crusade against obscurantism in Hindu traditions. These movements on one hand and the consolidation of the British power towards the middle of the nineteenth century on other finally led to the institution of a modernizing Great tradition. Its components were :

• The contact with the West brought about far reaching changes in social structure and cultural institutions. *Changes were witnessed in almost all-important areas of*

life. The British administration introduced new arrangements in legal, agrarian, educational and administrative domains. Most of these led to structural modernization.

- For instance, *the bureaucratic system of administration and judiciary introduced by them were based on modern rational norms, which replaced the traditional Indian legal norms, based on the principle of hierarchy and ascription.*

- *A similar transformation took place in the system of education and agrarian structure.* The Western system of education was introduced towards the middle of the nineteenth century and expanded significantly thereafter.

- *New patterns of land settlements such as Zamindari, Ryotwari and Mahalwari covering the whole of British India resulted in systematization of revenue administration.*

- *Some other areas experiencing modernizing trends were industrialization, urbanization, transport and communication, army and the emergence of industrial working class and so forth.*

- *The emergence and growth of a nationalist political leadership was also the result of growing modernization of Indian society.* In fact, the nationalist leadership became so strong that freedom movement itself generated a new culture of modernization.

It is apparent from the above that the colonial phase of modernization created wide networks of structure and culture which were modern and had an all India appeal. There was, however, one important feature of Indian modernization during the British-period. The growth of this process was selective and segmental. It was not integrated with the micro-structures of Indian society, such as family, caste and village community. At these levels, the British by and large followed a policy of least interference,

especially after the rebellion of 1857. Moreover, some British administrators were wrongly impressed by the staticness and autonomy of these micro-structures compared with the rest of the Indian society. This was especially so about the notion of village community and importance attributed to caste. For a long time caste and ethnic factors were given recognition in recruitment of officers to army and middle and lower ranks of bureaucracy. Later, in the twentieth century, as the nationalist movement gathered momentum, a communal electorate system was introduced. These historical factors have deeply influenced the process of modernization which followed during the post-colonial period. It increased the contingency of traditional institutions and symbolisms to the Indian process of modernization.

Freedom movement ushered in a new political culture of modernization. At its centre was the personality of Mahatma Gandhi whose one foot was always deeply embedded in tradition. His emergence during the peak of Westernization process in India signifies an orthogenetic response of Indian tradition to the new challenges of social change. Gandhi successfully mobilized Indian people for the attainment of freedom, but he could not, however, avert one serious breakdown in the process... the partition of India into two independent nations. As we mentioned above, it followed from the uneven growth of sub-cultural traditions of modernization in Hinduism and Islam, each conditioned by unique historicity of their own. The quest for a separate nationhood by the Muslim community in India reflected a crisis of aspiration along with that of confidence.

After the independence modernization process has undergone some fundamental changes. Every domain of social system is under the active influence of modernizing process. Modernization has, now, become an integral part of the developmental strategy. Now modernization has been envisaged for all levels of cultural and

structural systems. Discontinuity in modernization between macro-structures and micro-structures and between the Little and Great traditions, as during the British regime, has now been consciously abolished.

- The **political system** has assumed a new shape after adoption of the parliamentary form of government based on adult franchise. Political parties have emerged as powerful organs of the system. Thus, democratic political structure has effectively led to increasing political consciousness among the people. The process of politicization has further, been accelerated through the Panchayat Raj institutions.

- The foundations of traditional **family structure** have come under influence of legal reforms in marriage and inheritance. The family introduced equalitarian norms in family leading to raised status of women.

- Community Development Projects have carried the cultural norms and role-structures of modernity to each and every **village** in India, and this, coupled with introduction of land reforms and elective village panchayats, has initiated villagers to a bureaucratic form of participation in local level management and administration of justice.

- Similarly, **caste** has assumed new functional roles. It has acquired an associational character. New consciousness has emerged among dalits. Increasing role of caste in politics is a pointer to this trend.

- Moreover, **land reforms**, too, have brought structural transformation in agrarian social structure.

However, it is pertinent to call attention to the fact that modernization in India has not been uniformly progressive movement. Two crucial issues may be pointed out in this regard :

- First, in the process of modernization several traditional institutions and activities have been reinforced. **For example,** religious preachers are using modern media to spread their ideas. Now, there are television channels in India exclusively developed to religious preaching. Caste associations are using new modes of communication to consolidate their position.

- Second, inconsistencies are visible in patterns of modernization. Though structural change is witnessed in family, joint family loyalties and norms still prevail. Democratic participation is increasing despite of increasing caste conflicts.

Thus, modernization in India has not thoroughly dispensed with traditional institutions. **Yogendra Singh** has, appropriately, highlighted this fact in his study entitled **Modernization of Indian Tradition**. He writes, "The form of traditional institutions may remain intact but their substance might undergo major transformations incorporating modernization." In this sense modernization process in India has acquired a typical form. Traditional institutions have displayed their potential for adaptations in course of change.

CONTINUITY AND BREAKDOWNS IN MODERNIZATION IN INDIA

According to Eisenstaedt, modernization, in its initial stages in India, did not lead to any serious breakdown because of the peculiar structural characteristics of the Indian society. Here, cultural system was fairly independent of political system. **Louis Dumont** writes: 'This domain of polity or artha is, in the dominant tradition, relatively autonomous with regard to absolute values; there was also independence between the political system and the system of caste stratification.' Castes had their own panchayats and plural traditions, and similarly there also existed autonomy for groups and regional communities. *This inter-structural autonomy facilitated assimilation of modernizing innovations, without introducing major breakdown.* Modernity, however, mainly developed as a sub-culture without pervasive expansion in all sectors of life.

The colonial power of modernization did not seriously articulate many structural challenges which now with the totalization of this process in free India implies. As segmental nature of modernization becomes encompassing, relevance of structural autonomy ceases to operate as a shock-absorber. *Changes in political system begin increasingly to impinge upon the system of stratification (caste, class, ethnic communities), and these together create serious stresses for the cultural system as a whole. The cultural pre-requisites of a comprehensive modernization necessitate adaptive changes in the system of values which come in direct confrontation with tradition cultural values and norms.* For instance, secularism, untouchability, non-parochialism are some cultural demands of modernization in contemporary India which its traditional value system continues to resist. Important trends of social and cultural change in India which are relevant to the process of modernization are,

- In cultural sphere, major changes have been introduced by legislations.

- These seek to abolish social inequalities and exploitations handed down by tradition and accord democratic rights and constitutional privileges to all members of society.

- This has led to a trend away from Sanskritisation (Emulation of the Great tradition) and towards formation of new identities and associations of castes, regional groups and tribes.

- These processes are accelerated by 'Great traditions' of modernization such as, urbanization, industrialization, spread of education and politicization.

- The traditional structures and loyalties are being mobilized for objectives which are essentially modern and an increased emphasis is on protest movements.

However, the tradition also gets reinforcement in the process; modern media of communication and transport are used for spreading ritual order and for national organization of religious groups and their mode of activities and social participation. There is a tendency among religious sects to organize themselves on rational bureaucratic model, and the previous fission of each new sect form the parent body has now changed into strong orientation towards fusion.

Inconsistencies are also there in structural changes that India has undergone during the post-colonial phase of modernization. These are :

- *Micro-structures like caste, family and village community have retained their traditional character.* Caste has shown unexpected elasticity and latent potential for adaptation with modern institutions such as democratic participation, political party organization and trade unionism, and it persists unabatedly. Joint family loyalties and particularistic norms continue to prevail.

- *These contradictions are, however, further magnified at the level of macrostructures, such as the political system, bureaucracy, elite structure, industry and economy.*

- *The post-colonial period of modernization had homogeneity in elite structure.* These elite from industrial, civil and military bureaucracies, as well as political spheres came from similar class- caste stratum; they had equitable exposure to Western education and socialization. They also had uniformity of ideologies and aspirations. This was because the social base for recruitment of these elite was limited.

- *Elite structure has fairly widened during the post-independence period;* it may not be equitable in terms of stratification system, but in cultural background there is enough representativeness which leads to many contradictions.

- *A gap is specially coming into being between political elite and non-political*

elite; the former are less Westernized, and externally at least identify with traditional cultural symbolisms more strongly than the latter.

Contradictions are also growing in the federal structure of the Union:

- One party government is being replaced by multi-party government in States, having divergent ideological policies (Communist-led united fronts in Kerala and West Bengal, D. M. K. in Tamil Nadu).

- There is also evidence that, in the course of three five-year plans additional income generated by economic investment has gone in favour of only the well-to-do classes to the detriment of poorer sections. Planning has thus accentuated and sharpened the gaps in social stratification.

- This along with slow rate of economic growth and rapid increase in population creates additional intensities for structural tensions.

- Despite the years of effort at industrialization, India continues to be rural-peasant dominated society with general poverty of living standards.

Thus, major potential sources of breakdown in the Indian process of modernization may, in one form or another, be attributed to structural inconsistencies, such as :

- democratization without spread of civic culture (education),

- bureaucratization without commitment to universalistic norms,

- rise in media participation (communication) and aspiration, without proportionate increase in resources and distributive justice,

- verbalization of a welfare ideology without its diffusion in social structure and its implementation as a social policy,

- over-urbanization without industrialization, and

- finally modernization without meaningful change in the stratification system.

Gunnar Myrdal refers to similar impediments to modernization in India and other Asian countries in his work Asian Drama. According to him,

- nationalism and democratic institutions themselves have grown in a structurally uneven form in these countries.

- In Europe, he says, strong independent State with a fairly effective government and a common pattern of law enforcement, preceded nationalism, and both preceded democracy. In South Asian countries democratic ideology has, due to special historicity, preceded strong and independent State and effective government, and this is further complicated by onslaught of nationalism. This uneven historicity goes along with economic dependence of these countries on developed nations and slow rate of economic growth and still slower pace in institutional changes.

- According to Myrdal, India, which has a more viable size of intellectuals and middle classes necessary for democracy, planned economic growth has not made as deep an impact towards liberalizing the structural bottlenecks for modernization.

- According to him, India's 'soft-state' policy after Independence inhibited its leadership from going to the root of the problem, that is, introduction of basic changes in the institutional structure of society.

- The inegalitarian structure of society continued to grow and consolidate itself; there developed a long gap between verbalization and implementation of policies of reform;

- The decentralization of power in rural sectors led to concentration of power in the hands of a petty plutocracy. Also the leadership of the country as a whole remained with those who are opponents of real economic and social change.

CONCLUDING ANALYSIS

The emergent tensions caused by process of modernization in India, direct our attention to much needed further coordination in the strategy of change. Contradictions are emerging in the system at various levels as a result of uncoordinated institutional reforms and economic measures introduced for modernization during the post-Independence period. These contradictions, however, also inhere and symbolize the frictions caused by upward movement of hitherto suppressed aspirations and interests of groups. Protest movements whether disguised (like Sanskritisation, Islamization, formation of parochial associations based on caste, language and regional culture) or overt (Centre-State tensions) are inevitable in democratic transition to modernization. These, of course, indicate the specific areas where institutional and other reforms could further be accelerated to remove friction in the process of change. Modernization should thus proceed by a series of conciliatory steps through a forceful strategy of mobilization in the course of the developmental process. The need is also simultaneously to reinforce the democratic values and institutions. Given a democratic political framework, there exists a built-in mechanism in this system to build pressures for removal of inconsistencies emerging from uncoordinated changes in the 'conditions' of modernization; but the same cannot be said to be true for other forms of totalitarian political systems.

On the whole it appears that, despite continual tensions and contradictions, chances of the institutional breakdown are minimal; democratic values have fairly institutionalized in the political system; cultural gap which has recently widened between various levels of the elite does not go far enough to introduce major conflict about the ideology of modernization. Caste, which represents institutionalized form of inequality sanctioned by tradition now fights battles against inequality and inegalitarianism by its own rational self-transformation into associations: many independent or categorical values of tradition

have shown a surprising degree of elasticity of adapt themselves to the cultural system of modernization. Some of these traditions even thrive as modernization processes accelerate without creating major contradictions. In the realm of material resources too, the recent 'agricultural revolution' in the countryside has created a new atmosphere of optimism for future progress. This, along with people's increasing awareness to curb the birth-rate may point towards new hopeful signs of modernization without a breakdown. A constant coordination of mobilization with conciliation is a pre-requisite for democratic form of modernization in India.

PROTESTS AND MOVEMENTS DURING THE COLONIAL PERIOD AND SOCIAL REFORMS

Understanding Protest and Movement : An element of dissatisfaction with the existing system can be found in every society. Dissatisfaction may be caused by poverty, social discrimination or lack of privilege. People may develop a strong desire to change the situation by raising their voices against the existing order. They may start questioning established practices of society. This difference of opinion actually reflects a desire for change. Social movements emerge under this situation. However, a movement does not occur suddenly. It begins with dissent, moves towards protests and finally takes the form of a social movement. This sequence – dissent, protest and social movements – represents different phases of social change. But in some cases all these may be in operation at the same time.

The term dissent refers to ideas and activities which are different from those prevailing in a society at a given point of time. Differences of opinion and disagreement on certain issues are bases of dissent. Dissent is thus the beginning of a movement for change. For example, the struggle against the inhuman practice of untouchability in India was initiated

only when the people who were suffering from this cruel practice raised their voices against it.

Protest is *generally specific in nature. When dissent is expressed openly it assumes the form of protest. When a dissenting opinion crystallizes further the situation of protest is created. Thus protest, in order to be meaningful, has to be supported by dissent in respect of the institutional arrangements prevailing in society at a given point of time.* In fact, a consciousness of injustice and deprivation takes place at this stage. Accordingly, we may say that the social sharing of discrimination and deprivation is the starting point of protest. Thus, we may say that dissent expresses dissatisfaction with the existing situation and registers disagreement. Protest, on the other hand, is a formal declaration of dissent and represents a more crystallized state of opposition and conflict.

Social movements are of great sociological interest because they are a major source of social change. A social movement is a sustained collective effort that focuses on some aspect of social change. M.S.A Rao says that a social movement essentially involves sustained collective mobilization through either informal or formal organization and is generally oriented towards bringing about change in the existing system of relationships. Rao considers ideology as an important component of a social movement.

Protests and movements during colonial period mainly aimed at socio-religious reform. A reform movement attempts to improve conditions within an existing social system without changing the fundamental structure of the society itself. Reforms are often linked with belief systems, rituals and life-styles of the concerned people. There are several examples of reform movements in India. The most well-known reform movement was the Bhakti (devotional) movement of medieval India. It was an all-India movement which involved the lower caste people, and the poor. It protested against ritualism and caste barriers. Thus, the primary objective of the movement was to reform

world view and social practices of the people. It never tried to transform the social system radically, but advocated partial changes in the value system.

Several reform movements also engendered the socio-cultural regeneration, which occurred in the nineteenth century in India. It started with the formation of the Brahmo Samaj in Bengal in 1828 which had branches in several parts of the country.

According to K. L. Sharma Socio-religious reforms in British India were felt necessary due to three reasons:

- the selection of texts from various commentaries on the code of Manu had not always been enlightened;

- the reliance on law courts for interpretation had resulted in greater conservatism;

- the law, as applied by the law courts and British judges, was a combination of ancient Hindu and Victorian English conservatism, particularly in regard to women, inheritance, marriage and the rights of married women.

The right to property of individual members in a joint family or the granting of property right to women took many years from their acceptance in letter to their actual acceptance. The joint family, caste and Hinduism have always been the pivoted institutions and have discouraged any legislation which would weaken them manifestly or even latently.

Besides these reasons, there were several socio-cultural and economic problems which demanded mass mobilization, awakening and action against the British Raj, feudals and upper sections of society. There was a need to attack the institutional mechanisms, which had made society rigid and exploitative.

According to A.R. Desai reform movements during British period were an expression of national awakening due to contradictions between the old value system and new socio-economic realities.

- The aim of these movements was to revive the old religion in the context of nationalism

and democracy as the cardinal principles for the emergence of modern India. Modern society established liberty, freedom of competition, contact and freedom of the individual to own and manipulate property at will. Individualism was its keynote in contrast to the pre-capitalist society which was authoritarian in character; maintained social distinctions based on birth and sex, and subordinated the individual to caste and the joint family system.

- The new society demanded, as the very condition of its development, the abolition of privileges based on birth or sex. The reform movements were against medievalism in socio-cultural realms. They attacked the caste system and its allied institutions, polytheism, superfluous religious rites and dogmas.

- These religio-reform movements were national in content but religious in form.

Apart from the Brahmo Samaj in Bengal, the Prarthana Samaj in Maharashtra and the Arya Samaj in Punjab and north India were some of the other reform movements among the Hindus. The work of reformation was also undertaken by other organizations which were led by the backward castes and the members of other religious groups. For example, the Satya Sodhak Samaj of Jotiba Phule in Maharashtra and the Sri Narayan Dharma Paripalana Sabha in Kerala were started by the backward castes. Similarly, the Ahmadiya and Aligarh movements represented the spirit of reform among the Muslims. The Sikhs had their Singh Sabha and the Parsees, the Rehnumai, Mazdeyan Sabha. The major concerns of these movements and organizations were no doubt religious reform, but the social content was not missing from them. These movements brought about remarkable changes in the life of the people.

THE BRAHMO SAMAJ

Raja Ram Mohan Roy is considered to be the father of modern Indian renaissance. Besides English and Bengali, Ram Mohan Roy acquired knowledge of Sanskrit, Persian and Arabic. He also knew Hebrew, Latin and Greek. He made a deep study of Hindu and Muslim laws, literature and philosophy. He believed in the progressive reform of religion and a society with a liberal outlook. Ram Mohan Roy did not believe in worshipping the images of God. Monotheism was his main slogan.

On 20 August 1828, he founded the Brahmo Samaj, the literal meaning of which is "One God Society". The orthodox Hindus did not cherish the ideals of this institution, but generally people welcomed this new organization. Ram Mohan Roy was a secularist as he was inspired by Christianity, Islam and the Upanishads. He had great faith in the uncompromising monotheism of Islam. He learnt about the concept of the unity of God as an essence of Hinduism from the study of the Upanishads, Brahma Sutras and Gita.

- Ram Mohan Roy thought that without sacrificing or discarding the genuine spiritual and cultural heritage, India could not have a new philosophy, absorbing and assimilating the modernism imported from the west.

- He strongly advocated use of modern science and technology in education and also use of the English language. Ram Mohan Roy was, in fact, a rationalist and a pioneer of English education and enlightened journalism.

- He championed the cause of the exploited peasantry.

- His main aim was to relate religion to all aspects of life – individual, social and national.

- Universal theism was his message. He, however, used the Vedas and the Upanishads, in worship, sermons and devotional music, with emphasis on the universality of their contents.

- Ram Mohan Roy champion of the cause of women. He worked against irrational institutions like sati and child marriage. Through the Brahmo Samaj, he advocated for women. Inheritance of property for women,

and inter-caste marriage were special programmes undertaken by the Brahmo Samaj.

- He was against the caste system, as it put barriers in the ways of growth of Indian society. Ram Mohan Roy was essentially a democrat and humanist.
- He did not hesitate in borrowing well from the British Raj and western culture. The Brahmo Samaj was an institution for all sorts of people, without distinction, for the workship of the some Supreme God, without idolatry.

However, the historians R.C. Majumdar, H.C. Roychaudhuri and Kalikinker Datta are of the view that Ram Mohan Roy never regarded himself as anything but a Hindu. He stoutly denied that he had founded a different sect. He always entertained the recital of the Vedas even by orthodox Brahmans. No non-Brahmana was allowed in the Brahmo Sabha room. Ram Mohan Roy himself wore the sacred thread of the Brahmanas up to his death.

- Debendranath Tagore provided a solid organizational set-up to the Brahmo Samaj after the death of Ram Mohan Roy in England.
- He decided to make the propagation of 'Brahmo Dharma' the main programme or the Brahmo Samaj. His Tattvabodhini Sabha, or Truth Teacing Society, preached the Vedas and Vedantism as the basic of the Samaj.
- The system of initiation and from of divine service were introduced by the new leader. He maintained and carried the best traditions of the days of Ram Mohan Roy.
- He gave a new direction to Brahminism by abandoning belief in the infallibility of scriptures. The Samaj continued to work for ameliorating the condition of women and children and for modernization of education.
- A new phase began with the emergence of the dynamic personality of Keshub Chandra Sen. Sen advocated radical reforms with the zeal of a missionary.

- His mission was to broaden the activities of the Brahmo movement and to extend it to other parts of the country. In 1867, the Brahmo Samaj started functioning at Bombay under the leadership of Ranade and Bhandarkar.
- It organized several programmes in Madras. Keshub fervent devotion, passionate enthusiasm and powerful eloquence gave a new life to the Samaj.
- His rationalistic principles reached new heights. The true spirit of repentance and devotional fervour increased the strength of the movement. He toured Madras and Bombay and other places to propagate the ideals of the Samaj.

Debendranath and Keshub soon fell out, as the two cherished different ways of functioning within the Samaj. Debendranath had a radical approach. In 1866, Keshub established the Brahmo Samaj of India. The parent body was known as the Adi Brahmo Samaj. The new organization tried to foster the sense of spiritual and national unity in India. Keshub visit to England in 1869 spread the message of the Samaj in the West.

- The splinter Samaj advocated radical changes, including complete abolition of the caste system.
- Female emancipation and female education received top priority.
- Due to Christian influence, greater emphasis was put on the sense of sin, the spirit of repentance, and the efficacy of prayer.
- Religion was treated as a practical recourse to solve human problems rather than a dogmatic doctrine.
- His thesis of 'New Dispensation' (Nava Vidhan) declared on 25 January 1880 promoted a new synthesis of different religions.

The fourth phase in the Brahmo Samaj emerged when some followers of Keshub Chandra Sen left him and founded the Sadharan Brahmo Samaj on. The new organization was founded for the following reasons:

- the demand for the introduction of a new constitution was not accepted ;
- there was disagreement on the question of adesha or Divine Command.
- Keshub Chandra Sen's daughter was married to the prince of Cooch Bihar, in violation of the Native Marriage Act of 1872.

The founder adopted a new constitution based on universal adult franchise. The old organization went into oblivion. The new Samaj is active even today, with its branches all over the country.

- It has followed the path of constitutionalism and radical reformism.
- Its programmes include the removal of the purdah system, introduction of widow remarriage, abolition of polygamy and early marriage and provision of higher education for women.
- It has attacked rigidities based on caste system. Inter-caste commensal relations, such as eating and drinking water, have been encouraged by the Samaj.
- Emphasis on monotheism continues to be its primary ideal.

THE PRARTHANA SAMAJ

The Prarthana Samaj, an offshoot of the Brahmo Samaj, came into existence in 1867 under the leadership of Justice Mahadeo Govinda Ranade. Keshub was a source of inspiration for this organization.

- The followers of the Prarthana Samaj never looked upon themselves as adherents of a new religion or of a new sect, outside and alongside the general Hindu body, but saw it simply as a movement within it. They were staunch theists in the Vaishnavite tradition of Maharashtra. The saints, like Namdeo, Tukaram and Ramdas influenced them to a large extent.
- They devoted themselves to social reforms such as inter-caste dining and marriages, remarriage of widows, and improvement of the lot of women and depressed classes.

- The Samaj founded the following organization and institutions: an asylum and orphanage at Pandharpur; night schools; a widow home: and a depressed classes mission.

Justice Ranade devoted his life to the Prarthana Samaj. He contributed to the formation of the Widow Marriage Association in 1861, and the Deccan Education Society in 1884-85. Ranade conveyed two things:

- the whole man was his concern; and
- there was continuity even in face of radical transformation.

He advocated that these two should become a part of the reformist philosophy.

THE ARYA SAMAJ

The Arya Samaj was founded in 1875 by Swami Dayananda Saraswati. He was a Sanskrit scholar with no English education. He gave the call "Go back to the Vedas". He had no regard for the Puranas. Swami received education on Vedanta. His views were similar to that of Ram Mohan Roy. Disbelief in polytheism and image worship, opposition to caste-based restriction, child marriage, and opposition to the prohibition of sea voyages, and advocating female education and widow remarriage were important programmes common to the followers of Brahmo Samaj and Arya Samaj. Like other reforms of his times, Swami Dayananda Saraswati regarded the Vedas as eternal and infallible. His monumental work – Satyartha Prakash is an interpretation of the Vedas. Swami considered the epics – the Ramayana and the Mahabharata – as literary treasures.

- Swami launched the Shuddhi (purification) movement, conversion of non-Hindu to Hinduism. This was begun to realize the ideal of unifying India notionally, socially and religiously.
- Direct contact with the masses had immense in the Punjab and the United Provinces.
- He advocated that Vedas had all the truth. Every modern thing could be found in them.

- Swami strongly attacked the hereditary basis of the caste system, idolatry and the belief in the superiority of Brahmanas over caste groups.
- He rejected unsociability and pleaded that the study of the Vedas be made open to all. The work of the Swami after his death was carried forward by Lala Hansraj, Pandit Guru Dutt, Lala Lajpat Raj and Sawami Sradhananda.
- The Samaj, to prevent child marriage, fixed the minimum marriageable age at 25 years for boys and 16 for girls.
- Inter-caste marriage and widow remarriage were encouraged. Even today, Arya Samaj Mandirs (temples) performs such acts with sincerity and promptness.
- Equal status for women was their demand, both in letter and spirit.
- The Samaj also helped the people in crises like floods, famines and earthquakes.
- The Samaj opened orphanages and widow homes at various religious places.
- The Samaj has also attempted to give a new direction to education. The revival of the 'Gurukula' pattern, an ancient system of Hindu education, has been its goal. However, at the higher level, the value of English education was recognized. Today, the Arya Samaj has a widespread network of Dayananda Anglo-Vedic schools and colleges throughout India.

THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION

The Ramakrishna Mission is an embodiment of the synthesis of ancient India and modern western cultures. Ramakrishna Paramahansa was the founder of this socio-religious movement.

- He had faith in all religions and performed religious and performed exercises in accordance with Hinduism, Islam and Christianity. All the different religious views are different ways leading to the same goals – was the message of Ramakrishna.

- God is both one and many. He has form and is also without it. This message is a great universal spirit as well as a constellation of symbols.
- Thus, catholicity was the essence of the Mission's founder. He led a life of a secluded saint with broad catholicity, mysticism and spirituality.

Formally, the Mission was founded in May 1897 by Paramahansa disciple, Narendranath Dutta, who was later on known as Swami Vivekananda. Vivekananda was a graduate of Calcutta University. Two objectives of the Mission are :

- to bring into existence a band of monks dedicated to a life of renunciation and practical spirituality, from among whom teachers and workers would be sent out to spread the universal message of Vedanta as illustrated in the life of Ramakrishna;
- in conjunction with lay disciples, to carry on preaching, philanthropic and charitable works. looking upon all men, women and children. irrespective of caste, creed or colour, as veritable manifestations of the Divine.

Paramahansa himself founded the Ramakrishna Math with his young monastic as a nucleus to fulfil the first objective. The second objective was taken up by Swami Vivekananda after Ramakrishna's death. Vivekananda carried the message of Ramakrishna all over India. He was an eloquent speaker with a charming personality. Vivekananda's followers included people of all strata including prices and priests In 1893, he attended the famous "Parliament of Religions" at Chicago. He delivered lectures on Hindu philosophy as enunciated by Ramakrishna Paramahansa at various places in the UK and the USA.

The headquarters of the Ramakrishna Math and Mission are at Belur, near Kolkata. The Math is a religious trust dedicated to the nursing of the inner spiritual life of the members of the monastery.

The Mission is a charitable society dedicated to the expression of inner spiritual life in outward collective action in the service of men.

- The Mission stands for religious and social reforms. The Vedantic doctrine is its ideal.
- Its emphasis is on the development of the highest spirituality inherent in man.
- Certain spiritual experiences of Ramakrishna, the teachings of the Upanishads and the Gita, and the examples of the Buddha and Jesus are the basis of Vivekananda message to the world about human values.
- He wanted to make the Vedanta practical. His mission was to bridge the gulf between paramartha (service) and vyavahara (behaviour), and between spirituality and day-to-day life.
- He advocated the doctrine of service – the service of all beings. The service of jiva (living objects) is the worship of Siva. Life itself is religion. By service, the Divine exists within man.
- Vivekananda was for using technology and modern sciences in the service of mankind.

The Mission has been in existence for more than a century. It has now developed into a worldwide organization. The Mission is a deeply religious body; but it is not a proselytizing body. It is not a sect of Hinduism. In fact, this one of the strong reasons for the success of the Mission. The Mission has given top priority to the idea of social service, both in terms of philanthropic work and upliftment of religious and spiritual life. It has been successful in propagating the universal principle of Vedanta and giving a true picture of India to the western world. It believes that the philosophy of Vedanta will make a Christian a better Christian and a Hindu a better Hindu.

The Mission has opened many schools and dispensaries, and helped the victims of natural calamities. Millions of men and women suffering from dumbness have been helped by the Mission.

The Mission has published books on the Vedanta, and it also publishes about ten journals and magazines in English and other Indian languages.

THE SERVANTS OF INDIAN SOCIETY

Like other nineteenth century organizations for socio-religious reforms, the Servants of Indian Society undertook various welfare programmes in the early twentieth century. Gopal Krishna Gokhale, a liberal leader of the Indian National Congress, founded the Society in 1905.

- The aim of the Society was to train "national missionaries for the service of India, and to promote, by all constitutional means, the true interests of the Indian people".
- Its members were called upon "to devote their lives to the cause of the country in a religious spirit".
- It was a society dedicated to the service of the country. Its aim was to prepare a cadre of selfless workers.

Srinivas Shastri succeeded Gokhale as its president, after Gokhale's death in 1915. Some of the members devoted themselves to selfless politics, others took up welfare activities. In 1911, Narayan Malhar Joshi, a follower of Gokhale, founded the Social Service League in Bombay.

- Its aim was "to secure for the masses of the people better and reasonable conditions of life and work".
- In 1926, they ran 17 night nurseries. They organized over libraries and reading rooms and 2 days nurseries. They organized over a hundred cooperative societies.
- Other activities included Police Court Agent's work, legal advice and aid to the poor and illiterate, excursions for slum-dwellers, facilities for gymnasia and theatrical performances, sanitary work, medical relief and Boys' Clubs and Scout Corps. Joshi also founded the All-India Trade Union Congress in 1920.

REFORM MOVEMENTS AMONG MUSLIMS, SIKHS AND PARSIS :

The Muslims had Four Revivalist Movements:

*   the Ahmadiya movement; the Aligarh movement; Sir Mohammad Iqbal's movement; and Sheikh Abdul Halim Sharar's movement.

*   These movements stressed upon universal brotherhood, liberal education and liberal interpretation of the Quran.

*   Parsis and Sikhs also launched several socio-religious reforms in their respective communities.

*   Parsis vowed to discard orthodoxy, particularly in regard to education of women, marriage and social position of women.

*   The Sikhs did a lot of work to reform the management of the Gurudwaras. There was practically a revolt against the Mahants of these shrines. The Khalsa College at Amritsar was established by the end of the nineteenth century.

THE SWADESHI MOVEMENT

The Swadeshi movement aimed at the indigenization by discarding use of foreign goods and inculcation of nationalist spirit among the people of India. 'Lokahitawadi', a reformer in Maharashtra, an ardent advocate of the Swadeshi movement, listed the following points for reforming society:

*   all should devoutly worship God;

*   all ceremonies, except those connected with initiation, marriage and death should be abolished. Ceremonials and prayers should be performed in one's own language;

*   every person should have liberty to act, speak and write according to what he thinks;

*   men and women should have equal rights in social and religious functions;

*   morality if higher than performance of ritual;

*   no person is to be treated with contempt. Pride of caste is unbecoming. All men are to be treated with charity. Do good to all;

*   love of the motherland and good of the country should always be borne in mind;

*   the rights of the people are higher than those of the governments,

*   the rules laid down by the government and rules suggested by reason should be observed;

*   everybody should strive for the growth of learning; and

*   truth should be the abiding principle of conduct.

These canons of conduct show that India was trying to rejuvenate its socio-cultural fabric and make a dignified place for itself in the changed circumstances. It had become necessary to change, to discard and to adopt some elements simultaneously. Striving for synthesis had become a necessity. Condemnation of ritual paraphernalia, caste system, rules of marriage, and of differences between the sexes had become absolutely necessary.

THE SATYASHODHAK SAMAJ MOVEMENT

Jotiba Phule organized a powerful movement against the Brahmanas in Maharashtra. He started a school for girls, and one for girls, and one for the 'untouchables', and also a home for widows. He challenged the supremacy of the Brahmanas. His two writings – Saravajanik Satyadharma Pustak and Gulamgiri became sources of inspiration for the common masses.

*   He founded the Satyashodhak Samaj (Truth Seekers' Society) to carry out his crusade against the Brahmana hegemony.

*   The Satyashodhak Samaj, besides being anti-Brahmanic, had a programme of positive action for women liberation, propagating education, and for economic betterment.

*   Mahatma Phule used the symbol of Rajah Bali as opposed to the Brahmana's symbol of Rama.

*   The middle castes, the Kunbis, Malis and Dhangars, developed a sense of identity as a

class against Brahmanas, who are thought of as exploiters.

- In the 1990s, the Maharaja of Kolhapur encouraged the non-Brahmana movement. The movement spread to the southern states in the first decade of twentieth century. Kammas, Reddis and Vellalas, the powerful intermediate castes, joined hands against the Brahmanas. Muslims also joined them.

THE SNDP MOVEMENT

·A number of backward class movements were launched in the pre-independence period. The backward classes organized themselves against the Brahmanas in particular as they thought that most of the socio-economic advantages were cornered by them depriving the agricultural intermediate castes and communities. These were similar to Jotiba Phule's Satyashodhak Samaj movement, with the similar aim of ending oppression by the Brahmanas. The Brahmanas were the first to exploit modern educational and employment opportunities. The upper non-Brahmana castes failed to get access to these opportunities. The Sri Narayan Dharma Paripalana (SNDP) movement, among the Ezhavas of Kerala, is an example of conflict between the depressed classes and the upper non-Brahmana castes. The Ezhavas were a caste of toddy-tappers in Kerala. They were like the Nadars of Tamil Nadu and the Idigas of Karnataka. The Ezhavas were the largest single caste group constituting 26 per cent of the total population of Kerala. In a developing country like India, movements led by the backward classes speak of their low status, disadvantages, discriminations and deprivations which they suffered for a long time at the hands of the ruling classes and communities.

The SNDP movement is an example of a 'regional' movement. It pertains to the Ezhavas of Kerala who were untouchables. The ideology of the movement was formulated by Sri Narayan Guru Swamy. He formed a programme of action known as the 'SNDP Yogam'.

- The Yogam took up several issues, including the right of admission to public schools, recruitment to government employment, entry into temple, on roads and political representation.

- Most of these objectives were realized. The movement, as a whole, brought about transformative structural changes which included upward social mobility, shift in the traditional distribution of power, and a federation of 'backward castes' into a large conglomeration.

- Caste reforms and mobility movement were launched in almost all parts of India during the British period.

- These movements had two objectives: to protest against the hegemony of Brahmanas, in particular and of other upper castes, in general; and to elevate the position of the backward castes in the caste hierarchy by imitating lifestyles of the upper castes, including having higher education and prestigious jobs.

- These movements invariably created 'ethnic' awareness and politicization among various caste groups.

FAR REACHING IMPACT OF THESE MOVEMENTS

The greatest impact of the nineteenth century socio-religious reform movements was:

- the creation of national awakening among the masses;

- the revival of Hinduism as a tolerant, rational religion to restore its lost prestige in the wake of Islam in the past and Christianity in the nineteenth century;

- an onslaught on the indignities committed on women, untouchables and other oppressed and depressed sections of Indian society;

- the creation of the feelings of sacrifice, service and rationalism;

- an attack on the hereditary character and rigidities of the caste system; and finally

- a sense of equality, indigenization and co-existence of cultures and religions.

It has been noted earlier that atrocities on women through purdah, child marriage, hypergamy, dowry and sex-based inequality in regard to division of work, education, occupation, freedom, etc., moved all the reformists. Not only were legislations against these ills passed, but concrete social actions were also taken to ameliorate the plight of women. It was an era of new enlightenment, of indigenization with an open mind, welfarism, liberalism and equalitarianism. This sort of awakening contributed a lot to India's freedom struggle.

These socio-religious movements were for introducing humanistic social reforms by stopping the moral and material decadence of India. Even radical westernization was pleaded for by Ram Mohan Roy as a means to rejuvenate the decaying Indian culture and society. These movements did not have an all-India character. They were localized in Bengal, Maharashtra, Punjab, etc. Their impact was generally limited to the educated, upper middle and middle classes. Assimilation of the values of rationalism, universal brotherhood, and freedom of man and equality of sexes was not easy with the Indian tradition and culture. These movements have been called "denationalized and hyper-westernized" by some critics. It is certainly undeniable that these movements made tremendous and everlasting impact in terms of socio-cultural awakening against social evils.

POSITIVE ASPECT OF REFORM MOVEMENTS AND SOCIAL REFORM

The orthodox sections of society could not accept the scientific ideological onslaught of the socio-religious rebels. As a result of this, the reformers were subjected to abuse, persecution, issuing of *fatwa* and even assassination attempts by the reactionaries.

- However, in spite of opposition, these movements contributed towards liberation of the individual from the conformity born out of fear and from uncritical submission to exploitation by the priests. The translation of religious texts into vernacular languages, emphasis on individual's right to interpret the scriptures and simplification of rituals made worship a more personal experience. The movements emphasised the human intellect's capacity to think and reason.

- By weeding out corrupt elements, religious beliefs and practices, the reformers enabled their followers to meet the official taunt that their religions and society were decadent and inferior. It gave the rising middle classes the much needed cultural roots to cling to, and served the purpose of reducing the sense of humiliation which the conquest by a foreign power had produced.

- A realization of the special needs of modern times, especially in terms of scientific knowledge, and thus promoting a modern, this-worldly, secular and rational outlook was major contribution of these reform movements.

- Socially, this attitude reflected in a basic change in the notions of 'pollution and purity'. Although traditional values and customs were a prominent target of attack from the reformers yet the reformers aimed at modernization rather than outright westernizing based on blind imitation of alien western cultural values. In fact, the reform movements sought to create a favourable social climate for modernization. To that extent, these movements ended India's cultural and intellectual isolation from the rest of the world. The reformers argued that modern ideas and culture could be best imbibed by integrating them into Indian cultural streams.

- The underlying concern of these reformist efforts was revival of the native cultural personality which had got distorted by colonial domination. This cultural ideological struggle was to prove to be an important instrument of evolution of national consciousness and a part of Indian national resolve to resist colonial cultural and ideological hegemony.

- However, not all these progressive, nationalist tendencies were able to outgrow the sectarian and obscurantist outlook. This was possibly due to divergent duality of cultural and political struggles resulting in cultural backwardness despite political advancement.

NEGATIVE ASPECT OF REFORM MOVEMENTS AND SOCIAL REFORM

- One of the major limitations of these religious reform movements was that they had a narrow social base, namely the educated and urban middle classes, while the needs of vast masses of peasantry and the urban poor were ignored.

- The tendency of reformers to the greatness of the past and to rely on scriptural authority encouraged mysticism in new garbs and fostered pseudo-scientific thinking while exercising a check on full acceptance of the need for a modern scientific outlook. But, above all, these tendencies contributed, at least to some extent, in compartmentalizing Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs and Parsis, as also alienating high caste Hindus from low caste Hindus.

- An overemphasis on religious and philosophical aspects of the cultural heritage got somewhat magnified by an insufficient emphasis on other aspects of culture – art, architecture, literature, music, science and technology.

- To make matters worse, the Hindu reformers confined their praise of the Indian past to its ancient period and looked upon the medieval period of Indian history essentially as an era of decadence. This tended to create a notion of two separate peoples, on the one hand, on the other; an uncritical praise of the past was not acceptable to the low caste sections of society which had suffered under religiously sanctioned exploitation precisely during the ancient period.

- Moreover, the past itself tended to be placed into compartments on a partisan basis. Many in the Muslim middle classes went to the extent of turning to the history of West Asia for their traditions and moments of pride.

- The process of evolution of a composite culture which was evident throughout Indian history showed signs of being arrested with the rise of another form of consciousness – communal consciousness – along with national consciousness among the middle classes.

- Many other factors were certainly responsible for the birth of communalism in modern times, but undoubtedly the nature of religious reform movements also contributed to it.

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3 RURAL AND AGRARIAN SOCIAL STRUCTURE

— The idea of Indian village and village studies
— Agrarian social structure - evolution of land tenure system, land reforms.

WHAT IS SOCIAL STRUCTURE?

Human world is composed of individuals. Individuals interact with one another for the fulfilment of their needs. In this process, they occupy certain statues and roles in social life with accompanying rights and obligations. Their social behaviour is patterned and gets associated with certain norms and values which provide them guidance in social interaction. There emerge various social units, such as, groups, community, associations and institutions in society as product of social intercourse in human life.

In this scenario, social structure is conceived as the pattern of inter-related statuses and roles found in a society, constituting a relatively stable set of social relations. It is the organized pattern of the inter-related rights and obligations of persons and groups in a system of interaction.

RURAL SOCIAL STRUCTURE IN INDIA

India is a country of ancient civilization that goes back to the Indus Valley Civilization which flourished during the third millennium B.C. Since then except for a brief interlude during the Rig-Vedic period when the urban centres were overrun, rural and urban centres have co-existed in India.

Rural and urban centres share some common facets of life. They show interdependence especially in the spheres of economy, urban-ward migration, townsmen or city dwellers' dependence on villages for various products (e.g., food-grains, milk, vegetables and raw materials for industry) and increasing dependence of villagers on towns for manufactured goods and market. Despite this interdependence between the two there are certain distinctive features which separate them from each other in terms of their size, demographic composition, cultural moorings and style of life, economy, employment and social relations. We find that the size of village population is small and density of population is low in comparison with towns and cities. India is rightly called a country of villages. Moreover, about 75 per cent of the total population lives in villages. Further, rural life is characterized by direct relationship of people to nature i.e., land, animal and plant life. Agriculture is their main occupation. For example, in India agriculture provides livelihood to about 60 per cent of the labour force.

Long enduring rural social institutions in India are **Family, Kinship, Caste, Class and Village**. They have millennia old historical roots and structures. They encompass the entire field of life —

social, economic, political and cultural – of the rural people. The complexity of social norms and values, statuses and roles, rights and obligations is reflected in them. Here we will discuss **the idea of Indian village and village study**. Other components will be discussed in other sections.

VILLAGE occupies an important place in the social and cultural landscape of contemporary India. Notwithstanding India's significant industrialization over the last five or six decades, and a considerable increase in its urban population, a large majority of Indians continue to live in its more than five lakh villages and remain dependent on agriculture, directly or indirectly. According to the 2001 Census, rural India accounted for nearly 72 per cent of India's total population. Similarly, though the share of agriculture has come down to around one-fourth of the total national income, nearly half of India's working population is directly employed in the agricultural sector.

Apart from it being an important demographic and structural reality characterizing contemporary India, village has also been an important ideological category, a category through which India has often been imagined and imaged in modern times. The village has been seen as the ultimate signifier of the "authentic native life", a place where one could see, observe and "realize" India and develop an understanding of the way local people organize their social relationships and belief systems. As **Andre Beteille** writes, 'the village was not merely a place where people lived; it had a design in which were reflected the basic values of Indian civilization'. Institutional patterns of the Indian "village communities" and its cultural values where supposed to be an example of what in the twentieth century came to be known as the "traditional society".

IDEA OF INDIAN VILLAGE

In the beginning, the studies by Maine, Metcalfe, and Baden-Powell gave an exaggerated notion of village autonomy. The Indian society was portrayed as a 'closed' and 'isolated' system. In a report of the select Committee of House of Commons, Charles Metcalfe depicted the Indian village as a monolithic, atomistic and unchanging entity. He observed: "The village communities are little republics, having nearly everything that they want within themselves and almost independent of any foreign relations". Further, he stated that 'wars pass over it, regimes come and go, but the village as a society always emerges 'unchanged, unshaken, and self- sufficient'.

Though one may find detailed references to village life in ancient and medieval times, it was during the British colonial rule that an image of the Indian village was constructed by the colonial administrators that was to have far reaching implications – ideological as well as political for the way Indian society was to be imagined in the times to come.

Recent historical, anthropological and sociological studies have, however, shown that Indian village was hardly ever a republic. It was never self-sufficient. It has links with the wider society. **Migration, village exogamy, movement, inter-village economy and caste links and religious pilgrimage** were prevalent in the past, connecting the village with the neighbouring villages and the wider society. Moreover, new forces of modernization in the modern period augmented inter-village and rural-urban interaction.

But, as pointed by Mandelbaum and Orenstein, despite increasing external linkages village is still a fundamental social unit. People living in a village have a feeling of common identity. They have intra-village ties at familial, caste and class levels in social, economic, political and cultural domains. In fact, village life is characterized by reciprocity, cooperation, dominance and competition.

Not all colonial administrators shared Metcalfe's assessment of the Indian village. It never became the most popular and influential representation of India. The Indian village, in the

colonial discourse, was a self-sufficient community, with communal ownership of land and was marked by a functional integration of various occupational groups. Things as diverse as stagnation, simplicity and social harmony were attributed to the village which was taken to be the basic unit of Indian civilization. 'Each village was an inner world, a traditional community, self-sufficient in its economy, patriarchal in its governance, surrounded by an outer one other hostile villages and despotic governments'.

In many ways, even **in the nationalist discourse**, the idea of village as a representative of authentic native life was derived from the same kind of imagination. Though Gandhi was careful enough not to glorify the decaying village of British India, he nevertheless celebrated the so-called simplicity and authenticity of village life, an image largely derived from colonial representations of the Indian village. The decadence of the village was seen as a result of colonial rule and therefore village reconstruction was, along with political independence, an important process for recovery of the lost self.

In the **post-Independence India** also 'village' has continued to be treated as the basic unit of Indian society. Among the academic traditions, the studies of village have perhaps been the most popular among the sociologists and social anthropologists working on India. They carried-out a large number of studies focusing on the social and cultural life of the village in India. Most of these studies were published during the decades 1950s and 1960s. These "village studies" played an important role in giving respectability to the disciplines of sociology and social in India.

Generally basing their accounts on first-hand fieldwork, carried out mostly in a single village, social anthropologists focused on the structures of social relationships, institutional patterns, beliefs and value systems of the rural people. The publication of these studies also marked the beginning of a new phase in the history of Indian social sciences. They showed, for the first time,

the relevance of a framework based understanding of Indian society, or what came to be known as "field-view" of the India, different from the then dominant "book-view" of India, developed by Indologists and orientalists.

What was the Context of Village Studies in India?

During 1950s and 1960s the new interest in the village social life was a direct offshoot of the newly emerged interest in the study of the peasantry in the Western academy. Emergence of the so-called "new states" following decolonization during the post-war period had an important influence on research priorities in the social sciences. The most significant feature of the newly emerged 'third world' countries was the dependence of large proportions of their populations on a stagnant agrarian sector. Thus, apart from industrialization, the main agenda for the new political regimes was the transformation of their "backward" and stagnant agrarian economy. Though the strategies and priorities differed, 'modernization' and 'development' became common programmes in most of the Third World countries.

Understanding the prevailing structures of agrarian relations and working out ways and means of transforming them were recognized as the most important priorities within development studies. It was in this context that the concept of 'peasantry' found currency in the discipline of sociology. At a time when primitive tribes were either in the process of disappearing or had already disappeared, the "discovery" of the peasantry provided a new lease of life to the discipline of sociology.

The **Village Community** was identified as the social foundation of the peasant economy in Asia. It is quite easy to see this connection between the Redfieldian notion of 'peasant studies' and the Indian 'village studies'. The single most poplar concept used by the sociologists studying the Indian village was Robert Redfield's notion of 'little community'. Among the first works on the

subject, **Village India: Studies in the Little Community** edited by M. Marriot was brought out under the direct supervision of Redfield.

Having found a relevant subject matter in the village, social anthropologists initiated field studies in the early 1950s. During October 1951 and May 1954 the Economic and Political Weekly published a number of short essays providing brief accounts of individual villages that were being studied by different anthropologists. These essays were later put together by **M.N. Srinivas** in the form of a book with the title India's Villages. Interestingly, the first volume of Rural Profiles by **D.N. Majumdar** also appeared in 1955. **S.C. Dube** also published his full length study of a village near Hyderabad, Indian Village in the same year.

IMPORTANCE OF VILLAGE STUDIES IN INDIA

- **To prepare a profile of village India, provide authentic and scientific account of traditional social order and there transformation :** In the emerging intellectual and political environment during the post-war period, sociologists and saw themselves playing an important role in providing authentic and scientific account of the "traditional social order", the transformation of which had become a global concern. Many of the village monographs emerged directly from the projects carried-out by sociologists for development agencies.

- **Evaluation of rural reconstruction programme :** Lewis was appointed by the Ford Foundation in India to work with the Programmed Evaluation Organization of the Planning Commission to help in developing a scheme for the objective evaluation of the rural reconstruction porogramme. According to Lewis, who studied a village near Delhi, the main concern of there study were what the villagers felt about need of housing, education, health, land consolidation programme and newly created panchayats.

- **To assist economists in planning process: Majumdar** has stated the importance of village studies in the following words, "sociologists, unlike his economist counterpart, saw the village 'in the context of the cultural life lived by the people' and the way 'rural life was inter-locked and interdependent' which 'baffled social engineers as it could not be geared to landed economy. It was here that the economists needed the assistance of sociologists and anthropologists".

- **According to M.N. Srinivas**, the sociologists viewed their perspective as being "superior" because they alone studied village community as a whole. Their knowledge and approach provided an indispensable background for the proper interpretation of data on any single aspect of rural life. Their approach provided a much-needed corrective to the partial approach of the economist, political scientist and social worker.

- **For qualitative analysis of economic growth :** According to Epstein while economists used quantitative techniques and their method was "more scientific"; the sociological approach had its own advantages. Sociological studies provided qualitative analysis. The method of sociology required that its practitioners selected 'a small universe which could be studied intensively for a long period of time to analyze its intricate system of social reactions'.

- **Study of historical continuity and stability of village :** **Hoebel** has stated that the village and its hamlets represented "India in microcosm". For **Srinivas**, they 'were invaluable observation-centres where sociologist could study in detail social processes and problems to be found occurring in great parts of India'. **Dasgupta** has stated that 'Villages were supposedly close to people, their life, livelihood and culture' and they were 'a focal point of reference for

individual prestige and identification'. As 'an important administrative and social unit, the village profoundly influenced the behaviour pattern of its inhabitants'. Villages were supposed to have been around for 'hundreds of years', having 'survived years of wars, making and breaking up of empires, famines, floods and other natural disasters'. This perceived 'historical continuity and stability of villages' strengthened the case for village studies.

However not all sociologists were involved with development programmes. Most of them saw there work in professional terms. **Srinivas** argued that 'the anthropologist has intimate and first hand knowledge of one or two societies and he can place his understanding at the disposal of the planner. He may in some cases even be able to anticipate the kind of reception a particular administrative measure may have. But he cannot lay down policy because it is a result of certain decisions about right and wrong'. Thus maintaining a "safe" distance from the political agencies was seen to be necessary because, unlike economics, social anthropology did not have a theoretical grounding that could help them become applied sciences.

DEFINING FEATURES OF INDIAN VILLAGE

The Indian village had a considerable degree of diversity. This diversity was both internal as well as external. The village was internally differentiated in diverse groupings and had a complex structure of social relationships and institutional arrangements. There were also different kinds of villages in different parts of the country. Even within a particular region of the country, not all villages were alike.

The stereotypical image of the Indian village as a self-sufficient community was contested by anthropological studies. **Beteille**, for example, argued 'at least as far back in time as living memory went, there was no reason to believe that the village was fully self-sufficient in the economic sphere. Similarly **Srinivas** too contested the colonial notion of the Indian village being a completely self-sufficient republic. The village, he argued, 'was always a part of a wider entity.

The fact that the village interacted with the outside world did not mean it did not have a design of its own or could not be studied as a representative unit of Indian social life. While villages had horizontal ties, it was the vertical ties within the village that governed much of the life of an average person in the village.

Village provided an important source of identity to its residents. Different scholars placed different emphasis on how significant the village identity was when compared to other sources of identification, such as those of caste, class and locality.

Srinivas argued that individuals in his village had a sense of identification with their village and an insult to oneself, one's wife, or one's family.

Dube argued that though Indian villages vary greatly in their internal structure organization their ethos and world-view, and in their life-ways and thought-ways, on account of variety of factors village communities all over the Indian sub continent had a number of common features.

The village settlement, as a unit of social organization, represented a kind of solidarity which was different from that of the kin, the caste and the class. Each village was a distinct entity, had some individual mores and usages, and possessed a corporate unity.

Different castes and communities inhabiting the village were integrated in its economic, social and ritual pattern by ties of mutual and reciprocal obligations sanctioned and sustained by generally accepted conventions.

Notwithstanding the existence of groups and factions inside the settlement, people of the village could, and did face the outside world as an organized, compact whole.

Though the later studies were much more elaborate and contained long descriptions of different forms of social inequalities and differences

in the rural society, many of them continued to use the framework of reciprocity particularly while conceptualizing 'unity' of the village the way **Srinivas and Dube or earlier Wiser** did. Some of the anthropologists explicitly contested the unity thesis while others qualified their arguments by recognizing the conflicts within the village and the ties that villagers had with the outside world. For instance, **Paul Hilbert** in his study of a south Indian village, although arguing that the caste system provided a source of stability to the village, also underlined the fact that 'deep seated cleavages underlie the apparent unity of the village and fragmented it into numerous social groups'. Similarly, Beteille had argued that his study of village 'Sripuram as a whole constituted a unit in a physical sense and to a much lesser extent, in the social sense'.

SOCIAL STRUCTURE OF THE VILLAGE: CASTE, CLASS AND GENDER

Caste

Caste and hierarchy have long been seen as the distinctive and defining features of the Indian society. It was during the colonial period that caste was, for the first time, theorized in modern sociological language. The colonial administrators also gathered extensive ethnographic details and wrote detailed accounts of the way systems of caste distinctions and hierarchies worked in different parts of the sub-continent. Social anthropology in the post-independence India continued with a similar approach that saw caste as the most important and distinctive feature of Indian society. While caste was a concrete structure that guided social relationships in the Indian village, hierarchy was its ideology.

An individual in caste society lived in a hierarchical world. Not only were the people divided into higher or lower groups, their food, their dresses, ornaments, customs and manners were all ranked in an order of hierarchy. Anthropologist invariably invoked the Varna system of hierarchy which divided the Hindu society into five major categories. The first three, viz., Brahmins (the

priests or men of learning), Kshatriyas (rulers and warriors) and Vaishya (traders) were regarded as dvijas or the twice born. The fourth category was that of Shudras, composed of numerous occupational castes that were regarded as relatively 'clean' and were not classed as "untouchables". In the fifth major category were placed all the untouchable castes. According to Dube the Hindus all over India, accepted this classification.

The legitimate occupations to be followed by people in these major categories were defined by tradition. Within each category there were several sub-groups (jati or castes), which could be arranged in a hierarchical order within them. According to **Dube**, despite a general framework, there were considerable variations in different regions where several socially autonomous castes, each fitting into one of the five major divisions, were otherwise practically independent in there socio-religious sphere of life.

According to **Majumdar**, Caste divisions determined and decided all social relations. Most scholars saw caste as a closed system where 'entry into a social status was a function of heredity and individual achievement, personal quality or wealth had, according to the strict traditional prescription, no say in determining the social status'. However, **Srinivas** is of the view that, there were some who admitted that the way caste operated at the local level was 'radically different from that expressed in the Varna scheme. Mutual rank was uncertain and this stemmed from the fact that mobility was possible in caste'.

Dube identified six factors that contributed towards the status differentiation in the village community of Shamirpet: *religion and caste; landownership; wealth; position in government service and village organization; age; and distinctive personality traits*. Attempts to claim a higher ritual status through, what Srinivas called sanskritisation, was not a simple process. It could not be achieved only through rituals and lifestyle imitation. The group had to also negotiate it at the local power structure. Similarly, stressing

secular factors, Dube pointed to the manner in which the caste panchayats of the lower or the menial castes worked as unions to secure their employment and strengthen their bargaining power vis-a-vis the land owning dominant castes.

However, a large majority of them viewed caste system as working within the framework of jajmani system and bound together different castes living in the village or a cluster of villages in enduring and pervasive relationships.

Land and Class

As is evident from the above discussion, the social sociologists studying India during the fifties and sixties generally worked in the framework of caste. The manner in which social science disciplines developed in India, class and land came to be seen as the concerns of economists. However, since sociologists advocated a prospective that studied "small communities" in holistic terms, agriculture and the social relations of production on land also found a place in the village monographs.

While some of them directly focused on economic life as one of the central research questions, most saw it as an aspect of the caste and occupational structure of the village. Land relations to them reflected the same patterns of hierarchy as those present in the caste system. **Srinivas** has argued that 'There was a certain amount of overlap between the twin hierarchies of caste and land. The richer landowners generally came from such high castes as Brahmins and Lingayats while the Harijans contributed a substantial number of landless labourers. In contrast to the wealthier household, the poor one was almost invisible'.

Some others underlined the primacy of land over all other factors in determining social hierarchy in the village. Comparing a Brahmin dominated village with a Jat dominated village, **Oscar Lewis** argued that 'While the landowners are generally of higher caste in Indian villages, it is their position as landowners, rather than caste membership per se, which gives them status and

power. However, despite such references to crucial significance of land ownership in vil social life, village studies did not explore details of agrarian social structures in diffe regions of the country. Caste, family, kinship religion remained their primary focus.

Gender Differences

Most village studies looked at gen relations within the framework of the house and participation of women in work. These st highlighted the division of labour within the fa and the overall dominance that men enjoyed the public sphere. Women, particularly among upper castes, were confined within the four of the house. According to **Srinivas** 'the so world of the woman was synonymous with household and kinship group while the m inhabited a more heterogeneous world'. Comp to men in the Central Indian village studies **Mayer** 'women had less chance to meet peo from other parts of the village. The village provided a meeting place for all women of Harijan castes, and the opportunity for gos But there was a limit to the time that busy wor could stand and talk while they drew their and afterwards they must return home, where occasions for talking to people outside their household were limited to meeting with o women of the street'. **Dube** in his study of Telangana village observed that women secluded from the activities of the public sp 'It was considered a mark of respectability women if they walked with their eyes down

Dube further mentions that the rules patriarchy were clearly laid out. After caste, ge was the most important factor that governed division of labour in the village. Masculine feminine pursuits were clearly distinguis Writing on similar lines about his village in same region **Srinivas** pointed out that the sets of occupations were not only separated also seen as unequal. 'It was the man exercised control over the domestic economy made the annual grain-payments at harvest to members of the artisan and servicing castes

had worked for him during the year. The dominant male view' thought of women as being incapable of understanding what went on outside the domestic wall' (Srinivas).

Men also had a near complete control over women's sexuality. In the monogamous family, popular among most groups in India, 'a man could play ground but not so a woman. A man's sense of private property in his wife's genital organs was as profound as in his ancestral land. And just as, traditionally, a wife lacked any right to land she lacked an exclusive right to her husband's sexual prowess. Polygyny and concubinage were both evidence of her lack of such rights. Men and women were separate and unequal.

Patriarchy and male dominance were legitimate norms. Dube has stated that 'according to the traditional norms of the society a husband is expected to be an authoritative figure whose will should always dominate the domestic scene. As the head of the household he should demand respect and obedience from his wife and children. The wife should regard him as her 'master' and should 'serve him faithfully'.

CONCLUSION

The studies of Indian villages carried out by social anthropologists during the 1950s and 1960s were undoubtedly an important landmark in the history of Indian social sciences. Even though the primary focus of these studies was on the social and ritual life of the village people, there are enough references that can be useful pointers towards an understanding of the political and economic life in the rural society of India during the first two decades of independent India.

More importantly, these studies helped in contesting the dominant stereotype of the Indian village made popular by the colonial administrators. The detailed descriptive accounts of village life constructed after prolonged field-works carried out, in most cases, entirely by the anthropologists themselves convincingly proved how Indian villages were not 'isolated communities'. Village studies showed that India's

villages had been well integrated into the broader economy and society of the region even before the colonial rule introduced new agrarian legislation. They also pointed to the regional differences in the way social village life was organized in different parts of the country.

Social anthropological studies also offered an alternative to the dominant "book-view" of India constructed by Indologists and orientalists from the Hindu scriptures. The "field-view" presented in the village monographs not only contested the assumptions of Indology but also convincingly showed with the help of empirical data as to how the idealized model of the Varna system as theorized in Hindu scriptures did not match with the concrete realities of village life. While caste was an important institution in the Indian village and most studies foregrounded caste differences, over other differences, empirical studies showed that it was not a completely closed and rigidly defined system. Caste statuses were also not exclusively determined by one's position in the ritual hierarchy and that there were many grey and contestable areas within the system. It was from the village studies that the concepts like sanskritisation, dominant caste, segmental structures, harmonic and disharmonic systems emerged.

However, village studies were also constrained by a number of factors. The method of participant observation that was the main strength of these studies also imposed certain limitations on the fieldworkers, which eventually proved critical in shaping the image they produced of the Indian village. Doing participant observation required a measure of acceptability of the field worker in the village that he/she chose to study. In a differentiated social context, it was obviously easy to approach the village through the dominant sections. However, this choice proved to be of more than just a strategic value. The anxiety of the anthropologist to get accepted in the village as a member of the "community" made their accounts of the village life conservative in orientation.

It also limited their access to the dominant groups in the local society. They chose to avoid asking all those questions or approaching those subordinate groups, which they thought, could offend the dominant interests in the village. The choices made by individual anthropologists as regard to how they were going to negotiate their own relationship with the village significantly influenced the kind of data they could gather about village life. Unlike the "tribal communities", the conventional subject matter of social anthropology, Indian villages were not only internally differentiated much more than the tribes they also had well articulated world views. Different sections of the village society had different perspectives on what the village was. Though most of the sociologists were aware of this, they did not do much to resolve this problem. On the contrary, most of them consciously chose to identify themselves with the dominant caste groups in the village, which apart from making their stay in the village relatively easy, limited their access to the world-view of the upper castes and made them suspect among the lower castes.

Apart form the method of participant observation and the anxiety about being accepted in rural society that made the sociologists produce a conservative account of the rural social relations, the received theoretical perspectives and the professional traditions dominant within the disciplines of sociology and social anthropology during the time of village studies also had their influences on these scholars. Sociologists during the decades of fifties and sixties generally focused on the structures rather than changes. This preoccupation made them look for the sources that reproduced social order in the village and to ignore conflict and the possible sources of social transformation.

AGRARIAN SOCIAL STRUCTURE

Defining Agrarian Social Structure

Agrarian social structure refers to all those settlements and groupings of people who earn their livelihood primarily by cultivating land and by carrying out related activities like animal husbandry. Agricultural production or cultivation is obviously an economic activity. However, like all other economic activities, agricultural production is carried out in a framework of social relationships. Those involved in cultivation of land also interact with each other in different social capacities. Some may self-cultivate the lands they own while others may employ wage labourers or give their land to tenants and sharecroppers. Not only do they interact with each other but they also have to regularly interact with various other categories of people who provide them different types of services required for cultivation of land. For example, in the old system of jajmani relations in the Indian countryside, those who owned and cultivated land had do depend for various services required at different stages of cultivation on the members of different caste groups.

All these interactions are carried out in an institutional set-up. The most important aspects of this social or institutional framework of agriculture are the patterns of land ownership and the nature of relationships among those who own or possess land and those who cultivate the lands. Agricultural practices and the land ownership patterns in a given society evolve historically over a long period of time. Those who own land invariably command a considerable degree of power and prestige in the rural society. It is these sets of relationships among the owners of land those who provide various forms of services to the land-owning groups that we call the agrarian class structure.

Agrarian social structure in a given society evolves over a long period of time. It is shaped historically by different socio-economic and political factors. These historical factors vary from region to region. Thus, though one can use the concept of class to make sense of agrarian structures in different contexts, the empirical realities vary from region to region.

The traditional Indian "rural communities" and the agrarian social structures were organized within the framework of "jajmani system". This was a peculiarly Indian phenomenon. The different caste groups in the traditional Indian village were divided between jajmans (the patrons) and the kamins (the menials). The jajmans were those caste groups who owned and cultivated lands. The kamins provided different kinds of services to the jajmans. While the kamins were obliged to work for the jajmans, the latter were required to pay a share from the farm produce to their kamins. The relationship was based on a system of reciprocal exchange.

However, those who participated in this system of reciprocal exchange did not do so on equal footings. Those who belonged to the upper castes and owned land were obviously more powerful than those who came from the menial caste groups. The structure of agrarian relations organized within the framework of jajmani reinforced the inequalities of the caste system. The caste system, in turn, provided legitimacy to the unequal land relations.

Over the years the jajmani system has disintegrated and rural society has experienced profound changes in its social structure. The agrarian class structure has also changed. These changes have been produced by a large number of factors.

EVOLUTION OF LAND TENURE SYSTEM

The agrarian policies of the British colonial rulers are regarded as among the most important factors responsible for introducing changes in the agrarian structure of the sub-continent. In order to maximize their incomes from land (which was collected from the cultivators in the form of land revenue), they introduced some basic changes in the property relations in the Indian countryside. These agrarian policies of the colonial rulers had far reaching consequences. In Bengal and Bihar, in parts of Chennai and United Province they conferred full ownership rights over the erstwhile zamindars that were only tax collecting

intermediaries during the earlier regimes. The vast majority of peasants who had been actually cultivating land became tenants of the new landlords. Similarly, they demanded revenues in the form of a fixed amount of cash rather than as a share from what was produced on the land. Thus, even when bad weather destroyed the crop; the peasants were forced to pay the land revenue.

These changes led to serious indebtedness among the peasantry. They were forced to mortgage their land in order to meet the revenue demands. In the long run it led to peasants loosing their lands to moneylenders and big landowners. The big landowners and moneylenders emerged as a dominant class in the countryside while the ordinary peasants suffered. In the new agrarian class structure that emerged during the colonial rule, peasants had no motivation to improve their lands and work hard. As a result the agricultural production declined.

LAND REFORMS

The nationalist leadership during the struggle for freedom had mobilized peasantry on the promise that once the county was liberated from colonial rule, they would introduce changes in the land relations. This process was initiated immediately after independence. The central government directed the state governments to pass "land reform legislations" that would abolish the intermediary landlords, the zamindars, and grant the ownership rights to the actual tillers of the land. Some legislation was to also grant security to the tenants. The states also fixed an upper ceiling on the holding size of land that a single household could possess. The surplus land was to be surrendered to the state and was to be redistributed among those who had no land.

The term land reform has been used both in narrow and in a broad sense. In the narrow and generally accepted sense land reform means redistribution of rights in land for the benefit of small farmers and landless people. This concept of land reform refers to its simplest element commonly found in all land reform policies. On the other hand, in a broad sense land reform is

understood to means any reform is understood to mean any improvement in the institutions of land system and agricultural organization. This understanding of land reform suggests that land reform measures should go not only for redistribution of land but also undertake other measures to improve conditions of agriculture. The United Nations has accepted this notion of land reform. The UN definition says that the ideal land reform programme is an integrated programme of measures designed to eliminate obstacles to economic and social development arising out of defects in the agrarian structure.

In the present context also, by land reforms we mean all those measures which have been undertaken in India by the government to remove structural obstacles in the agrarian system.

Objectives of Land Reform

There are no universal motives behind land reforms but some common objectives may be found everywhere :

- Social justice and economic equality are the major objectives behind land reforms. The ideal of equality has become part of people's consciousness in the modern world. Particularly in a traditional hierarchical society, the idea of equality has emerged as a revolutionary force. It also subsumes the elimination of the worst forms of discrimination and poverty. The ideology of equality and social justice has been expressed in terms of programmes like land reforms and poverty alleviation.

- Secondly, nationalism has been another motivation behind land reforms. Most of the developing countries in the world gained independence mainly after the Second World War. Thus, the achievement or national independence has been associated with the removal of institutional structures created during the colonial rule. Such structures may include the ownership of large estates by persons of alien nationality or various forms of land tenures imposed under the colonial

rule. The abolition of zamindari in India is an outstanding example. Zamindari, a form of land settlement established during the British rule was a symbol of colonial exploitation. Naturally, it was always a target for the leaders of India's freedom struggle. Accordingly, its abolition became the goal of the first phase of land reform measures after independence.

- Thirdly, the urge for democracy in contemporary world is another factor behind land reform programes. The idea of democracy has become a moving force in political power. The goal of liberty and justice can be achieved only in a democratic society. In this manner, even the poor and the deprived express, their grievances and articulate their demands in a democratic way. Thus an environment for reforms is created.

- Finally, land reform is taken as a means to increase productivity of land. It is thus considered one of the key issues in economic development in agricultural societies. It has been adopted as central programme for agricultural development. The basic issues of agrarian reorganization are resolved through effective implementation of land reform measures.

LAND REFORMS IN INDIA

Land reforms in India got underway both in political factors as well as in organizational mobilization of peasantry. The political factors were associated first with British rule and later with the growth of nationalism. It created a situation in which undertaking land reform measures became a compulsion for the government. Thus, some agrarian legislations which attempt to protect the rights of tenants date back to the middle of the nineteenth century.

The poverty of the people and extreme exploitation of the peasantry by zamindars and moneylenders attracted the attention of political leaders during the freedom struggle. It became an important plank of the programme of the Indian National Congress. A major programme of agrarian

reform was presented in 1936 at Jawaharlal Nehru's initiative and Mahatma Gandhi's approval. In his presidential address at Faizpur Session of the Congress, Nehru asked for "the removal of intermediaries between the cultivator and State" after which "cooperative or collective farming must follow."

Almost around the same time, pressure was being created by the increasing number of peasant struggles in different parts of the country. The All India Kisan Sabha in its meeting at Lucknow in 1936 demanded the abolition of Zamindari, occupancy rights for tenant's redistribution of cultivable waste land to landless labourers and others. In fact, between 1920 and 1946 several peasant organizations emerged which expressed the grievances of the middle and poor peasant. The Kisan Sabha Movement led by Swami Sahajanand Saraswati, the Kheda Agitation of 1918, the Bardoli Satyagrah of 1928, and the Tebhaga Movement of 1946-47 in Bengal were some of the major peasant struggles of the pre-Independence days. Agrarian discontent and injustice had spread throughout the country. These grievances were expressed in widespread conflicts between peasants and landlords. But if seen in the context of their goals, these peasant struggles produced positive results. The pressure created by the long drawn struggles compelled the Government to work out plans for the redressal of the complaints of peasants. In this sense, independence assumed historical importance for the land reform programmes that began just after the independence.

Shortly after the independence ample emphasis was put on land reforms as part of the national policy to transform iniquitous agrarian structure. The strategy adopted was to introduce land reforms through land legislation. It was broadly indicated by the Government of India and enacted by the state legislatures:

The primary objectives of land reforms after Independence were :

- to remove motivational and other impediments which arise from the agrarian structure inherited from the past, and

- to eliminate all elements of exploitation and social justice within the agrarian system so as to ensure equality of status and opportunity to all sections of the population.

Programmes of action to achieve these objectives :

- The abolition of all forms of intermediaries between the state and the tiller of the soil.

- Conferment of ownership rights on the cultivating tenants in the land held under their possession.

- Imposition of ceiling on agricultural land holdings.

- consolidation of holdings with a view to making easier the application of modern techniques of agriculture,

- Rationalization of the record of rights in land.

Abolition of Intermediaries

The British rulers introduced three major forms of land settlements – Zamindari, Raiyatwari and Mahalwari – to gain maximum revenue from land. Under the Zamindari system the rights of property in land were given to the local rent gatherers. These persons were called Zamindars and belonged generally to the upper castes of the community. This new settlement turned the actual cultivators into tenants. This structural change in the land system created a class of intermediary between the State and the actual tillers of the soil. Under the Raiyatwari system no intermediary owners were recognized. The actual tillers of the soil were given transferable rights in their lands. But under this system also influential Raiyats emerged as powerful landholders. In the Mahalwari settlement, too, a class of intermediaries had emerged.

These intermediaries had no interest in land management and improvement. Moreover, while the Zamindars were required to pay a fixed amount of revenue to the Government, there was no limit on collections from the actual cultivators. Numerous illegal cesses were imposed from time to time. The Zamindari system allowed a high level

of absenteeism. Thus, the system was not only unjust but it was also characterized by acute economic exploitation and social oppression.

It was against this background that abolition of intermediary interests became the first target of land reforms during the early years of the independence. This measure, undertaken all over the country, essentially sought removal of all intermediaries Like Zamindari, Jagirdari and others. It brought cultivators into direct relationship with the State. It conferred permanent rights in land to these actual cultivators. Accordingly, by 1954-55 almost all States abolished intermediary tenures through several land reform legislations. The abolition of intermediary tenures represents a remarkable transition to a modern agrarian structure.

Tenancy reform

Use and occupancy of land of another person on a rental basis is known as tenancy. Tenancy in land has been a widespread practice in different parts of the country. Different forms of tenancy such as the share cropping system, the fixed-kind produce system, the fixed-cash practice have existed both in the Zamindari and Raiyatwari settled areas. Under the system, the small farmers and landless people lease-in-land for cultivation from rich landowners. These landless cultivators pay rent in kind produce or cash to the landowners in return for land. They are known as tenants (local names are: Adhiars in Assam, Baragadars in West Bengal, Bataidars in Bihar, Warmadars in Tamil Nadu, Kamins in Punjab etc.). These tenants have weak socio-economic position and lack security and protection. They may be evicted any time by the landowners. Thus, they have been tenants-at-will for all practical purposes.

In view of large scale prevalence of tenancy, reforms were introduced to rationalize the rights and obligations of various classes of tenants. Tenancy reforms laid emphasis on three major aspects of the problem:

- regulation of rent;
- security of tenure; and
- right of purchase for the tenants.

These steps have been taken to improve the condition of cultivating tenants. They have been protected against rack-renting through the regulation of rent. Security of tenure for tenants has regulated eviction from land by the landowners. The tenants have also been conferred ownership rights over the lands cultivated by them as tenants. Over 124.22 lakh tenants have got their rights protected over an area of 156.30 lakh acres till September 2000.

Ceiling on Landholdings

The basic objective of fixation of ceiling on landholdings is to acquire land above a certain level from the present landholders for its distribution among the landless. It is primarily a redistributive measure based on the principle of socio-economic justice. The disparity in landownership in India is a well-known fact. While nearly one-fourth of rural households have no land at all, there were a large number of landholders owning thousands of acres each on the eve of independence. Thus, fixation of ceiling on agricultural holdings has been used as a means to correct this imbalance.

Legislations imposing ceiling on landholdings formed the second phase of land reform package in the independent India. This process began during the Second Five Year Plan in most states. Almost all the states have legislations restricting the size of holdings which a person or family can own. However, the permissible size varies according to the quality of land. Acquisition of land in excess of the ceiling is prohibited. Land rendered surplus to the ceiling is taken over by the state and distributed among the weaker sections of the community.

Though land ceiling laws have been passed within the broader framework suggested by the Central Government, there are differences among various state laws. In all the Acts there are a variety of exemptions from the ceiling. The ceilings

fixed are also different. While in most states, the ceilings fixed are vary high, in others ample scope is left for manipulation by the landowners. The process of taking possession of surplus land its distribution among the landless is, rather slow.

The total quantum of land declared surplus in the entire country since inception till September 2000 is 73.49 lakh acres. Out of this, only about 64.84 lakh acres have been taken possession of and 52.99 lakh acres have been distributed. The total number of beneficiaries of this scheme in the country is 55.10 lakh, of whom 36 per cent belong to the Scheduled Castes and 15 per cent to the Scheduled Tribes.

Consolidation of Holdings

The fragmentation of landholdings has been an important impediment in agricultural development. Most holdings are not only small but also widely scattered. Thus, legislative measures for consolidation of holdings have been undertaken in most of the states. Major focus has been on the consolidation of the land of a holder at one or two places for enabling them to make better use of resources. Attempts have also been made to take measures for consolidation in the command areas of major irrigation projects.

Land Records

The record of rights in land has been faulty and unsatisfactory. The availability of correct and up-to-date records has always been a problem. It is in view of this that updating of land records has now been made a part of land reform measures.

Nonetheless several states have initiated the process of updating the land records through revisional surveys and settlements. Steps have also been taken to computerize these records. A centrally-sponsored Scheme on Computerization of Land Records has been launched with a view to remove the problems inherent in the manual system of maintenance and updating of land records.

CRITICS

However, progress in this respect has been poor. The Five Year Plan documents say that "in several States, information regarding tenants, sub-tenants and crop-sharers has not been obtained yet." It has further been highlighted that large areas of the country still do not have up-to-date land records. The main reason behind this has been strong opposition of big landowners.

Though the legislations were passed by all the states, only in some cases they produced desired effects. It has been argued that only in those parts of the country where peasants were politically mobilized that the land reforms could be effectively implemented. While the zamindari system was abolished in most parts, the ceiling legislations had very little effect.

CONCLUSION

Despite many loopholes, apart from increasing productivity of land, these changes have transformed the social framework of the Indian agriculture. Agriculture in most parts of India is now carried out on commercial lines. The old structure of jajmani relations has more or less completely disintegrated, giving way to more formalized arrangements among the cultivators and those who work for them. Some scholars have these changes indicate that capitalist form of production is developing in agriculture and a new class structure is emerging in the Indian countryside.

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4 CASTE SYSTEM

— Perspective on the study of caste systems:
   G.S. Ghurye, M. N. Srinivas, Louis Dumont, Andre Beteille
— Features of caste system
— Untouchability: Forms and Perspectives.

G.S. GHURYE

Ghurye's approach towards caste is attributional. Attributional approach discusses primarily the significant features of the caste system and what distinguishes it from other forms of social stratification. For Ghurye each caste was separated from the other in a hierarchical order. This ordering sprang from the attributes of a caste. Ghurye cognitively combined historical, anthropological and sociological perspectives to understand caste and kinship system in India. He tried to analyze caste system through textual evidences using ancient texts, on the one hand and also from both structural and cultural perspectives, on the other hand. Ghurye studied caste system from a historical, comparative and integrative perspective. Later on he did comparative study of kinship of Indo-European cultures. In his study of caste and kinship, Ghurye emphasises two important points :

• The kin and caste networks in India had parallels in some other societies also.

• The kinship and caste in India served in the past as integrative frameworks.

The evolution of society was based on the integration of diverse, racial or ethnic groups through these networks. Ghurye highlights **six structural features of caste system** as follows:

• **Segmental division :** Membership of a caste group is acquired by birth and with it come the position in the rank order relative to other castes.

• **Hierarchy :** Following from the above, society was arranged in rank orders, or relations of superiority or inferiority. Thus Brahmins were accepted as highest in the hierarchy and untouchables at the very bottom.

• **Pollution and purity :** In this idea the whole effort of a caste was to avoid contamination from polluting object (those involved in unclean occupations or of the lowest castes). This shunning of pollution is reflected in the residential separation of the caste group.

• **Civil and religious disabilities and privileges of different sections:** These were placed on every caste which gave permission to its members only to interact with particular groups of people. This included its dress, speech, customs and rituals and from whom they could accept food. The system was geared to maintain purity of the group members, hence of the caste group.

• **Lack of choice of occupation:** Ghurye felt that every caste had a traditional occupation. The clean castes had clean occupation whereas unclean and impure castes had defiling occupations.

- **Restrictions on marriage:** This trait of the castes was very distinct and essential to keeping it together as a group that maintained its own distinct character. Essentially it maintained that one could only marry within ones castes.

Besides the above characteristics, Ghurye laid particular stress on **endogamy** as the most important feature of the caste system. Any effective unit of the caste hierarchy is marked by endogamy. Every caste had in the past segmented into smaller sub-divisions or sub-castes. Each of these sub-castes practiced endogamy. For example, Vaishya castes are divided into various sub-castes such as Agrawal, Maheshwari etc.

Caste is also linked with kinship through caste endogamy and also clan (gotra) exogamy. Gotra has been treated as thoroughly exogamous unit by the Brahmins and later by the non-Brahmins. The basic notion here is that all the members of a gotra are related to one another, through blood, i.e., they have rishi (sage) as their common ancestor. Therefore, marriage between two persons of the same gotra will lead to incestuous relationship. It will lead the lineage of the gotra to near extinction.

The relationship between caste and kinship is very close because

- exogamy in our society is largely based on kinship, either real or imaginary, and

- the effective unit of caste, sub-caste is largely constituted of kinsmen.

To Ghurye, these are three types of marriage restrictions in our society, which shape the relationship between caste and kinship. These are endogamy, exogamy and hypergamy. Exogamy can be divided into parts:

- sapinda or prohibited degrees of kin, and

- sept or gotra exogamy.

The gotra were kin categories of Indo-European cultures which systematized the rank and status of the people. These categories were derived from rishis (saints) of the past. These rishis were the real or eponymous founder of the gotra and charna. In India, descent has not always been traced to the blood tie. The lineages were often based on spiritual descent from sages of the past. Outside the kinship, one might notice the guru-shisya (teacher-student) relationship, which is also based on spiritual descent. A disciple is proud to trace his descent from a master.

Likewise, caste and sub-caste integrated people into a ranked order based on norms of purity-pollution. The rules of endogamy and commensality marked off castes from each other. This was integrative instrument, which organized from into a totality or collectivity. The Hindu religion provided the conceptual and ritualistic guidelines for this integration. The Brahmins of India played a key role in legitimizing the caste ranks and orders through their interpretation of Dharmashastra, which were the compendia of scared codes.

M.N. SRINIVAS

Srinivas approach to study of caste is attributional. The sociologists using the attributional approach stress the attributes of caste. However, each of them lays emphasis on one or other of these attributes and how they affect interaction. In case of Srinivas, we find that he chooses to study the structure of relations arising between castes on the basis of these attributes. Thus he introduces dynamic aspect of caste identity very forcefully. This aspect becomes clearer in Srinivas's work on positional mobility known as 'Sanskritisation' and concept of 'Dominant Castes'.

Srinivas assigned certain attributes to the caste system. These are :

- **Hierarchy :** To Srinivas, hierarchy is the core or the essence of the caste system. It refers to the arrangements of hereditary groups in a

rank order. He points out that it is status of the top-most or Brahmins and the bottom-most or untouchables, which is the clearest in terms of rank. The middle regions of hierarchy are the most flexible, who may be defined as members of the middle ranks.

- **Occupational differentiation :** Srinivas finds a close relationship between a caste and its occupation. He says that caste is nothing more the "systematization of occupational differentiation". Castes are known by their occupations and many derive their name from the occupation followed, e.g., Lohar, Sonar, Kumhar, Teli, Chamar etc. He also stresses that occupation are placed in a hierarchy of high and low.

- **Restrictions** on commensality, dress speech and custom are also found among castes. There is a dietic hierarchy and restrictions on acceptance of food.

- **Pollution:** The distance between castes is maintained by the principles of pollution. Srinivas too argues that the castes must not come into contact with anything that is polluted whether an object or being. Any contact with polluted renders a caste impure and demands that the polluted caste undergo purification rites. If pollution is serious such as when a high caste person has sexual relations with an untouchable, the person involved may be removed from his or her caste.

- **Caste Panchayats and Assemblies:** Besides the above mentioned attributes of a caste, every caste is subject to the control of an order maintain body or a Panchayat. Elder of each caste in a village together maintain the social order by exercising their authority collectively. Further, every caste member is answerable to the authority of its Caste Assembly. The authority of a Caste Assembly may extend beyond village boundaries to include in its jurisdiction of caste in other villages.

Srinivas views caste as segmentary system. Every caste, for him, is divided into sub-castes which are:

- The unit of endogamy;

- Whose members follow a common occupation;

- The units of social and ritual life;

- Whose members share a common culture; and

- Whose members are governed by the same authoritative body, viz., the Panchayat.

From the above, we can infer that the attributes of a caste definitely determined the nature of inter-caste relations. There attributes or customs of caste also determine the rank of a caste. This becomes obvious in the work of Srinivas on caste mobility or sanskritisation.

SANSKRITISATION

We have seen above that how every caste is assigned in the caste rank order on the basis of the purity and impurity of its attributes. In his study of a Mysore village, Srinivas finds that at some time or the other, every caste tries to change its rank in the hierarchy by giving up its attributes and trying to adopt those of castes above them. This process of attempting to change one's rank by giving up attributes that define a caste as low and adopting attributes that the indicative of higher status is called 'sanskritisation'. This process essentially involves a change in one's dietary habits from non-vegetarianism to vegetarianism, and a change in one's occupation habits from an 'unclean' to a 'clean' occupation. The attributes of a caste become the basis of interaction between castes. The creation of pattern of interaction and inter-relations is best expressed in Srinivas' use of the concept of 'dominant caste'.

Features of Sanskritisation

The concept of Sanskritisation has been integrated with economic and political domination, that is, the role of local 'dominant caste' in the process of cultural transmission has been

stressed. Though for some time, the lower castes imitated Brahmins but soon the local dominant caste came to be initiated. And the locally dominant caste was often a non-Brahmin caste.

Sanskritisation occurred sooner or later in those casts which enjoyed political and economic power but were not rated high in ritual ranking, that is, there was a gap between their ritual and politico-economic positions. This was because without Sanskritisation, claim to a higher position was not fully effective. The three main axes of power in the caste system are the ritual, the economic and the political ones. The possession of power in any one sphere usually leads to the acquisition of power in the other two. But Srinivas mentions that inconsistencies do occur.

Economic betterment is not a necessary pre-condition to Sanskritisation, nor must economic development necessarily lead to Sanskritisation. However, sometimes a group (caste, tribe) may start by acquiring political power and this may lead to economic betterment and Sanskritisation, Srinivas has given the example of untouchables of Rampura village in Mysore who have got increasingly Sanskritized though their economic condition has remained almost unchanged. Economic betterment, the acquisition of political power, education, leadership, and desire to move up in the hierarchy, are all relevant factors in Sanskritisation, and each case of Sanskritisation may show all or some of these factors mixed up in different measures.

Sanskritisation is a two-way process. Not only a caste 'took' from the caste higher to it but in turn it gave something to the caste. We find Brahmins worshipping local deities who preside over epidemics, cattle, children's lives, and crops, besides the great gods of all India Hinduism. It is not unknown for a Brahmin to make a blood-sacrifice to one of these deities through the medium of a non-Brahmin friend (Srinivas). Though local cultures seem to 'receive' more than they 'give', yet Sanskritic Hinduism has also absorbed local and folk elements. The absorption is done

in such a way that there is continuity between the folk or little tradition and the great tradition.

Unit of mobility is group and not an individual or family.

The British rule provided impetus to the process of Sanskritisation but political independence has weakened the trend towards this change. The emphasis is now on the vertical mobility and not on the horizontal mobility.

Describing social change in India in terms of Sanskritisation and Westernization is to describe it primarily in cultural and not in structural terms. Srinivas himself has conceded that Sanskritisation involves 'positional change' in the caste system without any structural change.

Sanskritisation does not automatically result in the achievement of a higher status for the group. The group must be content to wait an indefinite period and during this period it must maintain a continuous pressure regarding its claim. A generation or two must pass usually before a claim begins to be accepted. In many cases, the claim of the caste may not be accepted even after a long time.

The fact that Sanskritisation may not help a lower caste to move up does not prevent it to discard the consumption of beef, change polluting occupation, stop drinking alcohol, and adopt some Sanskritic customs, beliefs and deities. Thus, the process of Sanskritisation may remain popular without achieving the goal of mobility.

Factors Promoting Sanskritisation

Factors that have made Sanskritisation possible are industrialization, occupational mobility, developed communicating, spread of literacy and western technology. No wonder, the spread of Sanskritic theological ideas immersed under the British rule. The development of communications carried Sanskritisation to areas previously inaccessible and the spread of literacy carried it to groups very low in the caste hierarchy. M.N. Srinivas has specifically referred to one factor which has helped the spread of Sanskritisation

among the low castes. It is the separation of ritual acts from the accompanying mantras (citations) which facilitated the spread of Brahminical rituals among all Hindu castes, including the untouchables. The restrictions imposed by the Brahmins on the non-twice-born castes banned only the chanting of mantras from the Vedas. Thus, the low caste people could adopt the social practices of the Brahmins. This made Sanskritisation feasible.

According to Srinivas, the political institution of parliamentary democracy has also contributed to the increased Sanskritisation. Prohibition, a Sanskritic value, has been mentioned in the Constitution of India. Some states have introduced it wholly or partially.

IDEA OF DOMINANT CAST

Besides caste, Srinivas looks for yet another source or manifestation of tradition. He found it in the notion of 'dominant caste'. He first proposed it in his early papers on the village of Rampura. The concept has been discussed and applied to a great deal in work on social and political organization in India. He had defined dominant caste in terms of six attributes placed in conjunction:

- sizeable amount of arable land;
- strength of numbers;
- high place in the local hierarchy;
- western education;
- jobs in the administration; and
- urban sources of income.

Of the above attributes of the dominant caste, the following three are important:

- numerical strength,
- economic power through ownership of land, and
- political power.

Accordingly, a dominant caste is any caste that has all three of the above attributes in a village community. The interesting aspect of this concept is that the ritual ranking of caste no longer remains the major basis of its position in the social hierarchy. Even if a caste stands low in the social hierarchy because of being ranked low, it can become the dominant ruling caste or group in a village if it is numerically large, owns land and has political influence over village matters. There is no doubt that a caste with relatively higher in ritual rank would probably find it easier to become dominant. But this is not the case always.

In his study of Rampur village, there are a number of castes including Brahmins, peasants and untouchables. The peasants are ritually ranked below the Brahmins, but they own lands and numerically preponderant and have political influence over village affairs. Consequently, despite their low ritual rank, the peasants are the dominant caste in the village. All the other castes of the village stand in a relationship of service to the dominant caste, i.e., they are at the back of the dominant caste.

Srinivas was criticized for this concept with the charge that it was smuggled from the notion of dominance, which emerged from African sociology. Repudiating the critique, Srinivas asserted that the idea of dominant caste given by him had its origin in the field work of Coorgs of South India. His field work had impressed upon him that communities, such as the Coorgs and the Okkaligas, wielded considerable power at the local level and shared such social attributes as numerical preponderance, economic strength and clean ritual status. He further noted that the dominant caste could be a local source of sanskritisation. Sanskritisation and dominant caste are therefore representation of Indian tradition. And, in this conceptual framework, the traditions of the lower castes and Dalits have no place, nowhere in village India; the subaltern groups occupy the status of dominant caste.

LOUIS DUMONT

Louis Dumont was primarily concerned with the ideology of the caste system. His understanding of caste lays emphasis on attributes of caste that is why; he is put in the category of those following the attributional approach to the caste system. For him, caste is a set of relationships of economic, political and kinship systems, sustained by certain 'values', which are mostly religious in nature. Dumont says that caste is not a form of stratification but a special form of inequality, whose essence has to be deciphered by the sociologists. Here, Dumont identifies 'hierarchy's is the essential value underlying the caste system, supported by Hinduism.

Dumont starts with Bougle's definition of caste and says that it divides the whole Indian society into a large number of hereditary groups, distinguished from one another and connected together by thee characteristics :

- Separation on the basis of rules of the caste in matters of marriage and contact, whether direct or indirect (food);

- Interdependent of work or division of labour, each group having, in theory or by tradition, a profession from which their members can depart only within certain limits; and

- Finally gradation of status or hierarchy, which ranks the groups as relatively superior to inferior to one another.

Dumont views that this definition indicates the main apparent characteristics of the caste system. He describes mainly three things:

- India is composed of many small territories and castes;

- Every caste is limited to particular and definite geographic area; and

- Marrying outside one's own caste is not possible in the caste system.

In fact, Dumont highlights the 'state of mind', which it expressed by the emergence in various situations of castes. He calls caste system as a system of 'ideas and values', which is a 'formal comprehensible rational system'. His analysis is based on a single principle, i.e., the opposition of pure and impure. This opposition underlines 'hierarchy', which means superiority of the pure and inferiority of impure. This principle also underlies 'separation' which means pure and the impure must be kept separate.

- Dumont felt that the study of the caste system is useful for the knowledge of India, and it is an important task of general sociology.

- He focused on the need to understand the ideology of caste as reflected in the classical texts, historical examples etc.

- He advocated the use of an **Indological and stucturalist approach** to the study of caste system and village social structure in India. He viewed that 'Indian sociology' is that specialized branch which stands at the confluence of Indology and sociology and which he advocates at the right type of 'mix' prerequisite to the understanding of Indian sociology.

- From this perspective, Dumont himself, in his Homo Hierarchicus, has built up a model of Indian civilization, which is based on a non-competitive ritual hierarchical system. Dumont's analysis of caste system is based on the classical literature, historical examples etc.

Dumont's Concept of Pure and Impure

While considering the concept of pure and impure, Dumont had two questions in mind: Why is this distinction applied to hereditary groups? And, if it accounts for the contrast between Brahmins and untouchables, can it account equally for the division of society into a large number of groups, themselves sometimes extremely sub-divided? He did not answer these questions directly. But, the opposite has always been two extreme categories, i.e., Brahmin and untouchables.

- The Brahmins assigned with the priestly functions, occupied the top rank in the social hierarchy and were considered 'pure' as compared to other castes.

- The untouchables, being 'impure', and segregated outside the village, were not allowed to draw water from the same wells from which the Brahmins did so.

- Besides this, they did not have any access to Hindu temples, and suffered from various other disabilities.

- Dumont said that this situation was somewhat changed since the Gandhian agitation and when India attained independence. Untouchability was considered illegal; Gandhi renamed untouchables as 'Harijan's or 'Sons of Hari', that is, creatures of God.

Untouchables are specialized in 'impure' tasks, which lead to the attribution of a massive and permanent impurity to some categories of people. Dumont highlights temporary and permanent impurity.

- In larger areas of the world, death, birth and other such seclusion of the affected persons, for instance, the newly delivered mother was actually excluded from the church for forty days at the end of which she would present herself carrying a lighted candle and would be met at the church porch by the priest.

- In India, persons affected by this kind of event are treated as impure for a prescribed period, and Indians themselves identify this impurity with that of the untouchables. In his work *The History of Dharmashastra*, **P.V. Kane** writes that a man's nearest relatives and his best friends become untouchable for him for a certain time as a result of these events.

According to Harika, there are three kinds of purity:

- bearing of the family (Kula),
- objects of everyday use (Artha), and
- the body.

For the body, the main thing is the morning attention to personal hygiene, culminating in the daily bath. Even, the objects are considered as pure and impure; silk is purer than cotton, gold than silver, than bronze, than copper. These objects are not simply polluted by the contact but by the use to which they are put and used by the person. Now-a-days, a new garment or vessel can be received from anybody. It is believed that a person's own bed, garments, wife, child and water pot are pure for his own self and family and for others they are impure.

Dumont feels one cannot speak of the castes without mentioning the varna, to which Hindus frequently attribute the castes themselves, India has the traditional hierarchy of varna, 'colours' or estates whereby four categories are distinguished:

- The higher is or that of the Brahmins or priest, below them are the Kshatriyas or warriors, then the Vaishyas, in modern usage merchants, and finally, the Shudras, the servants or have-nots.

- There is one more category, the untouchables, who are outside the classification system.

- Dumont maintains that many of the Indologists confuse the Varna with caste, mainly because the classical literature is concerned almost entirely with the varnas.

- Caste and Varna are to be understood with relationship of hierarchy and power.

By his interpretation, caste was different from other forms of social stratification through the 'disjunction' of ritual status and secular (political and economic) power within the same social system. The subordination of the political and economic criteria of social stratification to that of ritual status in Dumont's model, however, plays down the significance of social change in colonial and contemporary times. Did not caste lose its political significance as late in the 18th and 19th centuries? As for what has happening at the 20th century, although Dumont explicitly recognized the emergence of inter-caste competitiveness in place of a structure of independence as a departure

from tradition. He regarded this as behavioural change, rather than a radical transformation of the system as a whole, at the level of values or principles. **Madan** presumed that Dumont's analysis is an exercise in deductive logic.

In the last, Dumont discusses the significant changes in the casts,

- He views that traditional interdependence of castes has been replaced by "a universe of impenetrable blocks, self-sufficient, essential, and identical and in competition in one another." Dumont calls this the 'substantialization of castes'.

- An inventory of sources of change in the caste system lists judicial and political changes, social-religious reforms, westernization, and growth of modern professionals, urbanization, spatial mobility and the growth of market economy. But, despite all these factors making for change, the most ubiquitous and the general form, the change has taken in contemporary times is one of a 'mixture', or 'combination', of traditional and modern features.

ANDRE BETEILLE

Beteille study on caste is reflexive, distinctive, dynamic and analytical, as against Ghurye, Dumont, and Srinivas sociology of caste. Dumont considers caste as a sacred cow driven by the universal superiority of Brahmins, dominating in ritual sphere or in the status hereby. Srinivas considers that Sanskritic behaviour or way of life is mostly solicited by ethnic group of people in Indian society. So Dumont and Srinivas along with Ghurye, explicitly or implicitly speak that Brahminic superiority and Sanskritic exclusivity. Andre Beteille tries to study caste beyond these perspectives.

According to Beteille, caste is an objective reality. Its role and structural character should be studied from empirical perspective. His understanding of caste comes out of the field data, collected from Sripuram village of Tanjore district

of Tamil Nadu. In this village three major caste groups are present – Brahmins, Non-Brahmins and Adi-Dravidians. Between Brahmins and Adi-Dravidians a huge cultural, symbolic and relational gap is found. Beteille finds out that Dumont's 'theory of hierarchy' carries relative significance to understand the disharmonic relationship between Brahmins and Adi-Dravidians. These two castes are placed in two extreme position of caste hierarchy. He empathises with M.N. Srinivas to understand the rise of non-Brahmins in the secular sphere of caste hierarchy. Controlling village land and dominating in village, local and state politics, these groups intensified the emergence and consolidation of dominant caste.

His sociology of caste criticizes Srinivas, Dumont and Ghurye on the ground that Brahminic exclusivity and superiority is not a matter of fact. It is evident from his study of Sripuram. Brahmins of Sripuram are largely divided into two groups : Srivaishnav and Samarthas, distinctively different from each other in terms of the ritual practices, symbols, doctrinal affinity and way of life. Residential areas of both the castes are also strictly different and both the groups practice endogamy implying that a sub-caste should be considered as caste. Samarthas are further divided in 4 major groups, and these groups are further divided into sub-groups. This study of segmentation of caste is largely influenced by the writings of his teacher and old friend Evans Pritchard, who in his study of Neurs talk about segmentation of tribe.

According to Beteille, Brahmins never follow a distinctive identity, ritual pattern and way of life. What means sanskritisation to one aspiring caste may not be meaning to other. So Brahmins being so segmented, it is too difficult to believe that the superiority is historic, continuous and undiluted as presumed by homes Dumont. Caste does not determine social commensality amongst people. It is evident from Samarthas divided on the basis of economic standing into three broad groups such an upper class, middle class and lower class. Beteille finds out that caste is not only a source

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of social exclusion only rather both caste and poverty are two distinctive dissensions to social inequality in India. Exploring different genesis to social exclusion, he concludes by saying, that social inequality in India has multiple dimensions and caste is one of it. Caste and class is not the only source to explain all possible sources of inequality as highlighted by structural functionalist on one hand and Marxists on other. Following the footsteps of Max Weber he indicates that structure exists in many forms and in village India source of the structure are :

- unequal of distribution of land and giving rise to class structure.
- unequal access to power.
- unequal access to status on the basis of caste identity.

Based on his study, title of his first book is 'Class Status and Power: The study of structure in a Tagore village'.

Beteille considers that Bhakti movement Backward caste movement, dalit mobilization potentially question to hierarchical gradation of values giving rise to the emergence of plural values competing with each other. (Existentialism competing with spiritualism, materialism competing with moralism) resulting in competitive values, rising in Indian society, reflecting on social change.

According to Beteille, Caste old is replaced by caste new than caste in Indian being replaced by class in India. Thus Indian modernity is typically Indian in character, exclusive and different from modernization of West, but some of the European suggest fail to understand. So they conclude that India provides hierarchy and European society produces structure.

FEATURES OF CASTE SYSTEM

The important features of caste as unit are hereditary membership, endogamy, fixed occupation and caste councils, while the features of caste as a system are hierarchy, commercial restrictions and restrictions with regard to physical and social distance.

FEATURES OF CASTE AS A SYSTEM

Hierarchy Based on Wealth

No two castes have an equal status. One caste has either a low or a high status in relation to other castes. It is difficult, if not impossible, to determine the exact or even the approximate place of each caste in the hierarchical system. Two methods have mainly been used in assessing the hierarchy: observational method and opinion-assessing method. In the former, either the attributional method or the interactional method has been used for ranking the castes. The attributional method determines the rank of a caste by its behaviour, for example, its customs, practice of degrading occupation, vegetarianism, habits of liquor-drinking etc., the interactional method evaluates ranks of two given castes in relationship to each other by observing the commensally interaction and marital relations, etc. between the two castes. If a caste 'A' accepts a girl in marriage from a caste 'B' but does not give a girl in that caste, 'A' will have higher status than 'B'. This is because of the hypergamy rule according to which a girl of a lower caste can marry in a higher caste but not vice-versa. Similarly, if the members of a caste 'A' do not accept food from the members of caste 'B' but members of caste "B" accepts it; it will indicate the higher status of 'A'.

In the 'opinion-assessing' method, the ranks of various castes in the collective caste hierarchy are assessed on the basis of the opinions of various respondents from different castes. The advantage in the 'opinion-assessing' method over the 'observational' method is that in the former, it is possible to regard hierarchy and interaction as two variables and study their relationship. A.C. Mayer, M.N. Srinivas, D.N. Majumdar, S.C. Dube, Pauline Mahar, etc., had used the observational method while McKim Marriot and Staley Freed had used the opinion-assessment method in analyzing the caste ranks in the caste hierarchy.

S.C. Dube used only one criterion for determining the caste hierarchies in three villages in Telangana: which castes can theoretically take food from which other castes. Mayer on the other hand, used the criterion of 'commensality' which involves principally the giving and taking of food and water and sharing of the same pipe (hukka) among various castes, Pauline Mahar ranked castes with regard to their ritual purity and pollution by using a multiple-scaling technique.

In recent years, though there has been a change in some characteristics of the caste system but there has been no change at all in the hierarchical characteristic.

Commensal Restrictions

There are rules laid down with regard to the kind of food that can be accepted by a person from different castes. According to Blunt, there are seven important taboos in this respect:

- commensally taboo, which determines rules regarding persons in whose company a many may eat;
- cooking taboo, which lays down rules regarding persons who may cook food that a man may eat;
- eating taboo, which prescribes rituals to be observed at the time of eating;
- drinking taboo, which prescribes rules regarding accepting water etc., from the persons;
- food taboo, which prescribes rules regarding the kind of food a man may eat with members of other castes;
- smoking taboo, which lays down rules regarding persons whose pipe (hukka) a man may smoke; and
- vessels taboo, which determines the types of vessels to be used or avoided for cooking food to protect oneself from being polluted.

Blunt believes that the commensality restriction is the result of marriage restriction, but Hutton claims it is the other way round, if one comes before the other at all. On the basis of the severity of the food taboo, Blunt has classified castes into five groups :

- castes which take the kachcha (cooked with water) and pucca (cooked with ghee) food cooked only by a member of their own endogamous group;
- castes which eat food cooked by the members of own caste and also by Brahmins;
- castes which take food cooked by the members of own caste or by Brahmins or by Rajputs;
- castes which take food cooked by the members of own caste or by Brahmins or Rajputs or by lower castes of rank which they regard as at lest equal to their own; and
- castes which eat food cooked by almost anyone.

Hutton had criticized this classification because of the distinct restrictions on the kachcha and pucca food. Some castes which fall into one group as regards the kachcha food will fall into another in regard to the pucca food about which they are not so strict. The various castes do not fall into uniform groups. In the last few decades, however, we find these commensal restrictions are no longer rigidly observed. In other words, there is change in the commensally characteristics of the caste system.

Compelling Religious Sanctions on Social Participation

Restrictions on social interaction have been imposed because of the belief that pollution can be carried by mere bodily contact. It is because of such belief that pollution can be carried by mere bodily contact. It is because of such beliefs that the low caste people engaged in inferior occupations are avoided by the upper caste people. Likewise, the Chamars, dhobis, doms and hundreds of beef-eating low castes, commonly known as untouchables, are shunned by the high caste Hindus. There are also specific rules for greeting and interacting with members of high or intermediate caste.

The Outcaste substratum

Castes engaged in defiling or menial or polluting occupations are treated as untouchables. They are called outcaste, depressed classes or scheduled castes. These castes are believed to have descended from the races originally inhabiting India before the invasion of the Aryans. Later they accepted servitude on the lowest fringes of Hindu society. They mostly live outside the village and eke out their existence by labour like scavenging, shoe-making, tanning, etc. They are not permitted to draw water from wells used by the upper caste people. They are even debarred from the use of public roads, schools, temples, cremation grounds, hotels and tea-shops. Their presence and their touch as thought to contaminate others. In the Peshva period, Doms were not permitted to enter Poona city between 6:00 a.m. and 9.00 p.m. because it was thought that even their shadows could pollute the high caste people. For the same reason, Brahmin doctors in South India used to wrap their hands with a silken cloth before examining the pulse of their Sudra patients. On the same ground, Panam (basket-maker), Tiyans (toddy-drawer), Pulayan, Shanan and other lower castes in South India were to maintain a distance of thirty-six, seventy-two or ninety-six paces from these people, depending on their status. Caste mores have held these untouchable castes down in abysmal ignorance and degradation on the assumption that they suffer justly for their vicious deeds in previous lives. However, many of the prohibitions imposed on the outcaste have now been relaxed. But, though legally these restrictions have been removed, and socially also pollution is no longer treated very seriously by the majority of the high caste Hindus, yet we continue to find the practicing of some restrictions in ritual situations, though no longer enforced in ordinary day-to-day secular life.

FEATURES OF CASTE AS A UNIT

Ascribed Status

The membership of an individual in a caste is determined by his birth. Since each cast has its own rank in relation to other castes, the high or low status of an individual depends upon the ritual status of the caste in which he is born. In fact, every aspect of the life of an orthodox Hindu hinges on his birth. His domestic ceremonies and customs, temple worship, circle of friends and occupation, all depend upon the level of the caste into which he is born.

Endogamy

The members of a caste have to marry in their own caste and sub-caste. Endogamy has, thus, been permanently enforced within caste groups.

Forced Occupation

Each caste has a fixed hereditary occupation. There is an old saying, once a Brahmin, always a Brahmin and once a Chamar, always a Chamar. Since certain occupations are considered unclean, persons following them become untouchable and anyone adopting them, unless in company with his caste, must necessarily be outcaste to preserve the while caste from pollution. But this also does not mean that all Brahmins have always to remain engaged in priestly occupation, or all Rajputs are always to take to protecting function by joining the military, etc.

Under certain circumstances, some members in a caste were permitted to change their occupations. Similarly, different sub-castes of the same caste are found engaged in different occupations. For example, four sub-castes of a Khatik caste (a caste of butcher) in Uttar Pradesh are engaged in different occupations of butchery, masonry (rajgir), rope-making and selling of fruits (mewa farosh). Similarly, Teli caste in Bengal has two divisions, Tili and Teli, the former engaged in pressing oil and the later in selling oil since the pressing of oil-seeds is stigmatized as a degrading occupation because it destroys life by crushing the seeds. Tilis are treated as untouchable but not the Telis. Telis will outcaste a member who should venture to press it. The change of occupation did not necessarily involve the change of caste unless it involved the change of status.

Though generally the occupational restrictions imposed by caste have a religious motive but sometimes they may have a purely economic purpose also. For example, O'Malley refer to Sonars (goldsmiths) of one district in Madhya Pradesh who have a feast at which the caste men take oath that they will not reveal the amount of alloy decided to be mixed with gold by the Sonars on pain of being outcasted.

After industrialization of the country, particularly after the two World Wars, a significant change has come to be observed in these characteristics of the traditional occupation of caste. Restriction on change of occupation has been weakened and occupational mobility has become feasible.

Caste Councils

Each caste has a council of its own, known as caste panchayat. This panchayat exercised tremendous power over its members till recently. Today, though some caste panchayats are found to have branches all over India because of the development of the postal system and rapid communications of various kinds but till few decades back, these panchayats acted only for a limited area, an area small enough for the members of the council to assemble and for members of the caste within the area to have some knowledge of each other as a general rule. Local conditions, such as case of communication, deter in the area within which the caste council functions. Some of the offences dealt with by these panchayats till recently were: eating and drinking with other castes and sub-castes with whom such intercourse was forbidden, keeping as concubine a woman of other caste, adultery with a married woman, refuse to fulfil a promise of marriage, non-payment of debt, petty assaults, breaches of customs, and so on. The mode of punishment usually adopted was out casting, fine, feast to caste men, corporal punishment etc. (Ghurye). All the members of the caste were obliged to accept the verdict of their panchayat. Even in the British period, these panchayats were so powerful that they could re-try cases which as

once decided by the civil and criminal courts. In a way, thus, a caste panchayat was a semi-sovereign body.

The officials of the panchayat who perform executive and judicial functions may either be nominated or elected or may be hereditary or some may be elected while others may be hereditary. Blunt point out that lower the caste in the social scale, stronger its combination and the most efficient its organization. The procedure observed for trial is extremely simple and informal.

Referring to the authority enjoyed by these caste councils, Kapadia has referred to certain examples pertaining to three periods – 1962, 1912, and 1861. Pointing to the period 1861, he gives two examples of a civil judge of Maharashtra who had married a widow, and the couple was so much humiliated by their caste council that they had to commit suicide.

UNTOUCHABILITY : FORMS AND PERSPECTIVES

Untouchability in India goes back to hoary past, though its origin and practice remain vague or unknown. Till the early 1930s, the de jure definition of the depressed classes, as they were then known, was in terms of the religious concept of pollution. The depressed classes were defined as "Hindu castes, contact with whom entails purification on the part of high-caste Hindus" (Dushkin). In 1951 census, the Census Commissioner J.H. Hutton adopted several criteria to be employed for identifying the depressed classes. These criteria did not work well. Therefore, some adjustments were made before the promulgation of the schedule in 1935.

Though our Constitution outlawed the practice of untouchability and the Untouchability (Offences) Act of 1955 declared it as a legal offence, yet since Hindus are still deeply steeped in their concern for purity and pollution, the practice of untouchability has not been completely uprooted in the social and religious life of the country. Thus,

untouchability may be understood from two angles :

- the stigma attached to certain people because of ceremonial pollution they allegedly convey, and

- the set-practice engaged in the rest of the society to protect itself from the pollution conveyed by the untouchables.

The social stigma of the untouchables manifests itself in all walks of life. They are denied access to temples and to the services of the Brahmins and are shunned by the higher castes. They are born as impure and live as impure. The rest of the society is so much concerned about purity that they permanently keep untouchables in a state of economic, social and political subordination. The stigma, congenital according to one's caste, lasts for a lifetime and cannot be eliminated by rite or deed. Defined in relation to behaviour, untouchability refers to the set of practices followed by the rest of society to protect itself from the pollution conveyed by the untouchables. However, this concern with ritual pollution is not limited to the role of untouchables; it also served to keep the untouchables in an inferior economic and political position through physical separation. It is generally believed that the untouchable groups have come to realize that their problem can be solved only through effective political action. In recent times, due to reservation of posts in Parliament, Vidhan Sabhas, jobs educational institutions, etc., and other privileges granted by the government, a low ritual-status man has a better chance to achieve high economic and political status while high social status becomes an individual matter. Sociologists like L.P. Vidyarthi, Sachchidananda, etc. have attempted to study social transformation of dalits with reference to the caste disabilities, their educational efforts, acceptance of innovations, political consciousness, integration with the larger society, level or aspiration, internalization of modern values, position of women, their leadership, dalit movements and so on.

Though many dalits have given up their traditional caste-based occupations yet a good number is still engaged in polluting occupations. The change and diversification from polluting occupations has not only moved the stigma of their untouchability but has also enabled many to rise in class mobility. Some of them are owners of landed and household properties. They have been beneficiaries of various economic benefits of properties. They have been beneficiaries of various economic benefits offered to the scheduled castes by the government. The status disabilities now largely confined to the village discriminations in the matter of using the public wells or the temples are not as widespread as before. High public servants and those who occupy higher position are less subject to disabilities in social intercourse. There now exists a direct correlation between the politico-economic status of an individual and his social status. In some cases, however, their ascriptive status scores over their achieved status, for example, in the field of marriage, the entry of a Harijan in modern profession like medicine, engineering, administration, colleges. This is partly because of the stereotyped hatred and partly because of competition and jealously on account of protective discrimination in their favour. Even the Harijan elite studied by Sachidanand in Bihar in 1976 pointed out such jealousy.

A large number of Harijans suffer from an inbred inferiority complex which makes them sensitive to any treatment which they think smacks of discrimination. This does not mean that such alleged discrimination is always made and accusation is true. The immobility of the Harijans has also given place to mobility. This has been made possible by migration from rural to urban areas, education and entry in public services and in politics. All this points out how the structural distance between the dalits and others has considerably narrowed.

Dalits are a marginal group in rural India, both in economic sense and in view of low-status members of Hindu society. The two features observed about dalits in rural society are:

- most dalits do not own land nor are they tenants, and

- most dalits earn an important part of their income by working on the land of others and/ or by attaching themselves to landholding cultivators.

The employment of the dalit labour is determined by agricultural product and wages paid. The higher demand is at the time of harvest. The demand for the labour increase when there is more cultivable land, more irrigation, more fertilizers and more capital. Modern agricultural implements like tractors, etc., increase the demand for skilled labourers but decrease the number of persons needed. The employer (landlord) gets labour from dalits as well as non-dalits. The labour, thus, is not homogeneous. Preference is always given to non-dalits as they are considered more hardworking. It is for this reason that the dalit in rural areas is referred to as 'marginal'.

PERSPECTIVES

Gandhian perspective to untouchability is reformistic. He believed that untouchability is a crime against God and humanity. Being a true humanist, he believed that every human is a child of god; everyone is equal in the eyes of God. The value of equality is cherished in Hindu Dharmashastra.

Gandhi believed that untouchability is a product of aggressive caste system driven by the principles of individualism and materialism. He appreciated Varna system because it is giving way to hereditary learning of occupation without conceptualizing any occupation is superior or inferior. Gandhi speaks about division of labour dealing to self-sufficiency in society, neutral-occupation among the people and harmony of persistent in collective life. He teaches self-discipline, humanism, control of materialistic needs.

He wanted caste to perish away from India by initiating reforms that includes permitting untouchables to enter into Hindu temples, accelerating inter-dining, encouraging higher caste to take up the occupation of the lower caste to get a experience about the agony of untouchables and to ensure forgetting inter caste differences and internalizing the humanistic values of Hinduism. The Hindus of India should stand integrated.

Gandhian approach to untouchability was no difference from SNDP movement in its ideology. Hence starting from reform movement, to Gandhi untouchability is considered as a culturo-historic mistake that can be addressed through reform, compassion, providing space for integration between higher castes a lower caste (untouchables).

Gandhian approach was contradicted by Harold Gould. He considers that socio-religious movement of the untouchables is not a search for equality with Brahminic and Sanskritic groups rather through this movement, untouchables of India manifested a protest indicating, that they can imbibe Brahmanic and Sanskritic values. So equality is not a grace for them neither a concession, rather it's a right earned by them. So reform is a form of protest and not a search for equality of status with Brahmins as a form of concession or grace.

According to dialectical approach to untouchability, in no society, economically empowered group ever subjected to social and cultural discrimination. It is a matter of facts that untouchables of India were the original inhabitants of the country. They were subjected to territorial and political aggression at different points of time, leading to loss of land and further leading to loss of livelihood. So controlling over land and agriculture, the dominant class pushed untouchables into the village-outskirts, imposed a ban on untouchables like ban on planting tree, milking cow, practicing agriculture etc. This led to pathetic condition for untouchables.

- According to this approach, poverty was the prime cause of exclusion of the untouchables of India. This was further supplemented by a new ideology offering a cultural justification to untouchability.

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- David Hardiman considers that dalit movement in India is not different from mobilization of blacks in Europe. Both the movement is the manifestation of economic exploitation, giving rise to other forms of exploitation.

Contemporary approach to untouchability largely borrows ideas from **Ambedkar**. He considers that unto is not contextual practice intensity varies from one situation to another. Ambedkar's engagement with untouchability, as a researcher, intellectual and activist, is much more nuanced, hesitant but intimate as compared to his viewpoint on caste, where he is prepared to offer stronger judgements and proper solutions. However, with untouchability, there is often a failure of words. Grief is merged with anger. He often exclaims how an institution of this kind has been tolerated and even defended. He distinguished the institution of untouchability from that of caste, though the former is reinforced by the latter, and Brahmanism constituted the enemy of both. He felt that it was difficult for outsiders to understand the phenomena. He thought human sympathy would be forthcoming towards alleviating the plight of the untouchables, but at the same time anticipated hurdles to be crossed – hurdles made of age-old prejudices, interests, religious retribution, the untouchables could muster. He found that the colonial administration did little to ameliorate the lot of the untouchables. He argued that the track-record of Islam and Christianity, in this regard, is not praiseworthy either, although they may not subscribe to untouchability as integral to their religious beliefs.

Ambedkar felt that untouchables have to fight their own battle and if others are concerned about them, then, such a concern has to be expressed in helping them to fight rather than prescribing solutions to them. He discussed attempts to deny the existence of untouchables and to reduce the proportion of their population in order to deny them adequate political presence. He resorted to comparison with what he called the parallel cases, such as the treatment meted out to slaves and Jews but found the lot of the untouchables worse

than theirs. He argued that in spite of differences and cleavages, all untouchables share common disadvantages and treatment from caste Hindus: they live in ghettos; they were universally despised and kept outside the fold. He maintained a graphic account of the course of the movement of the untouchables, although this was much more specific about the movement in the Bombay Presidency.

He threw scorn at the Gandhian attempt to remove untouchability and termed it as a mere pretense aimed at buying over the untouchables with kindness. He presented voluminous empirical data to defend such a thesis, and suggested his own strategies to confront untouchability, warning untouchables not to fall into the trap of Gandhism. He exhorted them to fight for political power. Although he did not find the lot of untouchables better among Christians and Muslims, he felt that they had a better option as they did not subscribe to untouchability as a religious tenet. Ambedkar was also deeply sensitive to insinuations offered by others to co-opt untouchables within their political ambit.

Ambedkar rarely went into the origin of untouchability in history. He rebutted the suggestion that race has anything to do with it, and did not subscribe to the position that caste has its basis in race either. However, in one instance, he proposed a very imaginative thesis that untouchables were broken men living on the outskirts of village communities who, due to their refusal to give up Buddhism and beef-eating, came to be condemned as untouchables. He did not repeat this thesis in any central way later to the fold either. It has to be noted that the thesis was proposed when Ambedkar was fighting for the recognition of untouchables. He thought that untouchables were separate element in India and, therefore, should be constitutionally evolved with appropriate safeguards.

FUTURE PROSPECT

The big question is: will dalits ever be integrated in the main stream of the society? The age-long

bondage shackles may be shaken off when the dalits equip themselves with education and skills and effectively compete in modern society. Legislation alone will not do away with their disabilities. Along with dalits own effort for achieving resources, change in the attitudes of the caste Hindus is equally important for banishing untouchability. We agree with Sachchidananda who holds that the combination of factors like ameliorative efforts of the government, the growing consciousness of the dalits and the liberal attitudes of caste Hindus will diminish the disabilities and discriminations with the passage of time.

Politically, dalits are becoming conscious of the fact that they have to take advantage of their vast numbers in political terms. They may not be united to form a separate political party but by supporting the dominant national political parties they may extract the price of their support. But the problem is that though the educated dalits show evidence of politicians, the masses are not very much touched by this process. The elite have moved from the politics of compliance and affirmation to the politics of pressure and protest but they are still not able to present a common front and adopt radical posture.

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5 TRIBAL COMMUNITIES IN INDIA

- Definitional problems
- Geographical spread
- Colonial policies and tribes
- Issues of integration and autonomy.

Tribal community, village community and urban community are three main components of India's social formation. The tribes are backward, particularly in regard to education and economic condition. They were exploited by the dominant sections of Indian society, namely, "Hindu landlords", money-lenders and industrialists who purchased their lands to establish industries in tribal areas.

A number of tribes have been "Hinduised" or converted to Christianity or Islam to break away from their tribal identity, to get redemption from exploitation and to elevate their status and honour. Sometimes it becomes difficult to draw a clear line between a tribal and a caste group. There are hunters and food-gatherers among the tribal on the one end, and there are tribal settled in villages, practically functioning as "caste groups" on the other.

Tribals have a strong sense of their distinctiveness and separate themselves from non-tribals, Christians and Muslims. Language is one of the strong traits by which they identify themselves. The Mundas, Santhals and Hos are identified as distinct tribes on the basis of their spoken languages (besides other attributes). A large number of tribals in India live in hilly and forested areas where population is sparse and communication difficult. They are spread over the entire subcontinent, but are found mainly in the states of West Bengal, Bihar, Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh, Orissa, Madhya Pradesh, Rajsthan, Gujarat and Maharashtra.

DEFINATIONAL PROBLEM

There are no specific criteria by which we may define a tribe. Broadly a tribe is defined as "a community occupying a common geographic area and having a similar language and culture or belief and practices". **Nadel** has defined tribes as a society with a linguistic, cultural and political boundary". But there are problems in such definitions. There are many tribal societies which lack government and the centralized authority in the ordinary sense of the term. Likewise cultural homogeneity in a tribe is also elusive in this age.

Mandelbaum writes

"In tribal life the principle links for the whole society are based on kinship." Kinship is not simply a principle of social organization; it is also a principle of inheritance, division of labour and distribution of power and privileges. Tribal societies are small in size. They possess a morality, religion and worldview of their own, corresponding to their social relations. However some tribes such as Santhals, Gonds and Bhills are quite large.

Sahlins writes that the term "tribal society" should be restricted to "segmentary systems". The segmentary system has relations on a small scale. They enjoy autonomy, and are independent of

each other in a given region. We may observe this about the Santhals, Oraons and Mundas of Jharkhand or about the Bhils, Meenas and Garasias of Rajasthan.

Distinctions between 'folk', 'peasant' and 'urban' or between 'tribal', 'folk' and 'elite' are not very useful for the understanding of tribes in India. For example, the tribes of Jharkhand have been interacting and cooperating with each other, despite geographical barriers, problems of communication, relative cultural autonomy and economic self-reliance; as they faced a common external threat to their traditional system of land relations, economy and cultural autonomy. The Hindu zamindars, Bengali moneylenders and the British administration exploited them, pushing them to the point of extinction and utter dehumanization. There was never inter-tribal isolation and cultural exclusiveness. The tribals of Bihar mobilized their members against their exploiters. They interacted with the administration, town elite and outsiders. The Jharkhand area, which contains numerous tribes of Bihar, West Bengal, Madhya Pradesh and Orissa, is a tribal cultural zone comprising several tribal subcultures. The Mundas, Oraons, Hos and Santhals, the major tribes of this region, depend upon forest produce, settled agriculture, employment in industries, coal mines and government jobs. Some have settled in towns, others are in villages, and some of the latter are economically very well off. Thus, tribal culture is in part a "peasant culture" and in part an "urban culture".

Tribal exclusiveness, intact tribal solidarity and tribal consciousness on the one hand, and dependence upon towns and cities, administration and mobilization against their exploiters and on the other, have existed simultaneously among the tribal people. Even the revival of tribal aboriginality has been expressed in the form of an instrument for protesting against the external intrusions and impositions of rules and regulations.

The tribals of Jharkhand are peasants to a large extent, and therefore their 'peasant qualities should become the basis to understand their economic problems. The characteristics of peasant societies, outlined by **Theodore Shanin**, aptly apply to the tribals of Jharkhand. These are:

- the peasant family farm is the basic unit of a multi-dimensional social organization;
- land husbandry is the main means of livelihood, directly providing the major part of the consumption needs;
- specific traditional culture is related to the way of life of small communities; and
- The peasants have the underdog position – domination of peasants by others.

The tribes of Bihar have been called peasants by **S.C. Roy.** They have fought against feudalism for 300 years. Today, they are facing problems emerging out of industrial urbanization in the Jharkhand region.

Mandelbaum mentions the following characteristics while defining Indian tribes:

- kinship as an instrument of social bonds;
- lack of hierarchy (rigid status distinctions) among men and groups (clans and lineages)
- absence of strong, complex, formal organizations; communitarian basis of landholding;
- segmentary character;
- little value on surplus accumulation, on the use of capital, and on market-trading;
- lack of distinction between form and substance of religion; and
- A distinct psychological make-up for enjoying life.

Tribes are relatively isolated from larger cultural influences, have a relative cultural homogeneity and a simple technology. They believe in spirits, magic and witchcraft. They have their own taboos which prohibit certain actions that are punishable by the community, by the

supernatural, or by magical consequences. Large number of the tribes believes in animism, according to which all objects counselled – both animate and inanimate – are permanently or temporarily inhabited by spirits or souls. Often, an activity is believed to be caused by these spirits. Some spirits are worshipped and treated with fear and respect. Some scholars have maintained that animism was the earliest form of religion of the tribes. Many tribes believe in ancestor worship too.

Some general defining features of tribes in India are :

- Common name: Each tribe has a distinct name of its own through which it is distinguished from others.

- Common territory: Tribes generally occupy common geographical areas.

- Common language: Members of one tribe speak the same language. Each tribe has its own dialect, if not the script.

- Common culture: Each tribe has prescribed patterns of behaviour and festivals and deities to worship.

- Endogamy: Each tribe has the practice of marrying members within their own tribe.

- Political organization: All tribes have their own political organization. They have councils of elders to control members.

- As against the national average of 43 per cent, 57 per cent of the tribals are economically active.

- As regards the nature of work, against 73 per cent national average, 91 per cent tribal workers are engaged in agriculture. About 3 per cent tribals are engaged in manufacturing (against 11% of general population) and 5 per cent in servicing (tertiary sectors) against 16% average of general population. About 1 per cent tribals are engaged in forestry and food-gathering.

Tribes have been separated from other social categories on the basis of these features. The British conducted a detailed enumeration of the tribals in the 1930s. Tribes were distinguished from castes on the basis of their religious and ecological conditions. However, tribals are also peasants, as a good number of them today live in villages and have been engaged in agriculture and allied occupation, just like peasants belonging to various castes and communities. Today there are more than thirty million tribals divided into 427 tribes. They form about 8 per cent of the total population. There is vast diversity among the tribes in terms of habitation, ecology, economic pursuits, language, religion and contacts with the outside world. Each tribe is internally stratified. It may be said that members of a given tribe do not have a clear perception about their existential conditions or that they have a distorted or false consciousness.

GEOGRAPHICAL SPREAD OF INDIAN TRIBES

The large tribes of India are the Gonds of Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra and Andhra Pradesh; the Bhills of Rajasthan, Gujarat, Maharashtra and Madhya Pradesh and the Santhals of Jharkhand, Orissa and West Bengal. The Gonds and the Bhils are more than four million each. The Santhals are more than three million.

Roy Burman divides tribal communities into five territorial groupings, taking into account their historical, ethnic and socio-cultural relations. These are :

- North-east India, comprising Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland, Manipur and Tripura;

- the sub-Himalayan region of north and north-west India, comprising hill districts of Uttarakhand and Himachal Pradesh;

- Central and East India, Madhya Pradesh (Chhattisgarh), and Andhra Pradesh;

- South India comprising Tamil Nadu, Kerala and Karnataka; and

- Western India, comprising Rajasthan, Gujarat and Maharashtra.

L.P. Vidyarthi divided the tribal people into four major zones :

- The Himalayan Region, comprising, Jammu and Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh (Bhot, Gujjar, Gaddi), Terai area of Uttar Pradesh (Tharus), Assam (Mizo, Garo, Khasi), Meghalaya, Nagaland (Nagas), Manipur (Mao) and Tripura (Tripuri) and having 11 per cent of the total tribal population of the country;

- Middle India, comprising West Bengal Bihar (Santhal, Munda, Oraon and Ho), Orissa (Khonds, Gond) and having about 57 per cent of Indian tribal population;

- Western India, comprising Rajasthan (Bhil, Meena, Garasia), Madhya Pradesh (Bhill, etc.), Gujarat (Bhil, Dubla, Dhodia), and Maharashtra (Bhil, Koli, Mahadeo, Kokna) and containing about 25 per cent of the Indian tribal population; and

- Southern India, comprising Andhra Pradesh (Gond, Koya, Konda, Dova), Karnataka (Naikada, Marati), Tamil Nadu (Irula, Toda), Kerala (Pulayan, Paniayan) and Andaman and Nicobar Islands (Andamanese, Nicobari) and containing about 7 per cent of the Indian tribal population.

The tribals living in different states belong to various

- **Racial groups** (e.g., proto-australoid, which include Santhals, Munda, Oraon and Bhumij, and Mangoloid which include Garo, etc.),

- **Linguistic groups** (austric like Santhals, Munda, Bhumij, Dravidian like Oraon, and Tibeto-Chinese like Garo, Bhutia, etc.)

- **Economic** categories (food-gatherers, cultivators, labourers),

- **Social and religious** categories.

There is also a wide range of variation in their level of development and their level of socio-cultural integration. Though the majority of the tribals follow patrilineal system of social organization, yet there are quite a few who have matrilineal systems (like Garo, etc.). A sizeable proportion of Nagas, Mizos,

Santhals, Oraon and Munda, etc., have embraced Christianity. Some (like Bhutia, Lepcha) are largely identified with Buddhism. Some tribes have been assimilated into the Hindu fold, like the Bhumij and the Bhills. The dominant racial type among tribes is the proto-Australoid. In the sub-Himalayan belt, the Mangoloid type is preponderant. The Mediterranean and the Negrito are found in other regions. Tribal languages belong to all the types: the Austric, Dravidian and the Tibeto-Chinese. Tribal people are generally found to be bilingual. The main occupations of the tribes are forestry and food-gathering, shifting cultivation, settled agriculture, agricultural labour, animal husbandry and household industry. Despite many variations, there are also certain similarities also. The tribals as whole are technologically and educationally backward.

COLONIAL POLICIES AND TRIBES

Although the early anthropological work of the colonial era had described tribes as isolated cohesive communities, colonialism had already brought irrevocable changes in their world. In most parts of the country, colonialism brought radical transformation of the tribals as their relative isolation was eroded by the penetration of market forces and they were integrated with the British and princely administrations. A large number of money-lenders, traders, revenue farmers and other middlemen and petty officials invaded the tribal areas and disrupted the tribal's traditional way of life. They were increasingly engulfed in debt and lost their lands to outsiders, often being reduced to the position of agricultural labourers, sharecroppers and rack-rented tenants. Many were forced to retreat further into the hills. Belated legislation to prevent alienation of land by the tribal people failed to halt the process.

Verrier Elwin, who lived nearly all his life among the tribal people in central and north-eastern India and who was one of the formative influences in the evolution of the new government's policies towards the tribes, was to refer to the fate of the tribal people under British rule as

follows: 'But now they suffered oppression and exploitation, for there soon came merchants and liquor-venders, cajoling, tricking, swindling them in their ignorance and simplicity until bit by bit their broad acres dwindled and they sank into the poverty in which many of them still live today. Simultaneously, missionaries were destroying their art, their dances, their weaving and their whole culture.'

Colonialism also transformed the tribals relationship with the forest, they depended on the forest for food, fuel and cattle feed and raw materials for their handicrafts. In many parts of India the hunger for land by the immigrant peasants from the plains led to the destruction of forests, depriving the tribals of their traditional means of livelihood. To conserve forests and to facilitate their commercial exploitation, the colonial authorities brought large tracts of forest lands under forests laws which forbade shifting cultivation and put severe restrictions on the tribal's use of the forest and their access to forest products.

Loss of land, indebtedness, exploitation by middlemen, denial of access of forests and forest products, and oppression and extortion by policemen, forest officials and other government officials was to lead to a series of tribal uprisings in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, for example the Santhal uprising and the Munda rebellion led by Birsa Munda and the participation of the tribal people in the national and peasant movements in Orissa, Bihar, West Bengal, Andhra, Maharashtra and Gujarat. Following the various rebellions in tribal areas in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, the colonial government set up 'excluded' and 'partially excluded' areas, where the entry of non-tribals was prohibited or regulated. In these areas, the British favoured indirect rule through local kings or headmen.

The famous **isolation versus integration debate** of the 1940s built upon this standard picture of tribal societies as isolated wholes.

• The isolationist side argued that tribals needed protection from traders, moneylenders and Hindu and Christian missionaries, all of whom were intent on reducing tribals to detribalized landless labour.

• The integrationists, on the other hand, argued that tribals were merely backward Hindus, and their problems had to be addressed within the same framework as that of other backward classes.

This opposition dominated the Constituent Assembly debates, which were finally settled along the lines of a compromise which advocated welfare schemes that would enable controlled integration. The subsequent schemes for tribal development – five year plans, tribal's sub – plans, tribal welfare blocks, special multipurpose area schemes all continue with this mode of thinking. But the basic issue here is that :

• The integration of tribes has neglected their own needs or desires;

• Integration has been on the terms of the mainstream society and for its own benefit.

• The tribal societies have had their lands. forests taken away and their communities shattered in the name of development.

The strategies adopted by the British administrators for solving the problems of the tribals included acquiring tribal land and forests and declaring certain tribal areas as excluded or partially excluded. But the British government had also established a number of schools and hospitals in the tribal areas with the help of Christian missionaries who converted many tribals to Christianity. Thus, by and large, during the British period, the tribals remained victims of colonial-feudal domination, ethnic prejudices, illiteracy, poverty and isolation.

After independence, provisions were made in the Constitution to safeguard tribal interests and promote their developmental and welfare activities. Gandhi and Thakkar Bapa also did some pioneering work among the tribals. Nehru enunciated the policy of Panchseel for tribal transformation, which rested on following five principles:

- Avoiding imposing the culture of the majority people on them and encouraging in every way their own traditional arts and culture.
- Respecting tribal rights on land and forest.
- Training tribal leaders for administrative and developmental activities with the help of some technical personnel from outside.
- Avoiding over-administering of the tribal areas.
- Judging results not on the basis of money spent but the quality of human character evolved.

In 1960, **the Scheduled Tribe Commission** was set up under the chairmanship of U.N. Dhebar to work for the advancement of the tribals. After the Fifth Five Year Plan, the Tribal Sub-Plan (TSP) strategy was designed in 1980 which consisted of two things :

- socio-economic development of the tribes, and
- Protection of tribals against exploitation.

The funds for TSPs are provided by state governments and the cultural ministries.

However, TSP results have not been commensurate with the expectations and the investments made so far, as heavy emphasis is laid in several states on infrastructural development without corresponding emphasis on the development of the STs. The TSP schemes are supposed to lay emphasis on family oriented income-generating schemes in sectors like agriculture, animal husbandry, cooperatives, tribal crafts and skills, etc., besides laying emphasis on education, health and housing.

In the Five Year Plans, the programmes for the welfare of the STs aim at:

- Raising the productivity levels in agriculture, animals husbandry, forestry, cottage and small-scale industries, etc.,
- to improve the economic conditions,
- rehabilitation of the bonded labour,
- education and training programmes, and
- special development programmes for women and children.

But various evaluation studies on all these programmes for the integrated development of the tribals have brought out the inadequacies of these programmes.

ISSUES OF INTEGRATION AND AUTONOMY

Forced incorporation of tribal communities into mainstream has had its impact on tribal culture and society as much as its economy. Tribal identities today are formed by this interactional process rather than any primordial (original, ancient) characteristics peculiar to tribes. Because the interaction with the mainstream has generally been on terms unfavourable to the tribal communities, many tribal identities today are centered on ideas of resistance and opposition to the overwhelming force of the non-tribal world.

The positive impact of successes – such as the achievement of statehood for Jharkhand and Chhattisgarh after a long struggle – is moderated by continuing problems. Many of the states of the North-East, for example, have been living for decades under special laws that limit the civil liberties of citizens. Thus, citizens of states like Manipur or Nagaland don't have the same rights as other citizens of India because their states have been declared as 'disturbed areas'. The vicious circle of armed rebellions provoking state repression which in turn fuels further rebellions has taken a heavy toll on the economy, culture and society of the North-eastern states. In another part of the country, Jharkhand and Chhattisgarh are yet to make full use of their new-found statehood, and the political system there is still not autonomous of larger structures in which tribals are powerless.

Another significant development is the gradual **emergence of an educated middle class** among tribal communities. Most visible in the North eastern states, this is now a segment beginning to be seen in the rest of the country as well, particularly among members of the larger tribal communities. In conjunction with policies of reservation, education is creating an urbanized professional class. As tribal societies get more

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differentiated, i.e., develop class and other divisions within themselves, different bases are growing for the assertion of tribal identity.

Two broad sets of issues have been most important in giving rise to tribal movements. These are :

- issues relating to control over vital economic resources like land and specially forests,
- issues relating to matters of ethnic-cultural identity.

The two can often go together, but with differentiation of tribal society they may also diverge. The reasons why the middle classes within tribal societies may assert their tribal identity may be different from the reasons why poor and uneducated tribals join tribal movements. As with any other community, it is the relationship between these kinds of internal dynamics and external forces that will shape the future.

Tribes are faced with the problem of preserving their cultural identity and their social existence. Each tribe has three alternatives:

- to exist side by side with the majority,
- to absorb itself in the dominant group, and
- to secede and seek political independence on the basis of equality.

Different tribes have adopted different processes from amongst the above mentioned three processes. For example,

- the Bhils and the Meenas have adopted the first process of co-existence,
- the Oraon and the Khond tribes have adopted the second process of absorbing themselves in the Hindu society,
- the Nagas and the Mizos have adopted the third process of secession.

Our government has not adopted a uniform policy of cultural integration of all tribes because different tribes are at different stages of development and have different goals and aspirations. Naturally we find different levels of integration of different tribes. We can only hold

that tribes arte gradually being drawn into the wider economic framework of the country and they are getting themselves involved in the market economy.

Agriculture has come to occupy a central place in the economic activity of many tribes. According to the 2001 census figures, about three-fourth of the tribals in the country work as cultivators and about one-fifth as agricultural labourers and the rest as labourers in mines, forests or are engaged in other services. The fact that the tribal cultivators are responding positively to modern methods of cultivation points out a positive change in tribal's economic system. The economic integration of the tribes, however, does not necessarily mean that all tribes have achieved a high level of income. Many are still living below the poverty line.

Tribals are also being integrated in the political system of the country. The introduction of the Panchayati Raj has offered them opportunity for an increased involvement in the political activities. By contesting elections, they have started acquiring power at Panchayat Samiti and state levels. This has also resulted in educational and social development of tribals.

In social life too, because of the reservation policy, they now occupy important social positions. Though clan panchayats have not become altogether irrelevant for them, yet their role is confined to marital and land conflicts. The tribal councils have thus weakened now.

It may be averred that on the one hand, the tribals have maintained their cultural identity and on the other hand, they have integrated themselves in the broader economic, Social, political and religious systems of the country. This integration has enabled the tribals to bridge the social distance that existed between tribals and non-tribals, though they have not succeeded in achieving social equality.

While analyzing the tribal integration in larger society, would it be relevant to adopt **Ghurye's** model of labeling tribals as 'backward Hindus', or

Majumdar's model of adopting Hindu ideas by tribals through contacts with caste Hindus, or Srinivas's model of sanskritisation, i.e., tribes emulating high caste practices, or **Bailey's** model of postulating a continuum at the two ends of which stand a tribe and a caste, is a matter of discussion. **Lutz and Munda** criticizing Ghurye and Srinivas models have suggested **'modernization model'** for understanding tribal change.

Anthropologists have been evaluating the effectiveness of government programmes and pointing out the causes of their failure.

- **Roy Burman** had observed the strong ethnocentric bias of Indian society, the Indian government, and the social scientists vis-a-vis the tribes. He maintained that these groups were designated as 'tribes' because the mainstream caste Hindu society perceives these tribes as being radically different from itself, in the past as well as in the present.

- **Vidyarthi** asserted to incorporate the tribal viewpoint which is considered significant for the tribal change. Our contention is that tribals themselves must discard their feeling of 'being tribals and thus having limitations'. They must develop self-pride and self-confidence, and must stop thriving on borrowed concessions and government's reservation policy. It is this attitude which will help them achieve social elevation and equality. Government policies alone cannot contribute to their development through 'appeasement' approach. It is not by being rooted in the traditional culture but by seeking opportunities to assert themselves that they can elevate themselves in Indian society.

Tribes are becoming conscious, both socially and politically, of maintaining and preserving their ethnic and cultural identity and also of protecting themselves against exploitation by dikus outsiders). They have stressed their political solidarity. This may, however, result in a new form of ecological-cultural isolation. Tribes have generally taken such steps due to their economic backwardness and a feeling of frustration.

To integrate the tribes with the mainstream, special economic opportunities are offered to them. The "assimilationist" model of the tribe's integration with non-tribals. The "isolationist" model would not be much relevant today in the face of rapid changes in Indian society. Despite vast changes taking place in India, tribal consciousness has been strengthened mainly to project tribes as distinct components of Indian society. Industrialization in the tribal belt in Jharkhand, Gujarat, Maharashtra and Chhattisgarh for example, has promoted both tribal consciousness and integration with the non-tribal sections in the region. The demand for autonomy by tribals has originated from their fear of loss of cultural autonomy and of exploitation.

To Niharranjan Ray, the very expressions "tribes", "criminal tribes", "scheduled tribes" and "scheduled castes" are misleading. He believes that these expressions are unfortunate and unwise. "It has conditioned our attitude towards these communities of peoples and our approach towards the solution of their problems which are theirs as much as of the rest of the Indian population." From the point of view of Indian nationalism, Ray makes the following observations:

- Tribes are Janas or peoples, just like the peoples of other territorial and cultural regions of India. Tribes or Janas differ from other communities in terms of the socio-economic system of jati to which non-tribal Hindu communities belong. Ray writes: "Jati is not caste nor it is just a socio-religious system; it is also an economic system, hereditarily and hierarchically organized according to groups recruited by birth."

- There is a sharp distinction between "incorporation" and "integration". The tribes have been incorporated rather than integrated into the jati-fold by placing them at different hierarchical levels of the system, generally

at the lower levels. Even this process has been slow, and it has also become redundant because of considerable fluidity in the caste system. There is a need, therefore, to draw them into the new techno-economy, a new production system.

- There is a need to understand the stresses and strains being suffered by the tribals due to the quicker tempo of modern life, new legal, administrative and economic systems.

- The tribal people have migrated to other places from their birth places due to economic and other hardships. They have also joined to army.

- The nomenclatures – "scheduled tribes", "denotified tribes" and "scheduled castes" – have inherent seeds of division.

- Tribes today are in search of a sense of identity, of a sense of belonging and for self-determination in a new social order. Several new states have been formed in the north-eastern region. The demand for the formation of a separate state is indicative of this new identity. Ray writes: "Any consideration in the contemporary context, of the traditional Hindu method of tribal absorption is therefore, sheer madness to my mind. In the present context this is simply anachronistic."

But the fact of the matter is that a large number of major tribes have either Hinduised or converted to Christianity and Islam. These processes of change and mobility have no doubt reduced the gap between tribals and non-tribals, but have also created factions and feuds between the non-converts and the converts. A sharp line is drawn in Jharkhand between the tribals converted to Christianity and those who continue to adhere to their traditional way of life.

CONCLUSION

Tribes are generally backward. To protect against injustices done to them and to bring them up with other sections of society, the Constitution of India has granted them special concessions for their upliftment. However, there are some tribes who have not been "scheduled" as such sections by the Constitution. Generally, tribes are distinct from non-tribes; particularly from caste groups and other non-caste communities like Muslims, Christians, Sikhs, etc. Tribal people have been victims of exploitation by non-tribals for centuries.

A strong sense of identity is prevalent among the tribes of India. Language, religious and magical beliefs and practices, food habits, styles of dress, pattern of habitation and dependence upon forest produce are important features of their life which make them distinct from non-tribal groups. Kinship is the key principle of social organization as it governs major social, juridical, economic and political activities of their life.

Tribal societies are generally of a small size. There is not much social interaction between people of different tribes. However, intra-tribal solidarity has been strong. Tribal culture is in part of peasant culture, in part it has its exclusiveness, and in part it has taken elements from urban culture. Tribal people are differentiated like non-tribal people in terms of wealth, power and accessibility to resources and opportunities.

Today, the main problems of tribals are not of integration or assimilation with castes and communities in India. Their main problems are of poverty, unemployment, indebtedness, backwardness, displacement and ignorance. There are indications of inter-tribal solidarity movements and concerted action against their exploitation and suppression.

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6 SOCIAL CLASSES IN INDIA

- Agrarian class structure
- Industrial class structure
- Middle classes in India.

AGRARIAN CLASS STRUCTURE

Agrarian class structure in India have been shaped by long historical and politico- administrative process.

The traditional Indian society was organized around caste lines. The agrarian relations were governed by the norms of jajmani system. However, the jajmani relations began to disintegrate after the colonial rulers introduced changes in the India agriculture. The process of modernization and development initiated by the India State during the post-independence period further weakened the traditional social structure.

Caste stratification, according to some scholars, is associated with the rural and class stratification with the urban situation. Yogendra Singh has held that this statement is based on fallacy; it is not based on socio-historical evidence. Some western scholars held the view that early India was a static society, where not change but continuity was a dominant feature. But this fallacy of 'static India' hypothesis has been criticized by scholars like P.C. Joshi, Yogendra Singh, B. Cohn and Romila Thapar. Many classes like priests, feudal chiefs, merchants, artisans, peasants, labourers, etc., existed in early India. Merchants did not occupy low position in social hierarchy. The base for their mobility was their economic relationship. Their caste status did not clash with the class status. Yogendra Singh holds that the position of many castes altered over time, and wealth and property played an important role in achieving an improved status, particularly among the merchant class.

The period after 1000 A.D. saw the growth of classes of traders, artisans etc., in cities. In the Mughal period too, since a large share of village produce was taken to the urban market, the dynamism of the class structure of both the cities and villages continued. This implied not only the existence of agrarian classes in villages but also a stable class of merchants, middlemen and bankers in towns and cities.

In the British period, the policy of trade and commerce affected the artisan classes and led to their large-scale migration to rural areas. Further, the British policy of favoured treatment to the port towns, neglect of vast number of other towns, policy of taxation and many others. Socio-economic policies led to the decline of the traditional Indian economic structure as well as the class structure. The class structure in the rural arrears was also affected due to land settlement policy. At the same time, the British policies created new foundations for the emergence of a feudal agrarian class structure.

While caste continues to be an important social institution in the contemporary Indian society, its significance as a system of organizing economic life has considerably declined. Though the agricultural land in most parts of India is still owned by the traditionally cultivating caste groups, their relation with

the landless menials are no more regulated by the norms of caste system. The landless members of the lower caste now work with the cultivation farmers as agriculture labourers. We can say that in sense, caste has given way to class in the Indian countryside.

The agrarian system that evolved in the rural areas during the British regime were based either on the zamindari or the ryotwari type of land systems. The zamindari system had three main agrarian classes: zamindars, tenants and agricultural labourers. The ryotwari system had two main classes: ryot-landlords and the ryot-peasants. The agrarian class structures everywhere in India had a feudal character. The zamindars (i.e., non-cultivating owners of land) were tax-gatherers, the tenants were real cultivators (often without security of land tenure), and the agricultural labourers had the status of bonded labour. With the support of the rulers power, this highly exploitative system continued to persist till the political independence of the country, despite peasant unrest the peasant movements.

In pre-British period Agrarian class structure was based on self-sufficient village community. So there was no class structure. During British period broad category of agrarian classes emerged.

Landlords Tenants Peasant Proprieters Agricultural Working Class

After independence, comprehensive land reforms and rural development programme gave rise to the emergence of distinctive pattern of agrarian class structure independent of caste hierarchy. The abolition of the zamindari system took away the powers of the zamindars.

Yogendra Singh has referred to several trends in agrarian class structure after independence. These are:

• There is a wide gap between land-reform ideology projected during the freedom struggle and even thereafter and the actual measures introduced for land-reforms.

• This gap is the result of the class character of politician and administrative elite.

• The economic prosperity of the rich peasantry has increased but the economic condition of the small peasants has deteriorated.

• Capitalist type of lease-labour or wage labour agrarian system.

• The inequalities between the top and the bottom levels of classes have increased rather than decreased.

• Agricultural workers have not received the benefits of land reforms. The sociological process dominant in the current class transformations in the villages involves 'embourgeoisement' of some and 'proletarianisation' of many social strata.

P.C. Joshi referring to the trend in agrarian class structure has pointed out:

• The decline of feudalistic type of tenancy and its replacement by more exploitative lease arrangements.

• The rise of commercially oriented landlords.

Andre Beteille has referred to change from 'cumulative' to 'dispersed, inequalities due to changing social stratification.

However, the agrarian social structure is still marked by diversities. As pointed out by **D. N. Dhanagare**, the relation among classes and social composition of groups that occupy specific class position in relation to land control and land use in India are so diverse and complex that it is difficult to incorporate them all in a general scheme. However, despite the diversities that mark the agrarian relation in different parts of country, some scholars have attempted to club them together into some general categories.

Amongst the earliest attempts to categories the Indian agrarian population into a framework of social classes was made by following sociologists;

Daniel Thorner. He suggested that one could divide the agrarian population of India into different class categories by taking three criteria :

- First of income earned from land (such as, 'rent' or fruits of own cultivation or 'wages')

- Second, the nature of right held in land (such as, proprietary or 'tenancy' or 'share-cropping right' or 'no right at all')

- Third, the extent of fieldwork actually performed (such as, 'absentees who do no work at all or 'those who perform partial work' or 'total work done with the family labour' or work done for others to earn wages').

On the basis of these criteria he suggested the following model of agrarian class structure in India;

(i) **Maliks,** whose income is derived primarily from property right in the soil and whose common interest is to keep the level of rents up while keeping the wage-level down. They collect rent from tenants, sub-tenants and sharecroppers.

(ii) **Kisans,** working peasants, who own small plots of land and work mostly with their own labour and that of their family members.

(iii) **Mazdoors,** who do not own land themselves and earn their livelihood by working as tenants, sharecroppers or wage labourers with others.

Thorner's classification of agrarian population has been very popular. Development of capitalist relations in agrarian sector of the economic has also changed the older class structure. For example, in most regions of India, the Maliks have turned into enterprising farmers. Similarly, most of the tenants and sharecroppers among the landless mazdoors have begun to work as wage labourers. Also, the capitalist development in agriculture has not led to the kind of differentiation among the peasant as some Marxist analysts predicted. On the contrary, the size of middle level cultivators has swelled.

Utsa Patnaik conducting his study in agrarian class structure in Haryana finds out 5 classes from the perspective of labour :

- Big landlords =Live on hired labour

- Rich peasants =occasionally use family labour with hired labour

- Middle peasants = development on family labour

- Small peasants = sell their labour after finishing their domestic work

- Agricultural labourers = absolutely live on wage.

This standpoint of Patnaik is supported by **Ashok Rudra, Parnak Vardhan and Arvind Narain Das** who look into Agrarian class structure in Punjab, U.P. and Karnataka.

Katleen Gough in the study of Tamil Nadu, from the perspective of capital, finds out 5 agrarian classes:

- Big-bourgeoisie

- Medium bourgeoisie

- Petty-bourgeoisie

- Semi-proletariat

- Pure-proletariat.

- **Kotovsky** has referred to classes like landowners, rich peasants, landless peasantry, and agricultural labourers.

- In the last two decades, some economists have referred to classes of big landholders (with 10+ hectare land), small landholders (with 2-10 hectare land), marginal landholders (with less than 2 hectares land), and agricultural labourers.

- **Ram Krishna Mukherjee** has referred to three classes in agrarian structure: landholders and supervisory farmers, self-sufficient peasantry and share croppers and agricultural labourers.

The classification that has been more popular among the students of agrarian structure and change in India is the division of the agrarian population into four or five classes :

- **Big landlords**

- **Big Farmers**

- **Middle Farmers**

- **Small and Marginal Farmers**

Landless Labourers.

At the top are the **big landlords** who still exist in some parts of the country. They own very large holdings, in some cases even more than one hundred acres. However, unlike the old landlords, they do not always give away their lands to tenants and sharecroppers. Some of them organize their farms like modern industry employing a manager and wage labourers and producing for the market. Over the years their proportion in the total population of cultivators has came down significantly. Their presence is now more in the backward regions of the country.

After big landlords come the **big farmers.** The size of their land holdings varies from 15 acres to 50 acres or in some regions even more. They generally supervise their farms personally and work with wage labour. Agricultural operations in their farms are carried out with the help of farm machines and they use modern farm inputs, such as, chemical fertilizers and hybrid seeds. They invariably belong to the local dominant castes and command a considerable degree of influence over the local power structure, both at the village level as well as at the state level. While the big farmers are more visible in the agriculturally developed regions of the country.

The next category is that of the **middle farmers** who own relatively smaller holdings (between 5 acres to 10 or 15 acres). Socially, like the big farmers, they too mostly come from the local dominant caste groups. However, unlike the big farmers, they carry out most of the work on farms with their own labour and the labour of their families. They employ wage labour generally at the time of peak seasons, like harvesting and sowing of the crops. Over the years, this category of cultivators has also begun using modern inputs, such as, chemical fertilizers and hybrid seeds. Proportionately, they constitute the largest segment among the cultivators.

The small and marginal farmers are the fourth class of cultivators in India. Their holding size is small (less than five acres and in some

cases even less than one acre.) They carry out almost all the farm operations with their own labour and rarely employ others to work on their farms. In order to add their meager earning from cultivation, some of them work as farm labourers with other cultivators. Over the years, they have also come to use modern farm inputs and begun to produce cash crop that grown for sale in the market. They are among the most indebted category of population in the India countryside. As the families grow and holding get further divided, their number has been increasing in most part of India.

The last category of the agrarian population is that of the **landless labourers**. A large majority of them belong to the ex-untouchable or the dalit caste groups. Most of them own no cultivable land of their own. Their proportion in the total agricultural population varies from state to state. While in the states like Punjab and Haryana they constitute 20 to 30 per cent of the rural workforce, in some states, like Andhra Pradesh, their number is as high as fifty per cent. They are among the poorest of the poor in rural India. They not only live in miserable conditions with poor housing and insecure of income, many of them also have to borrow money from big cultivators and in return they have to mortgage their labour power to them. Though the older type of bondage is no more a population practice, the dependence of landless labourers on the big farmers often makes them surrender their freedom, not only of choosing employer, but invariably of choosing their political representatives.

CONCLUSION

From the above studies it can be concluded that agrarian class structure in India has emerged out of multidimensional forces and their bearings in space and time.

INDUSTRIAL CLASS STRUCTURE

Industrial class structure started taking shape during British period. During British period in cities a new industrial and mercantile middle class came into being. There also emerged a new bureaucratic

administrative class. After independence industrial class took a new shape. The effects of industrialization have been

- The percentage of workers engaged in agricultural has come down while that of works engaged in individual activities has gone up.
- The process of social mobility has accelerated.
- Trade unions have organized industrial workers to fight for their rights.
- Since industrial workers maintain continued and close and relationship with their kin-groups and castes, caste stratification has an affected class character
- The traditional and charismatic elite have been replaced by the professional elite.

Morris D. Morris has referred to two view points regarding the behaviour pattern of the industrial labour.

One view is the labour being short in industry, employers had to scramble for their workforce and make all sorts of concessions which weakened their hold on workers. The workers frequently returned to their villages to which they were very much attached.

The other view talks of surplus of labour available villages for the urban employment. Because of easy availability, the employers abused workers unmercifully. Since working conditions in the factories were intolerable, the labour was forced to go back to their villages. Thus, in both views, it was held that workers retained their links with villages which limited the supply of labour for industrial development. As a consequence, proletarian type of behaviour did not develop. It also resulted in high rates of absenteeism and labour turnover and the slow growth of trade unions.

Beside the above features, other features of trial class workers were also visible.

First, the employment of women and children industries was very limited. About 20 and

25 per cent of labour force consisted of women and about 5 per cent of children. This was because employment of women in night shifts was prohibited and children below 14 years could not be legally employed.

- Secondly, though it is argued that industry is caste blind because no single caste can provide an adequate supply of labour and because employees are uninterested in caste affiliation, yet workers did not permit the employers to employ workers of untouchable castes.
- Thirdly, large number of workers in the industries were those who had no significant claim district in which the industry was located but were returned from different districts as well as neighbouring states. There were, thus, no geographical barriers inhibiting the flow of labour into the industry. The rural social structure (joint family system, etc.) was also not a barrier to one estimate, of the total workers in any industry, about 25 per cent are local, 10 pr cent come from within 100 kms of industry's location, 50 per cent from 100 to 750 kms and 15 per cent from more than 750 kms. This shows a tendency for industry hands to be drawn from increasingly distant areas. All these features explain the class aspect of industrial labour force in India.
- Analyzing the 'working class', Holmstrom has said that all workers do not share all interests; rather they share a few interests only. He has also said that it is necessary to draw a class line between the organized and the unorganized sector industrial workers.
- Joshi (1976) also has said that organized and unorganized sector industrial workers are two classes with different and conflicting interests. This can be explained on the basis of difference in four factors wages, working conditions, security and social worlds.
- The wages depend upon whether the industry is big (more than 1,000 workers), small (250-

1,000 workers) or very small (less than 50 workers). In 1973, West Bengal laid down different minimum wages for above three types of industries. The big industries pay much more than the small industries because of the economics of scale, unions and worker's strong bargaining position. Naturally, the interests of workers depend upon the type of industry they work in.

- The working conditions also affect the interests of workers. Workers in industries with more pleasant conditions, having safety measures and fewer accidents and less noise and monotony and fatigue, shorter hours, more space, freedom from close control or harassment, a chance of learning something more, canteens and crèches and washing rooms have different interests from those which do not provide all these amenities. As such, they work as two different classes of workers.

- Security and career chances also demarcate two classes of workers. A permanent worker has not only a job but also a career while the temporary worker is bothered more about the security of the job. The permanent worker's career extends into the future but the temporary one remains bogged down into the present. The former may plan to improve his job by learning a skill and getting promotion, the latter is terrified of losing his job if he jobs a union.

- Lastly, the social worlds also divide workers in two different classes. The 'Social world' refers to differences in economic conditions, life chances, mutual aid and dependence etc. The factory workers in the organized sector have more solidarity, fewer hostility and less tensions. Their interests and ideology keep them separate from the 'outsiders'. Thus the organized sector workers form a privileged upper class.

- **Business Elite: Shadow of Industrial Cla**

An entrepreneurial class or business e started emerging in India by the middle of nineteenth century. Although prior to British rule a group of enterprising busine persons and traders existed in the coun but the new business elite came i prominence only during this peri Traditionally, most of the business perso belonged to the trading castes a communities. But when a new link w established between the Indian economy a that of Britain, members of some other cas also joined mercantile enterprises. As m of the business persons mainly worked middle persons and brokers to British firm

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- These groups of business persons were primarily commercial agents and not industrial entrepreneurs. Moreover, they were located mainly in Kolkata, Mumbai and Chennai regions because commercial and industrial activities were concentrated in these regions.

- The members of this group mainly belonged to the upper castes. For example, Jains. Baniyas and Kayashthas had the upper hand over others in Kolkata region, Parsis and Jains in Mumbai, and in Chennai region, Chettiars controlled such businesses.

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- Most of them are the members of the traditional trading castes and in this sense there is continuity with the past tradition.

- Secondly, there has been a close link of the group with the nationalist movement in India These features, as **Yogendra Singh** suggests, "Influences as role that the business elite play in the modernization of Indian society".

- The size and role of business elite has phenomenally increased after independence. It has been primarily because of the expansion of industrial activities during the last few decades.

- The industrial business groups now organized their activities on modern scientific lines and are comparable to their counterparts outside the country. Trained manager manage their organizations. Thus, a kind of bureaucratic structure has emerged giving rise to a **new class of industrial bureaucrats**.

The accelerated growth of business elite suggests a significant change in the entrepreneurial motivation of the people. The group is gradually becoming broad-based as members of the diverse social groups and castes are entering into this fold. The industrial development of the backward regions in the country is a pointer to this trend.

MIDDLE CLASS IN INDIA

- **Understanding Middle Class in Theory :** The classical sociological thinkers, Karl Marx and Max Weber, have written a great deal on the concept of class. Class was the most important category for Marx in his analysis of the Western society and in his theory of social change.

Marx's model of class is a dichotomous one. It is through the concept of class that he explains the exploitation of subordinate categories by the dominants. According to Marx, in every class society, there are two fundamental classes. Property relations constitute the axis of this dichotomous system – a minority of 'non-producers', who control the means of production, are able to use this position of control to extract from the majority of 'producers' the surplus product which is the source of their livelihood. 'Classes', in the Marxian framework, are thus defined in terms of the relationships of groupings of individuals to the 'means of production'. Further in Marx's model, economic domination is tied to political domination. Control of means of production yields political control.

In this dichotomous model of class structure, the position of the middle class is only transitional. The middle classes for Marx were the self-employed peasants and the petty bourgeoisie. They were so described because they continued to own the means of production they worked with, without employing wage labour. Marx predicted that these middle classes were destined to disappear as the capitalist system of production developed. Only the two major classes, proletariat or the working class and the bourgeoisie or the capitalist class were significant in the Marxian framework of class relations.

The other theorists of class have assigned much more significance to the 'middle classes'. Foremost of these have been sociologists like Max Weber, Dahrendorf and Lockwood.

Max Weber though agrees with Marx that classes are essentially defined in economic terms, his overall treatment of the concept is quite different from that of Marx. Unlike Marx, he argues that classes develop only in the market economics in which individuals compete for economic gains. He defines classes as groups of people who share similar position in a market economy and by virtue of this fact receive similar economic rewards. Thus class status of a person, in Weber's terminology, is his "market situation" or, in other words, his purchasing power. The class status of a person also determines his 'life chances, Their economic position or "class situation" determines how many of the things considered desirable in their society they can buy.

Though, like Marx, Weber also uses the criteria of property ownership for defining classes, his theory provides a much greater scope for a discussion of the middle classes. He agrees with Marx that the two main classes in capitalist society are the property-owning classes and non-property-owning classes. However, Weber does not treat all the non-property owning individuals as belonging to a single class of the proletariats. The "class situation" of the non-property owners differs in terms of their skills. Those who possess skills that have a definite 'market value' (for

example. doctors, engineers and other professionals) are rewarded better than the unskilled labourers. Thus, their "class situation" is different from that of the working class and in the Weberian framework, they constitute **the middle classes**. Further, unlike Marx, Weber does not see any tendency towards polarization of society into two classes. On the contrary Weber argues that with the development of capitalism, **the white-collar 'middle class'** tends to expand rather than contract.

The later sociologists have tended to follow the Weberian line of thinking is their discussions and studies on the concept of middle class. Later sociologists have made a crucial distinction is made in the sociological literature between the "old" middle classes and "new" middle classes. The term "old" middle class is used in the sense in which Marx had used the term "petty-bourgeoisie" i.e., those who work with their own means of production such as traders, independent professionals and farmers. The term "new" middle class is broadly used to describe the skilled or white-collared workers/ salaried employees and the self-employed professionals. Even though they do not own the means of production they work with, they are distinguished from the unskilled blue-collar workers. Their incomes being much higher than that of the blue-collar workers, they can lead a lifestyle that is very different from that of the working class.

Rise of Middle Class in India

The middle classes emerged for the first time in Western Europe with development of industrial and urban economy. The term middle class was initially used to describe the newly emerging class of bourgeoisie/industrial class. And later on the term was used for social groups placed in-between the industrialist bourgeoisie on the one side and the working classes on the other i.e., the skilled professionals.

The historical context of the development of middle classes in India is quite different from that of the West. It was in the nineteenth century, under the patronage of the British colonial rule that the middle classes began to emerge in India.

Though they emerged under the patronage of the British rulers, the middle classes played an important role in India's struggle for independence from the colonial rule. During the post-independence period also, the middle classes have been instrumental in shaping the policies of economic development and social change being pursued by the Indian State.

The British colonial rule in India was fundamentally different from all the earlier political systems and empires that existed in the sub-continent. The British not only established their rule over most parts of the sub-continent they also transformed the economy and polity of the region. Apart from changing the land revenue systems, they introduced modern industrial economy in the region. They reorganized the political and administrative structures and introduced Western ideas and cultural values to the Indian people. As pointed out by **B.B. Mishra,**

- The peculiar feature that distinguishes the Indian middle classes from their counterpart in the West is the context of their origin.

- 'In the West', the middle classes emerged basically as a result of economic and technological change; they were for the most part engaged in trade and industry. In India, on the contrary, they emerged more in consequence of changes in the system of law and public administration than in economic-development, and they mainly belonged to the learned profession".

By the middle of the nineteenth century, the colonial rulers had been able to bring a large proportion of Indian territory under their rule. It was around this time that, after the success of the Industrial revolution, industrial products from Britain began to flow into India and the volume of trade between Britain and India expanded. They also introduced railways and other modern servicing sectors such as the press and postal departments. A large number of educated individuals were required to staff these administrative institutions. It was not possible to

get all of them from Britain. So, in order to fulfil this need, the British opened schools and colleges in different parts of India, particularly in big cities like Calcutta, Bombay and Madras.

Over the years, a new class emerged in India. Apart form those employed in the administrative jobs of the British government they included independent professionals, such as lawyers doctors, teachers and journalists. **According to B. B. Mishra** membership of this "educated middle class" steadily grew in size during the second half of the nineteenth century. They were mostly concentrated in urban centres and largely came from upper caste backgrounds.

Apart from the English educated segment, there were also other sections of the Indian society who could be called the middle classes. The most prominent among prominent among them were the petty traders/shopkeepers and independent artisans, the social groups that were called the "old middle classes" in the Western context. Merchants and artisans had always been separate social strata in the traditional structure of social stratification in India. As the economy began to change in response to the new administrative policies of the colonial rulers, many of the merchants moved to newly emerging towns and cities and became independent traders. This process was further accelerated during the post independent period.

Though limited in its significance, the modern machine-based industry also began to develop during the colonial period. The establishment of railways, during the middle of the nineteenth century, created conditions for the growth of modern industry in India. The colonial rulers constructed railways primarily for the transportation of raw materials required for the British industry overseas. The growing economic activity gave boost to trade and mercantile activity and some of the local traders accumulated enough savings and began to invest into the modern industry. The Swadeshi Movement started by the nationalist leadership gave a boost to the native industry. Apart from giving employment to the

labour force, this industry also employed white-collared skilled workers. Thus, along with those employed in administrative positions by the colonial rulers, the white-collared employees of the industrial sector were also a part of the newly emerging middle classes in India.

Though the middle classes in India emerged under the patronage of the British rule and their members were all educated in the English language and culture, they did not remain loyal to their masters forever. Members of the middle classes not only became actively involved in social reform movements, they also began to raise political questions and in the long run they came to question the legitimacy of the British rule in India. It was the members of these middle classes who provided leadership to the movement for independence. As **Pawan Kumar Varma** points out, 'The educated middle-class elite, which provided all the leaders of the National Movement, came to oppose British rule in the name of the most advanced bourgeois democracy, represented by Britain itself .

The Indian National Congress, particularly during its initial years, was dominated by the professional middle classes. A majority of the active members of the Congress were lawyers; journalists and educationists. Even Mahatma Gandhi, who is known to have transformed the Indian National Congress into a mass movement, was a lawyer and typically belonged to the professional middle class. Though Gandhi was able to bring peasantry and other segments of the Indian society into the fold of the nationalist movement, the leadership of the Congress party remained middle class and upper caste in character. According to **Varma** the British too were 'far more comfortable with the English-knowing, urban-centric middle-class constituents in the Congress than with the unwashed masses'.

Though different sections of the Indian society had participated in the struggle for freedom from colonial rule, it was the middle classes that took over the institutions of governance from the colonial rulers. It has been argued that the end of the

colonial rule did not mean a total break from the past. Much of the institutional structure that had developed during the colonial rule continued to work the independence within the ideology of the new regime. Thus, members of the middle class who were working for the colonial rulers did not loose much in terms of their position in the institutions of governance.

Size and Composition

There are no exact figures about the size of this class during the early years of Independence.

- According to **Varma** to one estimate, its proportion in the total population was around ten per cent and like middle classes in other societies it was not an undifferentiated monolith. It had its unifying features, both in ideology and aspiration, but within this broadly defining framework it has its segmentations in terms of income, occupation and education.

- Apart from the middle classes, on the lower side, of were the vast majority of the agricultural poor, peasants and the landless. Unskilled and semi-skilled manual workers, skilled manual workers, petty clerks and employees such as postmen, constables, soldiers and peons were also outside the middle class domain.

- At the other end of the scale, the upper classes of the Indian society were the rich industrialists and capitalists, the big zamindars and members of the princely families. In between these areas of exclusion, **middle classes** constituted mostly of officers in the government services, qualified professionals such as doctors, engineers, college and university teachers, journalists and white-collared salaried employees in the private sector.

- In terms of income, the middle classes are also generally middle income groups. But income as such is not the only defining criteria. For example, a well to do illiterate petty trader could not be counted as a member of the middle class. Thus, more than income, it is education that was considered the common feature of the middle class in different parts of India.

- This middle class, during the initial years after independence, was also united by a certain ideology a commitment to development and nation-building. Knowledge of English too, was an important characteristic of this class.

Background and the Growth of Middle Class after Independence

India's independence from the colonial rule marked the beginning of a new phase in its history. The independent Indian State was committed, in principle to democratic institutions of secularism, freedom, justice and equality for all the citizens, irrespective of caste, creed or religion and at all levels -- social, economic and political. To achieve these ends, India embarked upon the path of planned development. Plans were chalked out for the development of agricultural, industrial and the tertiary sectors of the economy. There was an overall attempt to expand the economy in all directions. The Government of India introduced various programmes and schemes for different sectors of the economy. The execution of these programmes required the services of a large number of trained personnel.

Apart form the increase in a number of those employed in the government sectors, urban industrial and tertiary sectors also experienced an expansion. Though compared to many other countries of the Third World, the growth rate of the Indian economy was slower, in absolute terms the industrial sector grew manyfolds. Growth in the tertiary sector was more rapid. Increase in population, particularly the urban population, led to a growth in the servicing industry. Banks, insurance companies, hospitals, hostels, press, and advertisement agencies all grew at an unprecedented rate, giving employment to a large number of trained professionals.

The next stage of expansion was in the **rural areas**. Various development programmes

introduced by the Indian State after independence led to significant agricultural growth in the regions that experienced Green Revolution. Success of the Green Revolution technology increased productivity of land and made the landowning sections of the Indian countryside substantially richer. Economic development also led to a change in the aspirations of the rural people. Those who could afford it started sending their children not only to English-medium schools but also to colleges and universities for higher studies. Consumption patterns also began to change. **Varma** has observed that

- 'Material goods hitherto considered unnecessary for the simple lifestyle of a farmer, began to be sought. And lifestyles as yet remote and shunned were emulated'.

- A new class has emerged in rural India that partly had its interests in urban occupations. The process of agrarian transformation added another segment to the already existing middle classes.

- In ideological terms, this "new" segment of the middle classes was quite different from the traditional middle classes.

- Unlike the old urban middle classes, this new, "rural middle class" was local and regional in character. The members of the rural middle class tended perceive their interests in regional rather than in the nationalist framework.

  Politically, this class has been on forefront of the movements for regional autonomy.

  Another new segment of the middle class that merged during the post-independence period ame from the dalit caste groups. Government licies of positive discrimination and reservations r members of the ex-untouchable/Schedule stes enabled some of them to get educated d employed in the urban occupations, mostly he servicing and government sector. Over the ars, a new dalit middle class has thus also erged on the scene.

THE NEW MIDDLE CLASS

The emergence of the new middle class is an interesting development in the era of economic liberalization in India. In a celebrated study of the Indian middle classes, B.B. Mishra has suggested that the members of the educated professions, such as government servants, lawyers, college teachers and doctors, primarily constituted the bulk of the Indian middle classes. He also included the body of merchants, agents of modern trading firms, salaried executives in banking and trading, and the middle grades of peasant proprietors and renters under this category. This notion of the middle class has continued for years for the purpose of examining the role of the middle class in contemporary India.

- It has been argued that in the early years of the Independence material pursuits of the middle class were subsumed in a broader ethical and moral responsibility to the nation as a whole. A restraint on materialistic exhibition in a poor country was the ideal reflector in the character of the middle class.

- Changes have, however, occurred in the basic character of this class. Pawan Varma, for example, in his book *The Great Indian Middle Class* has initiated a significant debate on the declining social responsibility of the Indian middle class. It is in this context, that the idea of new middle class has been made popular in India.

- The current culture of consumerism has given rise to the new middle class. The economic liberalization initiated in India in the 1990s portrays the middle class as a sizeable market which has attracted the Multinational Corporations (MNCs), images of the urban middle class in the print media and television contribute to the prevalence of images of an affluent consumer.

- The spread of the consumer item such as cell phones, cars, washing machines and colour televisions has also consolidated the

image of a new middle class culture. Advertising images has further contributed to perception.

- The new middle class has left behind its dependence on austerity and state protection. The newness of the middle class rests on its embrace of social practices of taste and consumption and a new cultural standard. Thus, the "newness" of middle class involves adoption of a new ideology rather than a shift in the social basis of India's middle class.

- Critics of this new middle class have pointed out the negative effects that middle class consumerism holds in the terms of environmental degradation and growing indifference towards socio-economic problems of the country. However, proponents of liberalization have projected this new middle class as an idealized standard for a globalizing India.

CONCLUSION

Though the middle classes have always been among the most influential segments of the modern Indian society, they were never as prominent and visible as they became during the decade of 1990s, after the liberalization process of the Indian economy began. Introduction of the new economic policy and increasing globalization of the Indian economy brought the Indian middle class into new prominence.

The process of globalization has also generated a lot of debate about the actual size of middle classes in India, their consumption patterns, and the pace of their growth in the years to come. It has been claimed that the size of middle classes has grown to 20 per cent of the total Indian population. Some others have put this figure at 30 per cent. Though a large number of Indian people still live a life of poverty, it is the middle classes that have come to dominate the cultural and political life in India today.

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7 SYSTEMS OF KINSHIP IN INDIA

- Types of kinship systems
- Family and marriage in India
- Household dimensions of the family
- Lineage and decent in India
- Patriarchy, entitlements and sexual division of labour.

TYPES OF KINSHIP SYSTEMS

The kinship system, that is, the way in which relations between individuals and groups are organized, occupies a central place in all human societies. Marriage is a link between the family of orientation and the family of procreation. This fact of individual membership in two nuclear families gives rise to kinship system. Theodorson has defined Kinship as "a social relationship based upon family relatedness'. The relationship which may be consanguine based on blood relation or affinal, based on marriage, determines the rights and obligations of related persons. As such, kinship system is referred to as "a structured system of statuses and roles and of relationship in which the kin (primary, secondary, tertiary and distant) are bound to one-another by complex interlocking ties".

After family, kinship group plays a very crucial role in daily life, rituals and social ceremonies of Hindus. People turn to their kin not only for help in exigencies of life but also on regular occasions. The important kinship groups, after the family, are Vansa (lineage) and gotra (clan). Vansa is a consanguineous unilateral descent group whose members trace themselves from a known and real common ancestor. It may be either patrilineal or matrimonial and is an exogamous unit. The members of a vansa are treated as brothers and sisters. Lineage ties remain up to few generations only. The main linkage among the families of a lineage is common participation in ritual functions like birth, death etc. The vansa passes into gotra which though is a unilateral kin group but is larger than the lineage. It is an exogamous group.

The kinship features in North and Central India differ from those in South India. The socio-cultural correlates of kinship system are language caste and (plain and hilly) region. In spite of the effect of these three factors in the kinship relations, it is possible to talk of kinship organization on some collective basis, e.g., on caste and zonal basis.

Northern Zone

The northern zone consists of the Sindhi, Punjabi, Hindi (and Pahari), Bihari, Bengali, Assami and Nepali. Though kinship behaviour in the northern zone changes slightly from region to region and within each region from caste to caste, yet comparative study shows that it is possible to talk of an 'ideal' northern patterns referring to practices and attitudes generally found to be common among a majority of the castes. **Iravati Karve** has given some important features of the kinship organization of the northern zone:

- In these areas caste endogamy, clan exogamy and incest taboos regarding sexual relations between primary kins are strictly observed. Marriage among close kin is not permitted.

- Kin junior to ego are addressed by their personal names and senior to ego by the kinship term.

- All children in ascending and descending generations are equated with one's own sibling group (brothers and sisters) and all children of one's sibling group are again equated with one's own children.

- The principle of unity of generations is observed (for example, great-grandfather and grandfather are given same respect as father).

- Within the same generation, the older and the younger kin are kept distinct.

- The duties and behaviour patterns of the members of three generations are strictly regulated.

- Some of the ancient kinship terms having Sanskrit origin have been replaced by new terms, for example, pitamaha is replaced by pita. Suffix 'ji' is added to kinship terms used for kin older than the speaker for example, chachaji, tauji, etc. In Bengal, instead of 'ji' suffix 'moshai' is added.

- After marriage, a girl is not expected to be free with her parents-in-law, but when she becomes a mother, she achieves position of respect and power and restrictions on her are lessened.

- The family is no structured that children, parents and grand-parents either live together or social kinship obligations towards them are clearly met.

- Apart from the joint family which represents a person's intimate and nearest circle of relations, there is always a larger circle of kin who play a part in his life. These kindred represent the circle of his patri-kin or matri-kin that may stand by him and help him when the immediate family no longer suffices.

Central Zone :

The central zone comprises the linguistic regions of Rajsthan, Madhya Pradesh, Gujrat and Kathiawar, Maharashtra and Orissa with their respective languages. All the languages of this region are of Sanskritic origin, and therefore, they have affinity with the northern zone. But there are pockets of Dravidian languages in this region. There is also impact of the eastern zone. Tribal people have there unique and somewhat different position compared to other people. The salient features of kinship organization of the Central India are not much different from those of the North India. The important features of kinship in Central India are:

- Cross cousin marriages are prevalent which are not witnessed in the north zone.

- Every region follows northern India practices of marriage, that is, consanguinity is the main consideration which rules marriage.

- Many castes are divided into exogamous clans. Among some castes, the exogamous clans are arranged in hypergamous hierarchy.

- The kinship terminology shows intimacy and closeness between various kin. The relations between kin are governed by the custom of 'neota gifts' according to which cash-gift is given equivalent to cash-gift received. The neota-registers are maintained and preserved for generation.

- In Gujarat, mamera-type of cousin marriage with mother's brother and levirate (marriage with husband's brother) are practiced by some caste.

- The custom of periodic marriages in Gujarat has led to child marriages as well as unequal marriages. Such marriages are practiced even today.

- In Maharashtra, there is impact of both modern and southern zones in kinship relations. For example, the clan organization of the Marathas is similar to that of the Rajputs which is arranged in a ladder manner. Clans are grouped into divisions and each division is named according to the number of clans it comprises; for example parrch-kuli, sat-kuli, etc. The clans are arranged in hypergamous

In the matrilineal family, the kinship relationship of women to one another is that of a daughter, mother, sister, mother's mother, mother's sister, and sister's daughter. In the kinship relationship of women with men, males are related to women as brother, son, daughter's son, and sister's son. The kinship relationship of males to one another is that of brother, mother's brother and sister's son. All these kinship relations are based on blood. There are no relations by marriage. This is because husband visits the family occasionally. We, therefore, find:

- absence of companionship between husband and wife and absence of closeness between father and children; and

- There is complete independence of women as regards their livelihood; they do not partake of the earnings of their husband.

This is how some southern families differ from the northern families.

The Nayars, the Tiyans, some Moplas in Malabar region and the Bants in Kanara district have matrilineal and matrilocal family, and it is called Tharawad. The important characteristics of Tharawad are:

- The property of Tharawad is the property of all males and females belonging to it.

- Unmarried sons belong to mother's Tharawad but married sons belong to their wife's Tharawad.

- Manager of Tharawad's property is oldest male member in the family; called Karnavan. Karnavan is an absolute ruler in the family. On his death, the next senior male member becomes Karnavan. He can invest money in his own name, can mortgage property, can give money on loan, can give land as gift, and is not accountable to any member in respect of income and expenditure.

- When Tharawad becomes too large and unwieldy, it is divided into Tavazhis. A Tavazhi in relation to a woman is a group of persons consisting of a female, her children, and all her descendants in the female line.

- In southern zone there is a system of caste endogamy and clan exogamy similar to northern system. A caste is dived into five exogamous clans. Few characteristics of clan organization are:

- Each clan, which is composed of a number of families, uses some symbols for there clan The main symbols used for clans are of silver, gold, axe, elephant, snake, jasmine, stone etc.

- A person from one clan can seek a spouse from any other clan except his own. However, this choice is theoretical because of the rule of exchange of daughters.

- In marriages, there is not only the rule of clan exogamy but also of family exchange of daughters.

- Because of the marriage rule of exchange of daughters, many kinship terms are common. For example, the term used for nanad (HuSi) is also used for bhabhi; the term used for sala (WiBr) is also used for bahnoi (SiHu); the term used for sasur (HuFa) is also used for bhabhi's father (BrWiFa).

- Marriage between maternal parallel cousins, that is, between children of two sisters, is not permissible.

- Sororate marriage (that is, marriage with wife's younger sister) is practiced. Also, two sisters can marry two brothers in one family.

- There is a system of preferential mating in the south. In a large number of castes, the first preference is given to elder sister's daughter, second preference to father's sister's daughter, and third preference to mother's brother's daughter. However, today cross-cousin marriage and especially the uncle-niece marriage is beginning to be considered as outmoded and a thing to be ashamed of among those groups which have come in contact with the northern Indians or with western culture.

- The taboos prescribed for marriage are: a man cannot marry his younger sister's daughter,

a widow cannot marry her husband's elder or younger brother, that is, levirate is a taboo; and a man cannot marry his mother's sister's daughter.

- Marriage is dependent on the chronological age differences rather than the principle of generational divisions as in the north. One example is that the marriage of grandfather and granddaughter is possible in south.

- Yet, another feature of marriage and kinship in the south is that marriage is not arranged with a view to widening a kin group but each marriage strengthens already existing bonds and makes doubly near those people who were already very near kin.

- A girl has to marry a person who belong to the groups older than her, that is, tan-mum, and also to the group younger than her, that is, tam-mum, and also to the group younger than her parents, that is, she can marry any of her older cross-cousins. A boy must marry in a tan-pin group and to one who is a child of group of tam-mum.

- The dichotomy of status and sentiments expressed in such northern terms like kanya (unmarried girl), bahu (married girl), pihar (mother's house) and sasural (husband's house) are absent in south. This is because in south, a girl after marriage does not enter the house of strangers as in mother. One's husband is one's mother's brother's son and so on. Marriage in the south, thus, does not symbolize separation from father's house for a girl. A girl moves freely in her father-in-law's house.

Comparison of Kinship System of North and South India

In a southern family, there is no clear-cut distinction between the family of birth, that is, family of orientation and family of marriage, that is, family of procreation as found in the northern family. In the north, no member from Ego's family of orientation can also become a member of his family of marriage; but this is possible in the south.

- In the north, an Ego (person under reference/ study) has some kin who are his blood relatives only and others who are his affinal. In the south blood relatives are affinal kin at the same time.

- In the south, organization of kin is arranged according to age categories in the two groups, that is, older than Ego (tam-mun) and younger than Ego (tam-pin) (tam is 'self', mun is 'before' and pin is 'after').

- In the south, kinship organization is dependent on the chronological age differences while in the north, it is dependent on the principle of generational divisions.

- No special norms of behaviour are evolved for married girls in the south whereas in the north, many restrictions are imposed on them.

- Marriage does not symbolize woman's separation from her father's house in the south but in the north, a woman becomes a casual visitor to her parent's family.

- In the north, marriage is to widen the kinship group while in the south it is to strengthen already existing bonds.

At the end, it can be concluded that both rigidity and flexibility exist side by side in regard to values and norms related to kinship systems. These are reflected in regard to divorce, widow remarriage, incest taboos, caste endogamy, rule of avoidance, family structure, systems of lineage and residence, authority system, succession and inheritance of property etc. The kinship organization in India is influenced by caste and language. In this age of sharp competition for status and livelihood, a man and his family must have kin as allies. Caste and linguistic groups may help an individual from time to time but his most staunch, trustworthy and loyal supporters could only be his nearest kin. It is, therefore, necessary that a person must not only strengthen his bonds with kin but should also try to enlarge his circle of kin. Cousin marriages, preferential mating, exchange rules and the marriage norms which circumvent the field of mate selection are

now so changing that kinship relations through marriage are being extended and a person is able to get their help in seeking power and the status lift that power can bring. Kinship continues to be a basic principle of social organization and mobilization on the one hand and division and dissension on the other. It is a complex phenomenon, and its role can be sensed even in modern society.

FAMILY AND MARRIAGE IN INDIA

Family in India is an institution and a foremost primary group because it is the sheet anchor of the patriarchal authority on the one hand, and a protector and defender of individual members right to property on the other. Despite wide ranging changes in Indian society, because of synthesis of collectivism and individualism, the Hindu family continues to be important social institution. Several studies on family have revealed that industrialization, urbanization, education, and migration have not necessarily resulted in nuclearisation of family in India. Even a nuclear family in India is not simply a conjugal family. A real change in family must refer to changed pattern of kinship relations, obligations of members towards each other, individualization etc.

The word family is used in several different ways. A. M. Shah outlines at least four inter-related social situations of family life in India. These are:

*   The body of persons who live in one house or under one head including parent, children, servants etc.

*   The group consisting of parents and there children whether living together or not.

    In wide sense all those who are related by blood and affinity.

*   Those descended or claiming descent from a common ancestor; a house, kindred or lineage.

Generally a family consists of a man, his wife and their children. This is known as elementary family. Such a family could be an independent unit, it could also be a part of joint or extended

family, without necessarily residing together. An elementary family consists of members of two generations, that of ego and his offspring's. Such a family may share property in common with other such units of the ego's brother's family. According to Shah, an elementary family could be both, a complete one and an incomplete one. A complete elementary family consists of husband, wife and their unmarried children. In an incomplete family some and not all persons are found.

Joint Family in India

There has been a lot of debate about nature of joint family in India. The definition given by Iravati Karve can be taken as starting point for analyzing changes in family in India. According to Iravati Karve, the traditional ancient Indian family was joint in terms of residence, property and function. She has given five characteristics of joint family: common residence, common kitchen, common property, common family worship, and some kinship relationship. On this basis, she defines joint family as "a group of people, who generally live under one roof, eat food cooked at one hearth, hold property in common, participate in common family worship and are related to each other as some particular type of kindred". The word 'common' or 'joint property' here (according to the Hindu Succession Act, 1956) means that all the living male and female members up to three generations have a share in the paternal property.

*   According to I.P. Desai, co-residence and common kitchen are not as important dimensions of joint family as intra-family relationships are. He thinks that when two families having kinship relationship are living separately but function under one common authority, it will be a joint family. He calls it functional joint family. He calls a traditional joint family as one which consists of three or more generations. He calls two-generation family as a marginal joint family.

*   Ramakrishna Mukherjee while giving five types of relations- conjugal, parental – filial inter-sibling, lineal and affinal – has maintained

that a joint family is a co-resident and commensal kin-group which consists of one or more of the first three types of relations and either lineal and/or affinal relations among the members.

- K.M. Kapadia has given five types of family: nuclear (husband, wife and unmarried children), nuclear with married sons and nuclear family with a dependant (widowed sister, etc.)

- M.S. Gore has said that a joint family should be viewed as "a family of co-parceners and their dependants" instead of viewing it as a multiplicity of nuclear families. He holds that in a nuclear family, the emphasis is on filial and fraternal relationships. According to Gore, joint family is of three types, filial joint family (parents and their married sons with their offspring), fraternal joint family (two married brothers and their children) and filial and fraternal (combined) joint family.

In any case, in structural sense joint family implies living together of members of two or more elementary both lineally and laterally. When joint family consists of grandparents, parents and grandsons and daughters, it is called a lineal joint family. When married brothers along with there wives and offspring live together, it is known as lateral joint family. Besides patrilineal joint family, there is also matrilineal joint family.

The characteristics of joint family

- It has an authoritarian structure, i.e., power to make decisions lies in the hands of the head of the family (patriarch). Contrary to the authoritarian family, in a democratic family, the authority is vested in one or more individuals on the basis of competence and ability.

- It has familistic organization, i.e., individual's interests are subordinated to the interests of the family as a whole, or the goals of the family are the goals of the individual members.

- Status of members is determined by their age and relationship: The status of a man is higher than his wife; in two generations, the status of a person in the higher generation is higher than the status of a person in the lower generation; in the same generation, the status of a person of higher age is higher than the status of a person of lower age; and the status of a woman is determined by the status of her husband in the family.

- The filial and fraternal relationship gets preference over conjugal relationship, i.e., husband-wife relationships is subordinated to father-son or brother-brother relationship.

- The family functions on the ideal of joint responsibility. If a father takes loan to marry his daughter, it is also the responsibility of his sons to repay the loan.

- All members get equal attention. A poor brother's son will be admitted to the same school (even if costly) as rich brother's son.

- The authority in the family (between men and men, men and women, and women and women) is determined on the principle of seniority. Though the eldest male (or female) may delegate the authority to someone else yet even this delegation is based on the principle of seniority, which limits the scope for the emergence of individualism.

CHANGING PATTERN OF FAMILY IN INDIA

Changes in the family are mainly concerned with the changes in structure and interaction level in the family. Is joint family structure being nuclearised? Many studies in India have proved that joint family in India is not disappearing. This is evident from various empirical studies conducted by various scholars in different parts of the country.

STRUCTURAL CHANGES

I. P. Desai studied urban families in Mahuwa in Gujarat and found that:

- nuclearity is increasing and jointness is decreasing;

- Spirit of individualism is not growing, as about half of the households are joint with other households; and

- The radius of kinship relations within the circle of jointness is becoming smaller. The joint relations are mostly confined to parents-children, siblings, and uncles, nephews, i.e., lineal relationship are found between father, son and grandson, and the collateral relationship is found between a man and his brothers and uncles.

K. M. Kapadia studied rural and urban families in Gujarat's Navasari town and its 15 surrounding villages and concluded that:

- In the rural community, the proportion of joint families is almost the same as that of the nuclear families. Viewed in terms of castes, in villages, higher castes have predominantly joint family while lower castes show a greater incidence of nuclear family.

- In the urban community, there are more joint families than nuclear families. In the 'impact' villages (i.e., villages within the radius of 7 to 8 km from a town), the family pattern closely resembles the rural pattern and has no correspondence with the urban pattern.

- Taking all areas (rural, urban and impact) together, it may be held that joint family structure is not being nuclearised. The difference in the rural and the urban family pattern is the result of modification of the caste pattern by economic factors.

Allen Ross studied Hindu families in Bangalore in Karnataka and concluded that:

- The trend of family nuclear family units. The small joint family is now the most typical form of family life;

- a growing number of people now spend at least part of their lives in single family units;

- Living in several types of family during life-time seems to widespread that we can talk of a cycle of family types as being the normal sequence for city-dwellers;

- Distant relatives are less important to the present generation than they were to their parents and grand-parents;

- City-dweller son has become more spatially separated from all relatives.

A.M.Shah studied families in one village in Gujarat. Classifying families as simple (consisting of whole or part of the parental family) and complex (consisting of two or more parental families), he found that one-third families were complex and two-third were simple, indicating the breakdown of joint family system in rural India.

M. S. Gore studied families in an urban area (Delhi), rural and fringe areas of Rohtak and Hissar districts in Haryana; found that two types of families:

- One, husband, wife and sons-dominated children, and

- Two, husband, wife, unmarried and married sons.

Sachchidananda studied families in 30 villages in Shahabad district in Bihar and found that:

- One-fourth families were nuclear and three-fourth were joint, indicating predominance of traditional families.

- There were more nuclear families in upper castes than in middle and lower castes.

- Nuclearity tends to rise with the level of education.

Kolenda used data from 26 studies conducted between the 1950s and 1970s and found that:

- Majority of the families are nuclear.

- There are regional differences in the proportions of joint families. There are higher proportions of joint families in Gangetic plain than in Central India or Eastern India (including West Bengal).

- The joint family is more characteristic of upper and landowning castes than of lower and landless castes.

- Caste is more closely related to the size and the proportion of joint families.

Ram Ahuja studied families in 1976 in an urban area and in 1988 in rural areas during his two research projects. Both studies pointed out that though the number of nuclear families is growing yet it does not indicate the disappearance of joint family system.

Studies on structural changes indicate that:

- The number of fissioned families is increasing but even living separately, they fulfil their traditional obligations towards their parental families.

- There is more jointness in traditional (rural) communities and more nuclearity, in communities exposed to forces of industrialization, urbanization and westernization.

- The size of the (traditional) joint family has become smaller.

- So long the old cultural values persist among people; the functional type of joint family will be sustained in our society.

- Changes from 'traditional' to 'transitional' family include trends toward new-local residence, functional jointness, equality of individuals, equal status for women, increasing opportunity to individual members to achieve their aspirations and the weakening of family norms.

The important values which sustained joint family structure are:

- Filial devotion of sons.

- Lack of economic viability of some brothers, i.e., their inability to support their children economically.

- Lack of a state-organized system of social security for the old-age men and women.

- A material incentive for organizing the size of labour unit since it constituted the major share of the capital required for production of goods and services and people had to depend on family labour.

The factors which are now breaking the joint family are :

- A differential earnings of brothers generating tensions in the family, as unit of production and service today is predominantly an individual. Up to a point, the values the members inculcate may enable them to subside tension by mutual adjustment and compromise but brothers separate when they focus on the conjugal units.

- The death of the 'root couple' who holds economic power, and inability, incompetence and self-interest of sons and their wives to take up the role of 'parental couple'.

- incentive of depending on family labour is disappearing with the emergence of a cash nexus.

- System of social security, savings and extended earning opportunities of the people are leading to nuclearisation of joint family structures.

INTERACTIONAL CHANGES

The changes in intra-family relations may be examined at three levels: husband-wife relations, parental-filial relations and relations between daughter-in-law and parents-in-law.

The relations between husband and wife in Indian family have been reviewed by Goode, Kapadia, Gore and Murray Straus.

- Change in power allocation in decision-making: In traditional family, wife had no voice in family decision-making. But in contemporary family, in budgeting the family expenditure, in disciplining the children, in purchasing goods and giving gifts, the wife now credits herself as equal in power role. Though husband continues to play the instrumental role and wife the expressive role, yet both often talk things over and consult each other in the process of arriving at a decision. This also does not mean that husband-dominant family is changing into wife-dominant or equalitarian family. The assumption of economic role and

the education of wife have made wives potential equals.

- The source of power has shifted from 'culture' to 'resource' where 'resource' is 'anything that one partner may make available to the other helping the latter satisfy his/her needs or attain his/her goals, as such, the balance of power will be on the side of that partner who contributes grater resources to the marriage.

- Murray Straus study on 'husband to wife power score' also supported the hypothesis based on 'resource theory' rather than the 'cultural values theory'. He found that the middle-class husbands have a higher 'effective power' score than the working class husbands. It indicated that compared to middle-class families, working class families have less joint husband-wife activity of all types. It also means that in middle class families, both husband and wife take more active part than do working class families in attempting to direct the behaviour of the family group toward solution of the problem.

- Straus's study thus indicated that both nuclearity and low socio-economic status are associated with reduction in the husband's power. Emphasizing 'resources' factor does not mean that 'culture' (what Max Weber has called 'traditional authority') has lost its importance. In fact, both factors are important today in 'conjugal bonds'. It may thus be averred that though an average Indian family is husband-dominant yet the ideological source of power of women is giving place to a pragmatic one.

- Emancipation of wife: The change in conjugal bonds is also evident from the increasing emancipation of wife. In urban areas, wife going with husband a for social visits, taking food with husband or even before he does, going together to restaurants and movies, etc. – indicate increasing ' companion' role of wife. Husband no longer regards his wife as inferior to him or devoid of reasoning but consults her and trusts her with serious matters. As regards closeness of man to his wife and mother, man, particularly the educated one, is now equally close to both (Gore).

- The relations between parents and children may be assessed in terms of holding authority, freedom of discussing problems, opposition of parents by children, and modes of imposing penalty. In traditional family, while power and authority was totally vested in the patriarch and he was virtually all powerful who decided everything about education, occupation, marriage and the career of children in the patriarch and he was virtually all powerful who decided everything about education, occupation, marriage and the career of children in the family (Kathleen Gough, McKim Marriot), in contemporary family – not only in nuclear but also in joint family – the grandfather has lost his authority.

- The authority has shifted from patriarch to parents who consult their children on all important issues before taking any decisions about them (Ross) also maintains that grandparents are no longer as influential as they were earlier (Gore) also found that it is now parents who take decisions about schooling, occupation and marriage of their children. They even oppose their parents.

- Kapadia and Margaret Cormack also found that children today enjoy more freedom. Some legislative measures have also given powers to children to demand their rights. Perhaps, it is because of all this that parents do not use old methods of punishing their children.

- They use economic and psychological methods (denying money, scolding, restricting freedom, reasoning) more than the physical methods (beating). In spite of these changes in relations between parents and children, the children do not think only of their rights and privileges but also of the 'welfare of parents'.

- Relations between daughter-in-law and parents-in-law have also undergone change.

However, this change is not so significant in daughter-in-law relations. The educated daughter-in-law does not observe purdah from her father-in-law and discusses not only the family problems but also the social and even the political issues.

- Taking all three types of relations – husband-wife, parents-children and daughter-in-law and father in law – together, it may be concluded that:

- Younger generation now claims more individuality.

- Consanguineous relationship does not have primacy over conjugal relationships.

- Along with 'culture' and 'ideological' factor, the 'resource' factor also affects relations.

HOW LONG FAMILY IS GOING TO SURVIVE?

This question is concerned with the future of family as an institution, in general and the future of joint family, in particular. As the survival of family as an institution is concerned, it may be discussed in terms of four factors affecting the family :

- **Technological Advancement**: access to such conveniences as electricity, piped water in homes, intricate home appliances like gas and fridge, telephone, buses and other vehicles have all changed common man's living and raised his standard of life. Effects of the industrial-technological changes on family are quite evident, like those of productive function, abandonment of self-sufficiency in family economy, occupational and population mobility, weakening of kinship ties, and so forth;

- **Population Explosion:** shift from agriculture to manufacturing and service, migration from rural to urban areas, decrease in birth and death rates, increase in average expectation of life and availability of elderly persons in family, replacement of early marriages by post-puberty add late marriages, etc., have created problems and readjustment, changes

in power structure, desire for smaller families and so on;

- **Democratic Society:** ideals of democracy have filtered down to the level of family living. Demand of rights by women, emancipation of children from patriarch's authority, willingness to approach decision-making through democratic process, and change from familism to individualism may be described as important trends in family;

- **Secular Outlook:** there is a shift away from religious values to rational values. Changes in wife's attitude towards husband, demand for divorce on maladjustment, children's reluctance to support parents in old age, elimination of family worship, are all the result of rational thinking and deviation from moral and religious norms.

As regards the survival of joint family, many studies have proved that joint family will never be completely nuclearised in our society. The two structures, joint and nuclear will continue to survive. Only the nature of jointness will change from residential to functional one and the size of joint family will shrink to two or three generations.

Dominant trends in Indian family in the last few decades:

- Increasing importance of nuclear family.

- Transference of some functions (e.g., educational, recreational, protective, etc.) to some other institutions.

- Fundamental change in family age structure, i.e., proportionately fewer children to care for and proportionately more elderly persons surviving. This has created the necessity of transferring support function from the family to the state and to private insurance companies. This has affected the family power structure too.

- Freedom to women due to their education and increasing economic independence.

- Declining reliance of children upon family controls.

- Changing values of youth. Though they have respect for and fear of parents yet they want parental 'support' for achieving their individuals' interests.

- Liberalization of attitudes and practices towards sex.

- Change from pre-puberty to post-puberty marriages.

- Decreasing family size.

These characteristics of the present-day Indian family point out change in structure and family ties. These only trends are ongoing processes. They have not come to a stop. Nevertheless, it is possible to get a fair idea of what the family will be like in the future.

Following Harold Christensen, we can expect following possible changes in Indian family in the first quarter of the twenty-first century

- The family will continue to exist. It will not be replaced by state-controlled systems of reproduction and child bearing.

- Its stability will depend more on interpersonal bonds than on social pressures from outside or upon kinship loyalty.

- It will more depend upon community support and services.

- With medical advances, the family will have greater control over its biological process (of separating sexual from reproductive function, controlling sickness and death, and determining sex of the offspring).

- Remarriage and divorce rates will be high.

- Parents and grand parents will continue to support their children and grandchildren even after their retirement.

- Woman's position of power within the family will further improve with increase in gainful employment.

- Viewed generally, the family will not be equalitarian but will remain husband-dominant family.

HOUSEHOLD DIMENSIONS OF FAMILY IN INDIA

Desai, based on the data collected from Mahuwa, examined the household dimension of family. Jointness is a process, a part of household cycle. A family becomes joint from its nuclear position when one or more sons get married and live with the parents or it becomes joint also when parents continue to stay with their married sons. When married sons establish their independent households, and live with their unmarried children they become nuclear families. This is only a structural dimension of family. Desai outlines structure of family as follows:

1. Husband and wife

2. Unimember households

3. Husband, wife and married sons without children and other unmarried children

4. The above group with other relatives who do not add to generation depth

5. Three generation groups of lineal descendents

6. Four or more than four generations of lineal descendents.

In this classification emphasis is on the understanding of structure or composition of households based on generation and lineage combination. House is the unit of the above classification. There may be several reasons for change in the structure of family. According to Desai there are two types of reasons: natural, and circumstantial. Jointness itself could be a cause for a change in family. For example, married brothers or parents and married children staying together separate due to unmarried brother's or son's marriage. Brothers separate after parent's death. Separation also takes place because of unwieldy size of the parental family or due to shortage of space in the household. The circumstantial reasons for separation are due to contingent situations in man's life. These are:

- men staying with relatives such as the maternal uncle later on establish one's own household;

- other relatives staying with the head die or go away; and
- head of the family goes away alone for business purposes.

Besides the structural aspect of family Desai examines carefully the types of jointness based on degree, intensity and orientation in regard to functions and obligations which people perform for each other through living separately and at times at different far off places. Desai finds the following five types of households:

- Households with zero degree of jointness
- Households of low degree jointness (joint by way of the fulfilment of mutual obligations)
- Household with high degree of jointness (jointness by way of common ownership of property)
- Households with higher degree of jointness (marginally joint families)
- Households of highest degree of jointness (traditional joint families).

Desai concludes that today family is structurally nuclear and functionally joint based on the fact that 61 per cent are nuclear and 39 per cent are joint in Mahuwa with varying degrees as indicated above. Of the 423 respondents in Desai's study only 5 per cent are not joint at all. There are 27 per cent families with low degree of jointness, 17 per cent with high degree, and 30 per cent with higher and 21 per cent with highest degree. Desai also reports that 220 respondents believe in jointness unconditionally, 24 have faith in muscularity unconditionally, 51 believe in jointness conditionally and 58 express their faith in nuclear family with certain conditions. It is undoubtedly clear that people have belief in joint family system, though it is another thing that they are constrained to live apart from their parents and brothers and other kin due to structural conditions on which they do not have any control.

Family is an international unit with diverse and dynamic relationships within the household based on age, sex, kinship status, education, occupational status, place of work, office or power,

status of in-laws etc. One cannot understand such a complex situation by looking at household dimensions of family from a legalistic point of view. An extended household is a miniature world, and as such it reflects the ethos of wider social system of which it is a constituent unit. Besides the diverse and dynamic relationships within the household, composition, basic norms of deference and etiquette, authority of the head of the family and rights and duties of other members, performance of common and particular tasks etc., are some other dimensions to be noted in the functioning of family in India. There are also regional variations in household dimensions. Higher education does not weaken multy- member household, and since higher education is found more among the upper and upper-middle castes, joint family is more among them than the lower caste and class people. In functional terms, jointness of household is nothing but a structure of obligations among the closest kinsmen.

DESCENT AND LINEAGE IN INDIA

In our own society, our consanguinal relatives are always related to us biologically, this is what we mean, of course, when we loosely call them "blood" relatives. Ego's recognized consanguine relatives – the ones to whom he is bound by the kinship system – are, in general, persons to whom he may normally look for emotional support and various kinds of help in case of need. Their importance depends upon the fact that they are few in number as compared with the whole population of the society. Hence every society limits the circle of ego's consanguinal relatives. The principle or set of principles by which ego's consanguinal relatives are determined is known technically as **'Rules of Descent'**. There are three basic rules of descent:

- In patrilineal descent, each individual automatically becomes a member of any consanguinal kin group to which his father belongs, but not of those to which his mother belongs. As a syndrome agnatic is sometimes used and patrilineally related person is therefore an agnate.

- In Matrilineal descent, an individual joins the consanguine kin group of his mother, but not of his father. As a synonym uterine is sometimes used.

- In Bilateral descent, an individual inherits some but not all of his father's consanguinal relatives and also the corresponding consanguinal relatives of his mother. In a general way, the significant relatives in this system are also the close biological relatives; how far in the ever widening circles of relationship the kin relation is recognized i.e., involves social obligations will vary somewhat from one bilateral society to another. We tend to become rather vague about our kinship with relatives beyond first cousins.

Strictly speaking, probably no society is perfectly bilateral. Generally one favours the part lineal side by taking our names from our fathers.

When a descent is traced from only one parent it is called unilineal descent. The most important consanguinal kin groups associated with unilineal rules of descent the lineage and sibs. A lineage is the simplest type of unilateral grouping which consists of all the probable blood relations of one line of descent exclusively. A lineage consists of descendants in one line, who know their exact genealogical relationships and who recognize obligations to one another. A lineage is this smaller, more localized and more function-laden than the broad kinship grouping.

The lineage is only one form of corporate kin group. But there are many kinds of kinship organization, most can be classified into four major types. Patrilienage, Matrilienage, Clans and Kindred. They differ by virtue of the mode of tracing descent. The two widespread modes are unilineal and bilineal.

Bilineal descent is also known as cognitive descent or omnilinear descent. In this case, some difficulties may arise. The groups formed on this basis are bound to overlap for a start, according to this arrangement. I am a member of both my mother's and father's group. These could scarcely

the groups of permanent territorial residence because it could not be permanently resident in two groups at once.

The unilineal descent thus has some obvious advantages. First it assigns an individual to the group only and thus avoids the problem of overlapping groups. The unilineal stops the indefinite proliferation of inheritors that the bilateral principle demands.

Bilateral is a term used to describe the transmission of decent or of property rights through male and female parents, without emphasizing one or the other lines. The membership is loosely defined by the bilateral rules of descent.

Seen in comparative perspective, the kindred have a peculiar feature in that its membership and duties are defined strictly in relation to a given ego. Unlike lineage and this therefore, kindred are not mutually exclusive in membership, they overlap one another. The members have no group activities apart from their several connections with one specific person.

The tenaciousness of weakness of the kindred as a cooperative group points to a more general fat, namely, the bilateral descent, unlike either kind of unilateral descent, may be best throughout in negative terms, it amounts to a lack of emphasis on either line of descent and hence on descent as such.

In every society the rule of descent is important for at least two reasons:

- It automatically establishes for every individual a network of social positions in which he participates with obligation and rights.

- Aside from mutual aid of various kinds, the rights and obligations ascribed on the basis of descent always include some regulations of marriage and sexual relations.

Descent always prescribes, to some extent inheritance of property, and it often prescribes succession to titles or rank. Perhaps the most important supplement to descent for the disposal

of property rights at death is: rights established by marriage; rights established by creditors unpaid before the death of the deceased; inheritance of taxes etc.

MARRIAGE IN INDIA

In almost all societies marriage is an institutionalized social relationship of crucial significance. It is generally associated with number of other important social relationship. There are different types of marital union. These have implications for population composition, property relations, inheritance etc. Further, there are various regulations and prohibitions associated with marriage and sexual relations in various cultures.

Marriage is more than simply a legalized sexual union between a man and a women; it is socially acknowledged and approved. In India, people generally believe that marriage is mot between two individuals, but it is between two families in terms of bonds it creates between them. Certainly marriage provides recognition of legitimacy to children; it confers acknowledged social status on the offspring, and this is important in terms of inheritance and succession.

- Marriage is perceived by sociologists as a system of roles of a man and a woman whose union has been given social sanction as husband and wife. The equilibrium of the system requires adjustment between the two partners so that the role enactment of one (partner) corresponds to the role expectations of the other (Robert O' Blood).

- Indologists look upon Hindu marriage as a sanskara, having three objects of dharma (fulfilment of religious duties), rati (sex gratification), and praja (procreation). Marriage performed for dharma was called dharmik marriage, while one performed for sexual pleasures was regarded as adharmik marriage.

Marriage was considered sacred because of several reasons :

- dharma was the highest aim of marriage,
- rites were performed before sacred god Agni by reciting mantras from sacred scriptures Vedas by a sacred Brahman,
- union (between man and woman) was considered indissoluble and irrevocable;
- emphasis was on chastity of the woman and faithfulness of the man. Even today, the sanctity of the marriage is recognized by Hindus in spite of the fact that marriage is performed for companionship and not for performing duties, and whenever found a failure, it is dissolved by divorce.
- mutual fidelity and devotion to partner are still considered to be the essence of marriage. Kapadia (1966) has said: "Hindu marriage continues to be a sacrament; only it is raised to an ethical plane."

In other words, marriage in Hindu culture is a spiritual union between a man and a woman for spiritual realization.

Hindu culture also recognizes besides the above-mentioned Brahma marriage seven other forms of marriage with lesser and lower ideals.

- The four of these marriages – Gandharva (entering into sex before getting the social sanction of society), Asura (eloping with a woman), Rakshasya (forcibly abducting a woman from her home) and Paisacha (Man molesting a girl when she is asleep or intoxicated or in a state of unbalanced mind) – had such a low ideal that they were termed as Adharmik marriages.

- The remaining three – Daiva (woman is married to a priest, a man of intellect and money, belonging to an aristocratic class), Prajapatiya (entering wedlock for biological function of sex satisfaction and having children) and Arsha (women marrying a man of intellect and character (sage who is reluctant to enter marriage, so that she may get intelligent progeny and good home environment) – were given the label of Dharmik marriages.

The main reason for recognizing the four Adharmik marriages as marriages was to confer the respectful status of a wife on the 'injured' women.

MATE SELECTION AND RULES OF MARRIAGE

According to Kapadia the question of mate selection in marriage today involves three important issues namely the field of selection, the party to selection, and the criteria of selection. Preferential code, prohibiting restrictions, endogamy and exogamy explain the field, the party, and the criteria of selection of mates for marital alliance. Besides these rules which limit the field of selection in marriage, caste exercises a tremendous control over its members by imposing penalties on the defaulting members. With a view to grant freedom to a person in selection of marriage partner outside ones caste, many Acts were enacted. Despite these legal enactments, exclusivity of caste groups remains a hard fact even today.

The regulation of mate selection in Hindu society is subsumed under the concepts of endogamy, exogamy and hypergamy.

- Endogamy is a social rule that requires a person to select the spouse from within the caste and sub-caste,

- Exogamy forbids selection from gotra and sapinda (i.e., cousins like chachera, mamera, phuphera and mausera); and

- According to hypergamy, a boy from the upper caste can marry a girl from the lower caste and vice-versa.

- In early society, caste endogamy was functional because it preserved the occupational secrets of the caste, maintained the solidarity of the caste and checked decrease in the membership or strength of the caste.

- In the present society, though it makes marital adjustment easier, yet it has proved to be dysfunctional in some ways since it creates inter-caste tensions which adversely affect the political unity of the country, makes field of mate-selection limited and circumscribed, and creates problems of dowry, child marriage, etc.

The exogamous taboos, according to Valvalkar, were designed for restricting free marital relations between parents and offspring and between siblings. Kane has maintained that exogamous restrictions were imposed for preventing transmission of family defects through heredity and for the fear that there may be clandestine love affairs and consequent loss of morals.

However, these arguments are not accepted today for the reasons that decay of lineage is not reported among non-Hindu communities (Muslims) who practice cousin marriages. Kapadia has said that the rule of sapinda exogamy was of the nature of a pious recommendation and remained so till the end of the eighth century. Today, though this rule is followed by and large by all Hindus, yet cases of cousin marriages are not unknown.

Present Situation

- While earlier mates for children were selected by parents, now children believe in joint selection by parents and children, though cases of individual selection (i.e., selection by children themselves) are not rare.

- The criteria of selecting mates by parents are quite different from those of children. Parents give importance to family status, sanskara, caste, dowry and so forth.

- Children give importance to education, character, physical appearance, equipment and skills, etc.

- The joint selection today keeps in mind the needs of the family as well as the interests of the person acquiring a spouse.

- Many studies conducted by scholars like B.V. Shah, Margaret Cormack, Vimal Shah, etc., showed that a very large number of young boys and girls wanted to select their mates in consultation with parents.

CHANGES IN HINDU MARRIAGE SYSTEM

Changes in marriage system among Hindus may be analyzed in seven areas :

- Object of marriage: Traditionally Hindu marriage treated as a sanskara, having three objects of dharma (fulfilment of religious duties), rati (sex gratification), and praja (procreation). Marriage performed for dharma is called dharmik marriage. Marriage was a social duty toward the family and the community, and such little individual interest. Traditionally Hindu marriage is a sacrament. But today situation has undergone sea change. Many legislations i.e., Hindu Marriage Act of 1955, socio cultural awakening, education, and urban employment etc., have weakened the sacred ethos and objectives of Hindu marriage.

- Process of mate selection: Changes mentioned above*

- Form of marriage: Changes in the form of marriage refers to change from polygyny to monogamy and prevalence of both hypogamy and hypergamy marriages.

- Change in age at marriage: It refers to change from pre-puberty marriages to post-puberty marriages. It is realized that pre-puberty marriage harmful on health grounds and also result into higher number of widowhood. Education and employment are considered more or less as valuable for girls as for boys. Hypergamy and concomitant constrain on dowery also contribute to increase in age at marriage. In other words, change in the outlook, values and increased awakening as cultural factors and education, occupation, migration and dowery as structural factors have contributed to change in age at marriage.

- Economic aspect of marriage (dowry): The Anti-Dowry Act, 1961, has made giving and taking dowry as a legal offence.

- Stability of marriage (divorce): Hindu Marriage Act of 1954 and 1955 prohibit bigamy and permit divorce also on various grounds.

- Widow remarriage: The Widow Remarriage Act, 1856 permits widows to remarry but forfeits them the right of maintenance from the property of the first husband. Various laws were laws enacted in India relate to age at marriage, field of mate selection, number of spouses in marriage, dissolving marriage, dowry and remarriage.

The important legislations relating to these aspects are:

- The Child Marriage Act, 1954, dealing with age at marriage, freedom to children to marry without parental consent, bigamy, and dissolving marriage,

- The Hindu Marriage Act, 1955, amended in 1986, and dealing with age at marriage with parents consent, bigamy and annulment of marriage.

- The first three Acts (of 1929, 1954 and 1955) pertaining to the age of marriage prescribe the marriage age of girls as 18 years and for boys as 21 years. The difference in the Acts is that the 1929 Act (amended in 1978) does not invalidate the marriage for violating the provisions in the Act. It only prescribes punishment for the bridegroom, parents, guardians and the priest (but not for violation of the age provision. The1955 Act converse marriage performed with the consent of parents but the 1954 Act covers marriages performed through courts, with or without the parental consent. Both these Acts (1954 and 1955) prohibit bigamy and permit divorce also on various grounds and put restriction on marriage within the degrees of prohibited relationships, unless custom permits such marriages.

- The Widow Remarriage Act, 1856 permits widows to remarry but forfeits them the right of maintenance from the property of the first husband.

- The Hindu Succession Act, 1956, has given share to wife and daughters in man's property equal to that of sons and brothers.

We agree that social legislation is necessary for providing new direction to culture and society and permitting change and removing evils by filing up the gap between social opinion and social needs of the people. Dr. Radhakrishnan, at the time of introducing the bills related to marriage in 1952, said: "The ancient history cannot solve the problems of modern society. The function of the social legislation is to adjust the legal system continually to a society which is constantly outgrowing that system. While social legislation is essential, the will no implement it is more crucial.

MARRIAGE AMONG MUSLIMS

It is said that marriage among Muslims is more of a contract rather than a sacrament like Hindus.

Muslim marriage, called nikah, is considered to be a civil contract. Its important objectives are control over sex, procreation of children and perpetuation of family, upbringing of children, and ordering of domestic life. S.C. Sarkar also maintains that marriage among Muslims is a civil contract.

But it will be wrong to say that Muslim marriage has no religious duty. It is devotion and an act of ibadat. Jany is, therefore, more correct in maintaining that nikah, though essentially a contract, is also a devotional act. But it is surely not a sacrament like Hindus. Muslim society is stratified among different groups i.e., Shias and Sunnis, Ashraf, Azlaf etc. All these groups are endogamous and inter-marriages among them are condemned and discouraged.

Features of Muslim marriage

- proposal and its acceptance: The proposal is made by the bridegroom to the bride just before the wedding ceremony in the presence of two witnesses and a Maulvi (priest). For recognizing marriage as sahi (regular), it is necessary that both the proposal and its acceptance must be at the same meeting. Not doing so makes marriage 'fasid' (irregular) but not batil (invalid).

- capacity to contract marriage, doctrine o equality, The doctrine of equality refers t marriage with a person of low status. Suc marriages are looked down upon. Similarly runaway marriages (called kifa) are also no recognized.

- preference system : The preferential syster refers to giving preference first to paralle (chachera and mausera cousin and then t cross-cousin (only mamera but not phuphera But these days, cousin marriages ar discouraged.

- Mahar (dower) custom in marriage refers t money which a wife is entitled to get from he husband in consideration of marriage. Maha can be specified (fixed) or proper (conside reasonable). It can also be prompt (payable on husband's death or divorce) or deferred At one time, the Muslims had a practice o muta (temporary) marriage but that practice has been abolished now.

- Divorce (talaq) in Muslim society can be give with or without the intervention of the court. woman can divorce her husband only throug the court but a man can divorce his wife withou approaching the court and by making a single pronouncement during one tuhr (on menstruation period) i.e., one month calle Talaqu-e-Ahasan or three pronouncement in three tuhrs (called Talaq-e-Hasan) or three pronouncements in a single tuhr (calle Talaq-e-Ulbidat). In addition to these three types of divorce, there are three other kind of divorce too: illa, zihar, and lian.

- In illa, the husband swears by Allah (God) t abstain from sexual relations with his wife fo a period of four or more months or for specified period. After making illa, if he reall abstains from sexual inter course, th marriage is considered to be dissolved.

- In zihar, the husband declares in the presenc of two witnesses that his wife is like a mothe to him. Zihar does not dissolve the marriag but it provides a ground to the wife to sue he husband for divorce.

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- In lian, the husband accuses his wife of adultery. This provides ground to wife to approach the court for divorce. Divorce given by mutual consent of husband and wife is called khula (initiated at the instance of the wife) or mubarat (initiative coming from wife or husband).

After divorce, the wife is not entitled to get maintenance allowance from her husband. However, about fifteen years ago, the Supreme Court allowed maintenance allowance to one Shah Bano. Since this decision was questioned by the Muslim leaders, describing it as interference the Muslim Personal Law, the government had to amend the legislation. In February 1993, the Uttar Pradesh High Court also ordered the payment of maintenance allowance to one Hameedan and her two children. The All India Muslim Personal Law Board then filed a review petition in the High Court.

All these features point out the difference between the Hindu and the Muslim marriage in terms of aims and ideals of marriage, nature of marriage, characteristics of marriage and dissolving marriage.

It is now contended that the belief that Muslims practice polygyny and easy divorce in large numbers is a misconception. The number of Muslims who have more than one wife is negligible now. There are more cases of bigamy amongst Hindus. Likewise there are more divorces among Hindus and Sikhs than among Muslims.

MARRIAGE AMONG CHRISTIANS

As among Hindus and Muslims, we find stratification among Christians too. The two groups in which Christians are divided are: Protestants and Catholics. The later are further subdivided as Latin and Syrian Christians. All these groups and sub-groups are endogamous.

- The main object of marriage among Christians, as among Hindus and Muslims, is to get social sanction for sex relations and procreation.

- Further, religion also has great significance in Christian marriage. Christians believe that marriage takes place because of the will of God, and after marriage man and woman submerge themselves in each other.

- The three objects of Christian marriage are believed to be procreation, escape from fornication (sex relations without marriage), and mutual help and comfort.

- The marriage partners are selected either by parents, or by children, or jointly by parents and children. However, in 9 out of 10 cases, selection is made and marriage is settled by parents. While selecting partners, the focus is on avoiding blood relations, and giving importance to social status of family, character, education, physical fitness, etc.

- Restrictions on consanguinity and affinity among Christians and Hindus are almost the same. Christians have no practice of 'preferred persons' like the Muslims. After the engagement ceremony, the formalities to be fulfilled before the marriage are: producing a certificate of character, and submitting an application for marriage in the church three weeks before the due date. The church pretest then invites objections against the proposed marriage and when no objection is received, marriage date is fixed. The marriage is solemnized in the church and the couple declares that they take each other as wedded partner in the presence of two witnesses and in the name of Lord Christ.

- Christians do not permit polygyny and polyandry. The Indian Christian Marriage Act, 1872, amended six or seven times since then, covers all aspects of marriage.

- Christians practice divorce too, though the church does not appreciate it. The Indian Divorce Act, 1869 refers to the conditions under which divorce may be obtained. The Act covers dissolution of marriage, declaring marriage null and void, decree of judicial separation and restitution of conjugal rights.

- There is no practice of dowry or dower among Christians. Remarriage of widows is not only accepted but also encouraged.

- Thus, Christian marriage is not a sacrament like Hindu marriage but is a contract between a man and a woman life. Muslim marriage in which there is greater stress on companionship.

It is necessary that till a uniform civil code is enacted, the Divorce Act of Christians, which is a century and a quarter old, be amended and certain new laws passed. For example, the grounds for divorce are too limited and harsh. Even as between husband and wife, there is discrimination in as much as the husband as simply to prove adultery whereas the wife has to prove another matrimonial offence along with adultery for getting relief. Even when both parties wish on mutual consent basis to separate and the court are convinced that living together is impossibility, no relief can be given. The wife is considered to be a property of the husband as the provision in the Divorce Act entitles a husband to claim damages from the wife's adulterer.

PATRIARCHY, ENTITLEMENTS AND SEXUAL DIVISION OF LABOUR

Patriarchy : Literally, rule by father, this concept is used to refer to a system that values men more and gives them power over women.

Sexual division of labour: A system in which all work inside the home is either done by the women of the family, or organized by them through the domestic helpers. Gender division is a form of hierarchical social division seen everywhere, but is rarely recognized in the sociological studies. The gender division tends to be understood as natural and unchangeable. However, it is not based on biology but on social expectations and stereotypes.

Boys and girls are brought up to believe that the main responsibility of women is housework and bringing up children.

SEXUAL DIVISION OF LABOUR

In most families, women do all work inside the home such as cooking, cleaning, washing clothes, tailoring, looking after children, etc., and men do all the work outside the home. It is not that men cannot do housework; they simply think that it is for women to attend to these things. When these jobs are paid for, men are ready to take up these works. Most tailors or cooks in hotels are men. Similarly, it is not that women do not work outside their home. In villages, women fetch water, collect fuel and work in the fields. In urban areas, poor women work as domestic helper in middle class homes, while middle class women work in offices. In fact the majority of women do some sort of paid work in addition to domestic labour. But their work is not valued and does not get recognition.

The result of SEXUAL DIVISION OF LABOUR is that

- Although women constitute half of the humanity, their role in public life, especially politics, is minimal in most societies.

- Earlier, only men were allowed to participate in public affairs, vote and contest for public offices.

- Gradually the gender issue was raised in politics. Women in different parts of the world organized and agitated for equal rights. There were agitations in different countries for the extension of voting rights to women.

- These agitations demanded enhancing the political and legal status of women and improving their educational and career opportunities.

- More radical women's movements aimed at equality in personal and family life as well. These movements are called FEMINIST movements.

- Political expression of gender division and political mobilization on this question helped to improve women's role in public life.

- We now find women working as scientists, doctors, engineers, lawyers, managers and college and university teachers which were earlier not considered suitable for women.

- In some parts of the world, for example in Scandinavian countries such as Sweden, Norway and Finland, the participation of women in public life is very high.

Entitlement means the socially sanctioned right to have or do something, something that we have an official right to: the amount that we have the right to receive. When we analyze entitlement at microscopic, refers to place where one is living (the household), food one is taking within the household, over the property, over the child, over the sexual relationship, over work, over power and authority, over liberty and equality. At macroscopic level entitlement is defined by law, etc.

Differential entitlement of every individual over social and political affairs is characteristics of traditional society e.g. Dalits were denied temple entry in traditional Indian society, Women were not entitled to take part in social and political affairs in most part of traditional Indian society.

Entitlements are equitably distributed in modern societies. For example class mobility is now possible to lower strata of society. They can achieve this through education, acquision of wealth, political power etc.

Feminist sociologists criticize modern criteria of entitlements. They blame that entitlement is differentially distributed modern society. Patriarchy still defines entitlements, not the modernity.

ENTITLEMENTS ON THE BASIS OF GENDER STATUS

- Entitlements over household: A woman's right over household declines after the death of her parents. Entitlements of ownership over her house are restricted because of patriarchy and primordial values.

- Entitlements over food: Bina Majumdar studied status of a woman on the basis of entitlement over food. Her findings show the influence of patriarchal values still prevalent in matters of food in the family. Malinowski in his study found that– food meant for god is prepared by unmarried girls and food for domestic consumption is prepared by married women.

- Entitlement over projection oneself: Women make food using rental and physical labour. So her productive labour is involved in preparation of food. But she is not given credit for such act. Entitlement our maiden surname changed after marriage. Prefix is a must before the name of women after marriage. This signifies women as private property of man. Cultural prescription, patriarchal prescriptions define how a woman will present herself before or after her marriage. This shows that a woman does not have entitlement over her our existence.

- Entitlement over women's own self: Tulsi Patel in study of Rajsthan concluded that a woman becomes mother-in-law by the age of 35. This is because of child marriage. This shows that women do not have entitlement over the children she is going to produce.

- Entitlement over sexuality: Women's sexuality is greatly controlled and men's sexuality is free, in a patriarchal society. Women sexuality is subjected to patriarchal construct. Men make culture and dominate private sphere of women. Men and women are born equal but it is the society and culture which makes the status unequal.

- Entitlement over work: Gender based inequality in sphere of work is found in almost all societies. But it is absolute in socialist society. Reproductive role of women restricted her role in work field. Women never get out of her confinement of domestic life. Women's labour is rendered unpaid in domestic sphere. Her work is absolutely unrecognized and unappreciated. A kind of exploitation of women takes place at home. Gender role division persists. Women are silent workers. Exploitation in industries leads to revolution by exploited workers. But the silent workers never manifest the opposition to exploitation.

- Entitlement over power in the family and society : Decisions taken in a family are also influenced by patriarchal values. In less important decisions women are concerned. Important decisions are taken by elders in the family in consultation with other male members. Women don't have the power to control over her body. The number of children to produce, the name of the child, property belonging to family, her public affairs are all controlled by family.

- In our country, women still lag much behind men despite some improvement since Independence. Ours is still a male-dominated, **PATRIACHAL** society. Women face disadvantage, discrimination and oppression in various ways.

- The literacy rate among women is only 54 per cent compared with 76 per cent among men. Similarly, a smaller proportion of girls students go for higher studies. When we look at school results, girls perform as well as boys, if not better in some places. But they dropout because parents prefer to spend their resources for their boys education rather than spending equally on their sons and daughters.

- No wonder the proportion of women among the highly paid and valued jobs is still very small. On an average an Indian woman works one hour more than an average man every day. Yet much of her work is not paid and therefore often not valued.

- The Equal Wages Act provides that equal wages should be paid to equal work. However in almost all areas of work, from sports and cinema, to factories and fields, women are paid less than men, even when boy do exactly the same work.

- In many parts of India parents prefer to have sons and find ways to have the girls child aborted before she is born. Such sex-selective abortion led to a decline in child sex ratio (number of girls children per thousand boys) in the country to merely 927.

- There are reports of various kinds of harassment, exploitation and violence against women. Urban areas have become particularly unsafe for women. They are not safe even within their own home from beating, harassment and other forms of domestic violence.

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8 RELIGION AND SOCIETY

— Problems of religious minorities
— Religious communities in India

India is a pluralistic country. India is a land of unity in diversity, therefore, people of every religion and language live in every part of the country, hence, the Hindus, the majority community in India is a minority community in some states.

Government of India has notified 5 comm-unities, Muslims, Sikhs, Buddhists, Christians and Zoroastrians as religious minorities at the national level. As per the Census of 1991, population of the minority groups constitutes 17.17% of the total population of the country. On account of this the concept of minority has to be studied with great care. Here, we will discuss various aspects of this problem in brief.

The International Encyclopaedia of Social Sciences defines minority as a group of people differentiated from others in the same society of race, nationality, religion or language, who think of themselves as differentiated group with negative connotation. The Constitution of India uses the term minority but nowhere defines it. The Supreme Court and various High Courts have depended on the statistical criterion. Any community that does not constitute 50 per cent in a state is called a minority.

Almost all countries recognize religious and linguistic minorities. Minority groups are united by certain common features. They often organize themselves into a coherent group to demand such privileges from the state that will help to promote their religion, culture and language, so that they may stay alive and maintain their identity, not get absorbed by the majority.

- "A minority is a category of people singled out for unequal and inferior treatment simply because they are identified as belonging to that category."

- Minority group refers to "any recognizable racial, religious, or ethnic group in a comm-unity that suffers from some disadvantage due to prejudice or discrimination.

- The most common general description of a minority group used, is of an aggregate of people who are distinct in religion, language, or nationality from other members of the society in which they live and who think of themselves, and are thought of by others, as being separate and distinct.

- Speaking about the concept of 'minority' in the Indian context, it can be said that the term has not been properly defined anywhere in the Indian Constitution. But 'minority status' has been conferred on many groups.

- According to the Article 29 of the Constitution any group living within the jurisdiction of India is entitled to preserve and promote its own language, script or literature and culture.

- Article 30 states that a minority group "whether based on religion or language shall have the right to establish and administer educational institution of their choice.

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- The preamble of the Indian Constitution guarantees for all of its citizens justice, liberty, equality and fraternity. There is no discrimination against the minorities on any ground whatsoever.

Minority is a term difficult to define with any degree of precision. It may refer to a relatively small group of people dominated by a majority. Population size is not the only feature of minority status. If a group is discriminated on the basis of religion, race or culture it can be considered a minority.

PROBLEMS OF MINORITIES IN INDIA

In spite of the provisions of the constitutional equality, religious minorities in India often experience some problems among which the following may be noted.

- **Prejudice and Discrimination:** Prejudice and discrimination are found in any situation of hostility between racial and ethnic groups and divergent religious communities.

Prejudice refers to a 'prejudged' attitude towards members of another group. These groups are regarded with hostility simply because they belong to a particular group, and they are assumed to have the undesirable qualities that are supposed to be characteristic of the group as a whole.

Discrimination, on the other hand, refers to an action against other people on the grounds of their group membership. It involves the refusal to grant members of another group the opportunities that would be granted to similarly qualified members of one's group.

Speaking in the Indian context, discrimination especially in providing opportunities to people of different communities is, not at all in practice. The Preamble of the Constitution itself declares that all people irrespective of their caste, class, colour, creed, sex, region or religion will be provided with equal rights and opportunities. Articles 15 (I) and 15(2) prohibit discrimination on grounds of religion.

Article 25 promises the right to profess, propagate and practice religion. It is clear that there is no legal bar for any religious community in India to make use of the opportunities [educational, economic, etc.] extended to the people. It is true that some religious communities [for example, Muslims] have not able to avail themselves of the opportunities on par with other communities. This situation does not reflect any discrimination. It only reveals that such communities are lagging behind in the competitive race.

As far as prejudices are concerned, prejudices and stereotyped thinking are common features of a complex society. India is not an exception to this. Commonly used statements such as "Hindus are cowards and Muslims are rowdies; Sikhs are dullards and Christians are converters", etc., reflect the prevalent religious prejudices.

Common people who are gullible in nature never bother to find out the truth behind these statements, but are simply carried away by them. Such prejudices further widen the social distance among the religious communities. This problem still persists in India.

- **Problem of Preserving distinct Social and Cultural Life:** India is one among the very few nations which have given equal freedom to all the religious communities to pursue and practice their religion. Article 25 of the Constitution provides for such a right. Added to this, Article 3d (I) states all minorities whether based on religion or language shall have the right to establish and administer educational institutions of their choice. They are given the right to preserve their socio-cultural characteristics. It has set up a 'Minorities Commission' to help the minorities in seeking justice. No minority community can have a grievance against any government particularly in this matter.

- **Problem of Providing Protection :** Need for security and protection is very often felt by the minorities. Especially in times of communal violence, caste conflicts,

observance of festivals and religious functions on a mass scale, minority groups often seek police protection. Government in power also finds it difficult to provide such a protection to all the members of the minorities. It is highly expensive also. State governments which fail to provide such protection are always criticized. **For example,** the Rajiv Gandhi Government was severally criticized for its failure to give protection to the Sikh community in the Union Territory of Delhi on the eve of the communal violence that broke out there soon after the assassination of Indira Gandhi in 1984. The Gujarat state government was criticized for its inability to provide protection to the Muslim minorities in the recent communal violence that burst out. Similarly, the Government of Kashmir's inefficiency in providing adequate security to the Hindus and Sikh minorities in that state against the atrocities of extremists is also widely condemned.

- **Problem of Communal Tensions and Riots:** Communal tensions and riots have been incessantly taking place since independence. However, there are ups and downs in the incidents of communal riots. Whenever the communal tensions and riots take place for whatever reason, minority interests get threatened; fears and anxieties become widespread. It becomes a tough task for the government in power to restore the confidence in them. The Delhi [1984] and the Gujarat [2002] episodes of communal riots as stated above clearly reveal this situation.

- **Problem of Lack of Representation in Civil Service and Politics:** Though the Constitution provides for equality and equal opportunities to all its citizens including the religious minorities, the biggest minority community, that is, Muslims in particular have that they are neglected. However, such as feeling does not seem to exist among the other religious communities such as the Christians, Sikhs, Jains and Buddhists, for

these are economically and educationally better than the majority community.

- **Problem of Separatism:** Some of the demands put forward by some of the religious communities, in some areas are not acceptable to others. This has widened the gap between them and others. Examples : The separatist tendency present among some Muslims extremists in Kashmir and their demand for the establishment of Independent Kashmir in Kashmir is not acceptable to others. Such a demand is regarded as anti-national. Similarly, some of the Christian extremists in Nagaland and Mizoram are demanding separate statehood for their provinces. Both these demands are supportive of 'separatism' and hence cannot be accepted. Supporters of such demands have been causing lot of disturbances and creating law and order problems in the respective states.

- **Failure to Stick on Strictly to Secularism:** India has declared itself as a 'secular' country. The very spirit of our Constitution is secular. Almost all political parties including the Muslim League claim themselves to be secular. But in actual practice, no party is honest in its commitment to secularism. Purely religious issues are often politicized by these parties. Similarly, secular issues and purely law and order problems are given religious colours. These parties are always waiting for an opportunity to politicize communal issues and take political advantage out of it. Hence the credibility of these parties creates insecurity in the minds of minorities.

- **Problems related to language:** The British brought English language with them, and the Christians missionaries propagated it through their educational institutions. In Bengal and South India, English has been placed after their mother tongue. Consequently, even in independent India, when Hindi is the declared national language, these states continue to consider English as the national language and

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do not like to have Hindi imposed on them. Many times anti-Hindi movements have emerged in these areas, which are a threat to the national unity and integrity.

- **Problems related to religion:** The British did not merely want to rule India but they wanted to spread Christianity. Thus, the Christian missionaries opened schools and colleges all over India, and went into the remotest corners to serve. Moreover, incentives in all fields of work were given to those who embraced Christianity. Members of many minorities accepted Christianity, which caused several social, familial and personal problems. Acceptance of Christianity implied acceptance of British way of life. The poor communities could ill-afford to emulate the high standards of the British, which resulted in all sorts of undesirable behaviour such as thefts, illegal human trafficking, prostitution etc. The rift between them and the Hindus gave rise to conflicts between them.

- **Problems related to family and marriage.** The influences of Western culture have created many problems for the minorities in the domestic scene. The generation gap has widened, the youth feel freer to do as they wish, joint family system is almost extinct and the old values have been forgotten. Individualism is the rule of the day at all levels, which is creating conflicts and tensions all around.

- **Problems related to general life.** The minorities are facing problems in day-to-day life. Their dress, eating habits, education, entertainment etc., are changing fast under the influence of Western culture. The older generation is unable to accept these changes; therefore, there is conflict between them the young and the old. Hence social life is becoming tense for the minorities.

- **Problems of anomy.** In the absence of a well-defined code of conduct the problem of anomy has arisen among the youth of the

minorities. They believe that they have no need to observe social or moral codes. Frustrated by the corrupt system all around them, they too resort to unfair means to achieve their goals. It becomes a vicious circle and the society at large suffers the consequence.

A FACT FILE OF MINORITIES

- Majority of Muslims live in the cities and almost all Jains live in cities, whereas the Sikhs, Buddhists and Christians live in village and towns.

- The rate of procreation is the highest among the Muslims followed by Buddhists, Hindus, Sikhs, Jains and Christians in the same order. Christians have the lowest rate of reproduction.

- A demographic study of the minorities shows that the ratio of women is less than men in almost all the religious communities, except Christians where the women are more than men. This ratio is the lowest among the Sikhs.

- All the main minorities try to retain their identity. Each one of them has a particular way of worship, and different customs and traditions. This diversity is visible in their day-to-day practical lives.

- The religious diversity and plurality of Indian society has been creating situation of conflict from time to time. It is one of the main problems in the present times as well and communal riots fundamentalism and separatist tendencies are shaking the foundations of the Indian society.

- After Independence India has been acknowledged as a secular state. The Constitution clearly states that all religions are equal and the followers of each religion have equal rights. No citizen of India shall be discriminated against on the basis of religions, caste, race or gender.

- On the practical level the government has not been able to keep aloof from various

religious matters and conflicts. Some leaders of religious communities have openly declared that their religion is comprehensive and includes the social, religious and political aspects in its fold. Thus, they cannot keep politics out of it.

- According to **K.L. Sharma** the literacy rate among the Parsis, Jains, Jews and Christians is higher than others. With the exception of the Christians all of them are involved in trade and business.

In spite of all these diversities there is an underlying unity in the Indian society. In fact, religion has been our greatest treasure. The differences are linguistic and superficial. A deeper study of religions reveals the underlying oneness in them. As a matter of fact, the declaration of secularism is an acceptance of that intrinsic universality of all religions, especially of the Indian origin. The need of the hour is to realize the religiousness of all religions more than the outer layer of rituals and traditions, as spirituality, which is the predominant feature of Indian society, is above religions and communities.

There are so many examples in the Indian history related to minority communities who have made their significant contributions in the field of social, cultural and political development. During the freedom movement, minority groups were very active in their participation. Some of the examples of their participation are as follows:

- Politically they have occupied the posts ranging from the President of the world's largest democracy to the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of India.
- Punjab, land of Sikhs, is the foremost producer of wheat as well as rice and they have made Green Revolution a great success.
- In the field of cultural activities minorities have made their significant contributions. Urdu language is an excellent example of cultural tradition of Hinduism and Islam.

- Many Muslims, Christians and the members of other minorities have also made their remarkable contribution to literature in other Indian languages. They have also contributed to classical music, dance and films etc.
- By the efforts of minority communities, science, journalism and sports have become richer in India.
- In the industrialization of the country, Parsis have played their splendid roles.
- In this way, minority communities have made their best in promoting national integrity and co-operations.

WELFARE OF THE MINORITIES

The Constitution of India protects the interests of the minority and recognizes their rights to conserve their languages, scripts or culture and establish and administer educational institutions of their choice.

The Constitution of India clearly states that India is a secular state. For making this statement authentic it has provided various safeguards to protect the rights of the minorities. The rationale for this is that the majority community by virtue of its number can guard its interest, whereas a minority community needs additional support to safeguard its interests.

For the effective implementation of these safeguards the government has appointed a Commission for minorities to evaluate the working of the various safeguards of the Constitution for the protection of religious minorities; to make recommendations to ensure the effective implementation of all the safeguards; to secure life and property of the minorities; to provide special consideration for minorities in public employment; to ensure non-discrimination in development programmes and grant of financial benefits; and to act as a national information bureau to inform them of the latest position on minorities.

The Commission presents an annual report to the President. Besides this the Commission

can give a report to the President. Besides this the Commission can give report on any matter that demands attention. This report is then presented in the Parliament, where it is discussed and decision is taken as to what action has to be taken on the basis of the report.

The 15-point programme announced by the Prime Minister has also been implemented for the welfare of minorities. It has the objective of securing life and property of minorities. It is also for providing special consideration for minorities in public employment and to ensure non-discrimination in development programmes and grant of financial benefits. It also aims at curbing communal violence and promoting communal harmony. It safeguards their rights for education and employment.

Thus, the objective of the 15-point programme is to accelerate the process of integration of minorities in the national mainstream. In addition the government has also set up a National Minorities Development and Finance Corporation (NMDFC). This Corporation would provide financial aid for economic and developmental activities for the benefit of backward sections among the minorities. The government has increased its contribution from 125 Crore to 300 Crore provided the state governments and governments of Union Territories also put in their share as well.

The Constitution of India has guaranteed various rights to the minorities. The rationale for this is that while the majority community by virtue of its number can guard its interest, a minority community needs additional support to protect its interests. The constitution has guaranteed them the following rights:

- Under Article 29 if there is a cultural minority which wants to preserve its own language and culture, the State would not by law impose any other culture on it. This provision gives protection to religious and linguistic minorities.

- Under Article 350 the Constitution directs every state to provide adequate facilities for instruction in the mother tongue at the primary stage of education to children belonging to linguistic minority groups.

- Under Article 350 a special officer for linguistic minorities is appointed who looks into all matters relating to minorities. Admission to educational institutions cannot be denied to them on grounds of religion, race, caste or language.

- Under Article 300 all minorities shall have the fundamental rights to establish and administer educational institutions of their choice. With regard to granting aid, the state cannot discriminate against by educational institution on the ground that it is under the management of a minority. In 1964, the Supreme Court upheld the right of the minorities to choose the medium of instruction in their schools.

RELIGIOUS COMMUNITIES IN INDIA

India is a multi-lingual and a multi-religious country. Indian society is pluralistic in character from the religious and other point of view. Since a very long time people belonging to various religious communities have been living together in this nation. According to the 1931 census there were ten religious groups in India. These were Hindus, Jains, Buddhists, Zorastrians, Muslims, Sikhs, Christians, Jews and other tribal and non-tribal religious groups. The census of 1961 listed only seven religious categories; Hindus, Jains, Buddhists, Muslims, Christians, Sikhs and other religions and persuasions.

Though majority of the people living in this land are Hindus [82.41%], people belonging to other religious communities such as Muslims [11.67%], Christians [2.32%], and Sikhs [2%], Buddhists [0.77%], Jains [0.41%] and others [0.43%] are also living along with the Hindus by enjoying on par similar rights and opportunities. By virtue of their numerical strength the Hindus constitute the majority while the rest of the religious communities come under what is known as 'religious minorities.'

Hindus are much below 50 per cent in the west coastal area where Muslim and Christian population is largely concentrated. Hindus are also less numerous in Punjab where they are a minority, accounting for 2-10% population at the district level. In the tribal areas of the North East with a Christian dominant population, the proportion of the Hindu population ranges between 5-20%.

Religion is really a complex phenomenon in India. For example, elements of Sanskritic and tribal religion are found in a mixed form at various levels. So is the interaction between the 'great', the 'little' tradition. Integration of Sanskritic Hindu religion and tribal religion is also found. The Santhals, for example, observe several high caste festivals. This is also the case with the lower and 'untouchable' castes. Some tribals worship Shiva. M.N. Srinivas writes: "Different tribes are Sanskritized in different degrees, and different sections of the same tribe may not be uniformly Sanskritized."

Conversion to Christianity and Islam has been a controversial issue over the past couple of decades. It is said that the members of depressed classes and tribals have converted to Christianity, Islam and Sikhism in various parts of the country; particularly in the 1920s and also after Independence.

A good number of tribals have accepted Hindu rituals and religious practices in Bihar, Bengal, Assam and other areas. Thousand of Harijans have converted to Buddhism in Uttar Pradesh and Maharashtra. Induced or forced conversion is certainly against the Constitution of India and the law of the land. There may be several factors responsible for change of religion; but it is certain that a number of people have changed religion to get free from religious orthodoxy.

It has been reported that minority religions show a greater percentage of literacy than the majority religions. Parsis, Jains, Jews and Christians have shown this patter. With the exception of Christians, these communities are also more engaged in trade and business than Hindus and Muslims. A study reveals that the Parsis, Jews and Jains are "advanced" in business, though not diversified. Hindus and Muslims have a diversified occupational pattern because of their large numbers and spread all over the country. The minority groups are found in specific regions, sub-regions and cities, and therefore find themselves in an advantageous position. Syrian Christians, Moplas, Parsis and some other groups have been benefited because of their strategic location in Kerala and Maharashtra.

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9 VISIONS OF SOCIAL CHANGE IN INDIA

--- Idea of development planning and mixed economy.
— Construction, law and social change.
— Education and social change.

IDEA OF DEVELOPMENT PLANNING AND MIXED ECONOMY

Planning is commitment to concentrated actions. It is adjustment of social institutions to new social, economic and political conditions. It is not necessarily rational because it is not always guided by reliable scientific information. For example, in India, if for eliminating poverty, emphasis is laid only on increase in production and the issue of control over population explosions completely neglected, how could it be called rational planning? Planning aims at:

- Change in social organization, and
- Community welfare like improving educational facilities, increasing employment opportuni-ties, doing away with evil social practices, etc.
- prior determination of objectives and proclamation of values;
- concreteness, that is, laying down concrete details of its subject-matter, and
- Co-ordination of diversified skills and diversified professional training. For the success of a plan, it is necessary that,
- plan must stem from the people themselves,
- people's participation is extremely necessary,
- initiative for implementing the plan is to be taken not by the planners but by the activists in different walks of life,
- priorities have to be decided in advance, and
- Arbitration in decision-making must be by a person who has technical knowledge and is a trained professional because he has the capability of visualizing alternative solutions.

Economic planning was advocated by M. Visveswaraya in the 1940s in India. The Indian National Congress appointed a National Planning Committee on the eve of the Second World War (1938-39) to frame an all India plan. But it was the Bombay Plan (known as Tata Birla Plan) which made people planning conscious in India. In 1944, the Department of Planning and Development was also created. However, at this stage, government plans were not concerned with definite economic targets. They were mainly concerned with issues like raising standard of living, increasing purchasing power of people, stabilizing agricultural prices, developing industries, removing wealth disparities and raising the level of backward classes.

After independence Indian Planning comm-ission was set up to access countries need of material capital and human resources and to formulate economic plan for their more blended and effective

publication. It incorporates virtues of both capitalism and socialism aiming at fostering free and faster growth of human personality. The Commission was to:

- Determine priorities,
- Plan balanced utilization of the country's resources.
- Make an assessment of the material, capital and human resources of the country,
- Assess the progress achieved from time to time and recommend readjustment.
- Identify factor which retard economic developments.
- to set up a socialist society based on equality and notice and absence.
- to reduce inequalities of income and wealth.
- To increase production to the maximum. possible extent so as to achieve higher level of national income.
- to achieve full employment.

Since its inception, Planning Commission has so far prepared Five Year Plans, each focusing on different objectives, say, family planning, increasing employment opportunities, increasing annual national income by 5 per cent to 7 per cent, growth of basic industries (like, steel, power, chemicals), maximum use of manpower resources, decentralization of economic power, reducing inequalities in income distribution, achieving social justice with equality, and so on. It could be said that the central objective of planning in India has been to raise the standard of living of the people and to open out to them opportunities for a richer and more varied life.

Economic Planning for Removal of Poverty

- **Rapid economic growth :** Rise in GNP, rise in GDP, improvement in quality of life, will ultimately lead to reduction of poverty. Fourth plan onward 'Garibi Hatao' and 'Growth with justice'. Focus on raising living standard of the people.

- **Increase in employment :** Assumed inherent in economic growth through increase in investment irrespective of choice of technique. Economic Planning for Social Change

- **Reduction of inequality of incomes :** Two aspect equality in the result of traditional semi-feudal social formation and large disparities between rural and urban incomes.

- **Establishment of a socialist society :** Inclusive of social and economic democracy –availability of opportunities for large mares of people irrespective of whether they are rich or poor - Economic Planning and Democratic Socialism

- Faith in democratic values for the enrichment of individual and common man's life for self expression.

- A socialist society aims at the removal of poverty and the provision of a national minimum income.

- A socialist economic aims at the reduction of inequalities of income and wealth, through redistribution of income.

- A socialist economy aims at the provision of equal opportunities for all through provision of gainful employment for every able bodied citizen-raising investment level – expansion of rural industry along with urban

- Faith in mixed economy

- A socialist economy endeavours to cheek concentration of economic power and the growth of monopolistic tendencies through: - extension of the public sector into fields requiring establishment of large scale units and heavy investment.

- widening of opportunities for new entrants

- setting up SMEs and cooperatives as well

- effective exercise of government power of control and regulation and use of appropriate fiscal measures.

publication. It incorporates virtues of both capitalism and socialism aiming at fostering free and faster growth of human personality. The Commission was to:

- Determine priorities,
- Plan balanced utilization of the country's resources.
- Make an assessment of the material, capital and human resources of the country,
- Assess the progress achieved from time to time and recommend readjustment.
- Identify factor which retard economic developments.
- to set up a socialist society based on equality and notice and absence.
- to reduce inequalities of income and wealth.
- To increase production to the maximum. possible extent so as to achieve higher level of national income.
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- The basic criterion of economic decisions in a socialist economy is not private profit but social gain.
- State controlled the commanding height of the economy through the public sector.

Nehru Mahalanobis Strategy of Planning

- Emphasized on development of basic industries so as to achieve long term goal of development.
- A high rate of saving so as to boost investment
- Opted for protectionist path so as to safeguard infant industry.
- Encourage import substitution to achieve self-reliance.
- Aimed at enlargement of opportunities for less privileged section of the society
- Assumed agriculture, light industries, private sector export to play supplemental role of so as not to limit the industrial progress.
- **Gandhian Model of Planning:** Tried by Janta Government 1978-83.
- Basic objective of the Gandhian model is to raise the material as well as the cultural level of the Indian masses so as to provide basic standard of life.
- Aims to reform in agriculture so as to attain food-self sufficiency, and maximum regional self-sufficiency in food.
- Laid special emphasis on dairy farming as an occupation and as an auxiliary occupation to agriculture.
- Attainment of self-sufficiency in village communities requiring rehabilitation, development and expansion of cottage industries along side agriculture.
- Recognizes the need far and development of certain selected and key industries in India especially defence, hydro-electricity, thermal-power generation, mines, metallurgy machinery and machine tools, heavy engineering and heavy chemicals.

- Calls for following changes -
- Employment-oriented planning to replace production-oriented planning
- Agriculture and employment potential of farm machinery
- Equitable distribution through decentralized small scale production
- In Gandhian Model distribution tackled at production end, not at consumption end.

LPG Model of or Narsimha–Manmohan Model of Planning

- Areas hitherto to reserved for public sector were opened to private sector
- Government removed certain shackles to facilitate private investment, say removing license approval for establishing industrial units
- Abolishing the threshold limits of assets in respect of MRTP
- To facilitate FDI government decided to grant approval for FDI up to 51% in high priority areas
- Chronically sick PSU referred to BIFR for the formulation of revival/rehabilitation scheme along with social security mechanism for displaced workers
- Greater autonomy given to PSU managements and the boards of PSUs were made professional
- Economic opened to other countries to encourage exports

CRITICISM OF LPG MODEL

- Very narrow focus as corporate sector account for only 10% of GDP
- Bypasses agriculture and agro-based industries which are major source of employment
- Danger of labour displacement in light of larger role for MNCs
- Import window appeared too wide so as to invite larger trade gap

- Emphasis on capital intensive industries in light of growth of labour force at 2.2% per annum.

MIXED ECONOMY AND PLANNING

Three features:

- Positive economic role of state
- Co-existence role of state
- Combined features of capitalism and socialism

Planning Process in Mixed Economy :

- The mixed economy was necessarily a planned economy so as to reconcile conflict of self-interest and social gain so that they subserve national interest
- **Success of planning in mixed economy hinges on –**
- To what extent public sector able to pursue the socially determined goal.
- To what extent is the state able to guide the private sector to follow the socially determined goals?
- To what extent is the state able to check the distortions in investment? Decisions arising out of private sector interest going against the public sector.

Government's effort in this direction :

- deliberate promotion of defence, heavy and basic industry though larger resource allocation by the state.
- Allocation of substantial portion of investment in creation of economic infrastructure in farm and irrigation work etc.
- State control over financial institutions to direct invest in socially desirable channels
- Setting up of MRTP Commission
- use of rationing and price control of essential commodities so as to ensure availability to weaker section of society.
- Undertaking of special programmes to help the education and training of socially disadvantaged people.

Distortions in Planning Process :

- The profit motive and the acquisitive spirit of the private sector on the one side and the inefficiency of the public sector on the other have resulted in serious distortion. The main distortions are :
- Distortion of production structure due to persistence of inequality
- Growth of unemployment due to failure to control rapid growth of population and emphasis on capital intensive production.
- Failure of state to check concentration of economic power
- Emergence of black economy or parallel economy in India
- Failure to check the increase in prices
- Failure to bring about a redistribution of income.
- Failure of planning process to significantly reduce the proportion of people below poverty line.
- If we make an appraisal of all the eight completed, we find that all our plans have been oriented towards something, sometimes self-reliance in agricultural production, sometimes employment, sometimes industrial growth, and so on. But poverty and unemployment have invariably increased. During the period of 48 years, the average rate of economic growth has been 3.5 per cent. During 1951-1998, our annual national income had increased by about 3.5 per cent, agricultural production by 2.7 per cent, industrial production by 6.1 per cent, and the per capita consumption by 1.1 per cent. Though the government claimed that the number of people below the poverty line came down to 33 per cent in 1998 yet we cannot concede that poverty has decreased. No wonder, more people feel frustrated today and the number of agitations is increasing every year.
- According to **Ronald Lippit** for success of a plan certain strategies have to be put into practice

- development proposals and procedures should be mutually consistent,
- goals of development must be stated in terms that have positive value to the community,
- planners must have a thorough knowledge of the beliefs and values of the community's culture,
- development must take the whole community into account,
- community must be an active partner in the development process, and
- Communication and coordination between various agencies of development is essential.

CONSTITUTION LAW AND SOCIAL CHANGE

History is full of examples where laws have been used to bring about changes in society. Laws have been created to achieve desired goals. It is not only articulates but also sets the course for major social changes. In fact, attempted social change through law is an important feature of the modern world. This is visible in almost all developed and developing societies. The changes that have occurred with the transformation of Western capitalist societies and the emergence of Soviet type societies have essentially been through laws. For example, the Soviet Union and several east European counties have successfully made large scale social changes through laws. Income redistribution, nationalization of industries, land reforms and provision of free education are examples of the effectiveness of law to initiate change.

- A distinction is made between direct and indirect aspects of law in social change.
- In many cases law interacts directly with social institutions and brings about obvious changes. For instance, a law prohibiting polygamy has a direct influence on society. It alters the behaviour of individuals.
- On the other hand, laws play an indirect role also by shaping various social institutions which in turn have a direct impact of society.

The most appropriate example is the system of compulsory education which enables the functioning of educational institutions, which in turn leads of social change.

- However, such a distinction is not absolute but a relative one. Sometime, emphasis is on the direct aspect and less on the indirect impact of social change, while in other cases the opposite may be true.
- There is another way of examining the role of law in social change.
- Law redefines the normative order and creates the possibility of new forms of social institutions. It provides formal facilities and extends rights to individuals. In India, for example, law against untouchability has not only prohibited the inhuman practice but has also given formal rights to those who suffered from such disabilities to protest against it. In this sense, law not only codifies certain customs and morals, but also modifies the behaviour and values existing in a particular society.
- Thus, law entails two interrelated processes: the institutionalization and the internalization of patterns of behaviour. Institutionalization of a pattern of behaviour means the creation of norms with provisions for its enforcement. Internalization of patterns of behaviour, on the other hand, means the incorporation and acceptance of values implicit in a law. When the institutionalization process is successful, it in turn facilitates the internalization of attitudes and beliefs.

In ancient India, no universal legal system based on the principle of equality existed. In ancient India there was a close connection between law and religion. A rule of law was not different from a rule of religion. It was maintained that all laws were contained in the Dharmashastra. The legal system was primarily based on the social position of castes and classes. No uniform standards were applied in providing justice to people. There was no uniform legal norm at an

all-India level. Local customs and regional practices defined and determined these norms. Another important feature of the ancient legal system was its orientation towards the group. Legal norm applied more to the group as an unit rather than to the individual. This characteristic of legal system continued even during the medieval period.

During the British rule radical transformation took place in the legal and judicial systems of the country. The British introduced numerous changes in the traditional legal system. The new legal system was based on the principle of universalism. The notion of equality before law was recognized and received legal sanction. Law courts were established at different levels. The enactment of the Indian Penal Code and the Codes of Civil and Criminal Procedure produced a strong system of judicial administration. This legal system was, however, not confined to criminal justice alone. It even brought domestic and personal life of the people under its purview. Several social legislations came into operation which covered areas like collective bargaining, social security and employment contract. A continuous rationalization of law was introduced by codification of customary law. It increased the separation of law from religion.

Moreover, some legislation in relation to prevailing conservative and orthodox social practices were also passed during the colonial period which acted towards social reform. Indian society in the nineteenth century was under the grip of inhuman customs and practices. Untouchability was practiced throughout the country. The position of women was most degrading. Child marriage, widowhood and the cruel practice of sati put women to life long misery and humiliation. These inhuman practices were, however, challenged by social reformers and the British Indian Government responded by enacting several social legislations.

- The practice of sati (widow burning) was declared illegal in 1829.
- The Hindu Widow Remarriage Act of 1856 legalized the remarriage of the Hindu widows.

- When the members of the Brahma Samaj in Bengal started facing problem in marriage, a Native Marriage Act was passed in 1872. The Brahmos claimed that they did not belong to any religious groups in India. This Act worked like a civil marriage law under which people outside any religious fold could marry.

- Another important legislation linked with marriage was the Age of Consent Act of 1891. The Act prohibited the performance of marriage for girls below the age of twelve.

- During the closing years of the nineteenth century, besides personal laws, several other laws relating to land and industry were also enacted.

- The Factory Act of 1881 addressed the issue of the welfare of factory workers.

- The Bengal Tenancy Act of 1885 introduced reforms in land tenure system.

- The Press Act of 1878 was a landmark in the field of mass communication.

- These legislations not only advanced the cause of cultural change but also contributed towards transformation of the agrarian structure.

- The nature and extent of social change in India has been influenced largely by radical social legislation introduced after the independence. They pertain to subjects ranging from economy, policy, family and inheritance. Legislations impact upon every aspect of people's lives. The number of legislation enacted after the independence is, however, so large that all of them cannot be discussed here. Therefore, we have selected only some important legislations to highlight their role in social change.

- Laws have been passed to eradicate social evils. Under Article 17 of the Indian Constitution, untouchability is prohibited and its practice in any form is made punishable. A comprehensive legislation called the Untouchability (Offences) Act, 1955 was

passed later. This Act was further amended as the Protection of Civil Rights Act in 1976. According to this Act, an untouchable (Scheduled Caste) has access to all public places including places of worship. Though this legislation has not been fully able to eradicate the practice of untouchability, it has definitely attached caste prejudice.

- Similarly, a number of laws have been enacted for the upliftment of women and children. These Acts have brought about a perceptible improvement in their position in society. The Special Marriage Act of 1954, the Hindu Marriage Act of 1955, the Hindu Succession Act of 1956 and the Dowry Prohibition Act of 1956 and the Dowry Prohibition Act of 1961 have initiated changes in the very structure of Hindu society.

- Most of these legislations have further been amended to accommodate more radical and relevant issues. For example, the Hindu Marriage Act of 1955 was amended in 1976 to provide the right to girl to deny marriage before attaining puberty. In fact the original Act itself was radical because it enforces monogamy and permitted divorce among the Hindus. The Dowry Prohibition Act of 1961 was also amended in 1984 that made cruelty towards women a cognizable offence.

- The socio-economic changes that have been brought about through legislations have crated a favourable situation regarding the status of women.

- A number of legislations have also been passed to safeguard and protect the rights of children. Some of them are the Hindu Adoption and Maintenance Act, 1956, the Child Labour (Prohibition and Regulation Act, 1986, the Persons with Disabilities (Equal Opportunities, Protection of Rights and Full Protection) Act, 1996, the Juvenile justice Act, 2000 and so on.

- The role of legislation in transforming the socio-economic condition of tribals even more

explicit. We may throw light on this issue by citing the example of north-eastern India, which is home to a large number of tribals. The tribal communities of this region have experienced remarkable changes in their traditional economy, cultural life and political systems.

- The safeguards provided to tribals in the states of Assam. Meghalaya, Tripura and Mizoram under the Sixth Schedule of the Constitution of India have facilitated numerous programmes for administration development.

- Special provisions under Article 371A of the Constitution have been made for the State of Nagaland to safeguard the cultural identity of the Nagas. The State Governments have passed several legislation which have ushered changes along with preserving their identity.

- The Autonomous District Councils established under the provisions of the Sixth Schedule have been given wide power to maintain control over the tribal land. The Land Transfer Act of 1971 passed by the Meghalaya State Legislature has almost stopped the process of land alienation.

- Likewise, the Lushei Hills District (Acquisition of Chief's Right) Act, 1954 abolished the age-old system of chieftainship among the Mizos as the people themselves demanded it.

The Constitution of India aimed at securing justice liberty and equality to all to constitute the country into a socialist, secular and democratic republic

- Provide rule of law

- Acc to DPSP enshrined in the commit-state assumed the responsibility of securing adequate means and likelihood to all its times - A proper distribution of the material resources - Preventing concentration of wealth to the common detriment. The aim is to build up a social order which stands for welfare of all sections of society.

- The resonances of these commitments employing removal of poverty has permeated into all the Five Year Plans in a tacit or categorical term.

- Concludingly we can say that, in a democratic state like ours, legislation can be effectively used as an interment of social change.

EDUCATION AND SOCIAL CHANGE

GROWTH OF EDUCATION IN INDIA : Education influences different domains of social life. It not only influences social change, but also acts as an agent of social change. Education engages itself in a much more positive action and can perform the function of an initiator of change. It inculcates in the younger generation whatever changes are desirable for rebuilding a society. Moreover, it cultivates necessary intellectual and emotional readiness to deal with challenges of change.

Education is an important instrument of modernization. Modern values in social, economic and political spheres have to be instilled in the minds of people to achieve the goal of modernization. Values such as equality, liberty, scientific temper, humanism and ideas against blind faith pave the way for modernization. This task can be effectively performed by education.

In ancient India education was provided by the family, kin group and society as a whole through participation in daily life. But, as the needs and activates increased in course of times, a more systematic means of instruction was introduced and a specialized occupational group of teachers was formed. The Brahmans acted as formal teachers and were repositories of knowledge and learning. Teaching centers functioned around individual scholars and the learning process also emphasized the role of each individual student. This system of education emphasized more on life than on instruction. Thus curricula varied from center to center. The transmission of religious ideas and the interpretation of Gurukula and Vidyalayas. However, this educational system was available only to small section of the population that constituted the upper layers of the Varna hierarchy under the pressure of social and economic change.

Historically speaking modern education appeared in an India with the establishment of British rule. Initially, the British rulers supported traditional schools and encouraged their expansion and growth. But by the middle of the nineteen century, the colonial policy changed and a decision was taken to introduce European literature and science in India. English was made the medium of instruction in the higher branches of learning. This policy concentrated on the education of the upper and middle classes. Little progress was made in establishing a suitable system of primary education. According to one estimate in 1881-82, 1 in 10 boys and 1 in 250 girls between the ages of 5 and 12 years attended schools. About 90 per cent of the populations were illiterate even in the early part of the twentieth century. The educational system thus not only maintained the gulf between the upper classes and the mass of the population but also increased it further.

There was significant limitation of the educational policy of the colonial period.

- Education was a priority given to higher education over primary education. The enrolment in colleges and universities increased at a higher rate than in schools.

- Modernization through education remained confined to the educated and elite groups that ordinary belonged to the upper castes. It hardly affected the mass of the population.

- However, the system of education introduced during the colonial rule had several good points.

- It gave a fundamentally different orientation to the educational system and laid foundation of modern education in India.

- Its content was liberal and modern. The teaching of several new branches of learning such as science, technology and medicine created an environment congenial for modernization.

APPLIED SOCIOLOGY **141**

- The structure of educational institution was developed on professional lines. This structure, which classified institutions under categories like primary schools, high schools, college and university, continued even after the Independence.

Education in India has achieved amazing success during the last fifty-five years. Its achievements, both in absolute and relative terms, have been remarkable. The fact becomes more visible when we compare the present situation with the one existing at the time of independence. We inherited an educational system which was largely unrelated to national needs and aspiration. It was quantitatively small and qualitatively poor. Only about 14 per cant of the country's population were literate. Only one child out of three had been enrolled in primary schools. In addition to low levels of enrolment and literacy, regional and gender disparities were also very apparent. The education system faced problems of expansion, stagnation and wastage. It lacked vocationalisation and had no relationship with the social and cultural needs of the Indian society.

After the independence, it was recognized that education formed a vital aspect of the modernization processes. Therefore, educational reform was accepted as an important agenda of national development. A comprehensive constitutional and policy framework was developed. The successive Five-Year Plans augmented the goal by launching several programmers of educational development.

We may assess the educational profile of India by first touching upon the literacy scene.

- In 1951, we had a literacy rate of 18.3 per cent which went up to 52.2 per cent in the 1991 census. The rate of literacy, according to the 2001 census, was 65.38 per cant.
- While the literacy rate in the case of the male was 75.85 per cant, it was 54.16 per cent in the case of the female. It is apparent from these figures that there has been unprecedented growth in the field of literacy in India.

- The female literacy rate has increased by 14.87 per cant as against 11.72 per cant in the case of males. Such a remarkable progress in the rate of literacy has primarily been due to two major factors. First, the government-sponsored national campaign for literacy which has made tremendous impact. As the scene has been decentralized, its accountability has increased. Second, the considerable involvement of Non-governmental Organization (NGOs) which have made the literacy campaign more flexible.

- The expansion and the consolidation of elementary education have been equally remarkable. Universalisation of Elementary Education (U.E.E.) has been accepted as a national goal. This programme envisages universal access, universal retention and universal achievement.

- Now, almost 94 per cant of country's rural population have primary schools within 1 km. At the upper primary stage 84 per cent of the rural population have schools within a distance of 3 kms.

- The enrolment at the primary stage has gone up from 42.60 per cant in 1950-51 to 94.90 per cant in 1999-2000. Similarly, the number of primary and upper primary schools has gone up from 2.23 lakh in 1950-51 to 8.39 lakh in 1999-2000 and the number of teachers in these schools from 6.24 lakh in 1999-2000.

- A new scheme called Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) has been launched to pursue universal elementary education in mission mode. The goals of SSA are to send all children in the age groups of 6-14 to school by 2003 so that they complete five year of primary education by 2007 and complete eight year of schooling by 2010.

- Secondary education acts as a bridge between elementary and higher education. It prepares young persons of the age groups of 14-18 for entry into higher education. There

were 1.10 lakh secondary and senior secondary institutions in 1999 in the country. 272 lakh students were enrolled in these institutions, of which 101 lakh were girls. In 1999, there were 15.42 lakh teachers in these schools. The vocationlisation of secondary education has been implemented since 1998.

- The expansion of institutions of higher education has also been exceptional. On the eve of the independence the country had only 18 universities. Now there are 259. There are 11,089 colleges and 119 autonomous collages. The growth of technical and professional institutions has been equally phenomenal. At present, these are 7000 teacher education colleges, 110 polytechnics, 600 management institutes, 550 engineering and technology colleges and 170 medical colleges.

- Apart from expansion and spread of education opportunities at different levels, special emphasis has been put to improve the status of women through education. It is believed that empowerment of women is a critical precondition for their participation in the development processes. Girl child has now become a target group. Similarly, educational development of the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes has received added attention.

- The educational scenario presented above quite evidently looks impressive, but actual efforts have fallen far short of the goal. The National Policy on Education envisages that free and compulsory education should be provided to all children up to the age of 14 years. This target of universalizing elementary education is yet to be achieved.

Social Change brought about in the Indian society by the spread of education :

- The transition- from 'class education' (education for a few) to 'mass education' (education for all) has widened the scope of unlimited entry into the educational system.

- The groups and communities who were deprived of access to education have now joined the national mainstream of development.

- It has not only disseminated universal values such as equality and humanism but it has also transmitted scientific world view. Education has been one of the most important factors in transforming the outlook and attitude of the people.

- **The quantitative expansion of education** has spread into every nook and corner of the country. It has shaken the age-old inertia and indifference towards education. The phenomenal growth of literacy and education among women is unprecedented. It has radically transformed their attitude and improved their status within and outside the families. Their economic contribution has also become conspicuous. The difference in attitude towards boys and girls is no longer prevalent as before. Such a change in society's attitude towards women's role has enabled them to enter spheres of occupational activities that were virtually closed to them.

- **As a result of the expansion of education,** the degree of mobility among the member of the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes has considerably increased. The overall state of affairs, however, is not so encouraging in this respect. The problems associated with these disadvantaged groups have been so deep rooted that their solution requires overhauling of the social system itself. The national policy of providing equal opportunities as well as special opportunities to the underprivileged classes has begun giving positive results. Member of these communities have achieved considerable success in education. The rate if literacy has increased and the enrolment in primary and secondary schools has improved a great deal. Of course, their presence in higher education

is still very low. The upper castes continue to dominate almost all areas of higher education.

- It should be apparent by now that education has acted as a strange modernizing force in Indian society. It is changing the world view of the people. The growth of educational institutions based on the rational principle of science is itself an expression of modernization.

- Increasing urge for education among the deprived and the downtrodden reveals change in their levels of aspirations. It has given an additional responsibility to the education system. The education system till Independence catered to the needs of the upper and the middle classes. A momentous change has occurred in this situation after Independence. A large number of lower caste children have entered educational institutions at all levels. Their aspiration and abilities being different, a new orientation is necessary to find out their talents and capacity so that their educational needs can be fulfilled.

- Levels and the degree of mobility have also been influenced by education. Studies in India suggest that mobility at the level of caste generally operates in the socio-cultural domains and in respect of pollution and purity. Such changes are, however, reflected through changes in customs, practices, occupations, education and income of particular groups. Although these changes do not bring large scale change in the structure of stratification, some families or groups of families may raise their status within their own castes and in relation to some other castes. What we are trying to emphasize is that education has played an important role in effecting mobility at the individual level which is gradually spreading out to the group level.

- Increase in the number of caste-free occupations is thoroughly the result of educational progress in the country. Education is a major element in the honour

assigned to occupations. It plays a major role in determining what occupation one will achieve and, in turn, the level of one's income.

CRITIQUE

However, as we move away from the spectacular gains of education in India since Independence we are confronted with the problem which the Indian system of education is facing today. The problems of standard, content and the social purpose of education are basic to our system of education. Several sociologists like A.R. Desai S.C. Dube, M.S. Gore, K. Ahmad and A.B. Shah etc., have focused upon the issue of education as an instrument for social reconstruction and modernization.

- **Ahmad** has said that although formal education can play a vital role in 'ideational' change through transformation of knowledge, attitudes and values of the people, its effectiveness in bringing about structural changes in society is extremely limited. This is because of the linkages between the existing practices and procedures in education and vested interests.

- **Chitnis** has also pointed out the uneven functioning of education as an instrument of development.

- **A.R. Desai** too, has questioned the validity of education as an instrument of social change. His contention is that after independence, education has not been purposively geared to obtain the desired changes. He has criticized the policies and funding and financing of education to attain the goals of social mobility and equality. To support Desai, we can give the example of education of SCs, STs, women and the minorities which has failed in uplifting their status. The unemployment and under-employment of uneducated youth is another example of failure of education for achieving the aspirations of youths. The failure to achieve development of the rural areas and alleviating poverty is yet another example. Unless the

pattern set by the prevailing distribution of power is broken and there is a tilt in the policies towards the poor, it will be difficult to find resources for the necessary transformation. Change in higher education is also necessary for social change.

- **M. S. Gore** has pointed out the necessity of change in the content and methods of education in the environment and context in which it is conducted, and in the convictions and the commitment of teachers and administrators responsible for education for the effectiveness of education in achieving the required development.

- Some empirical studies have been conducted in India on the relationship between education and modernization. One such study was conducted by the NCERT in Delhi covering eight states. These studies described the extent to which the attitudes, aspirations and outlook of school and college students and teachers in the country have 'modernized'. Modernization in these studies was measured in terms of an adaptation of a scale developed by Alex Inkles. The results pointed out low effect of education on modernization.

Students continue to be traditional in matters of family life, etc.

- **Yogendra Singh** conducted a study into the implications of attitudes and values of teachers in Rajasthan University to modernization. This study measured the levels of aspirations, commitment, morale and authoritarianism among university teachers with a view to understanding how the role structures and value systems of teachers affect their role as agents of modernization. He found significant relationships between the two and thus held that teacher's values influence the modernization of students.

These issues have to be seriously debated and remedies evolved to make the system more effective and persuasive. As the nation has accepted the significance of education for the social and economic development of the country, its educational planning has to move in this direction. The report of the India Education Commission, entitled Education and National Development, forcefully stated, "Education cannot be considered in isolation or planned in a vaccuum. It has to be used as a powerful instrument of social, economic and political change ...."

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10 RURAL AND AGRARIAN TRANSFORMATION IN INDIA

- ... Programmes of rural development, Community Development
  Programmes and poverty alleviation schemes.
- ... land reforms and social change
- ... changing modes of production in Indian agriculture.
- ... issues in rural labour and bondage, migration.

PROGRAMMES OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT, COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES, CO-OPERATIVES, POVERTY ALLEVIATION SCHEMES :

Programmes of Rural Development and Community Development Programmes

Economic Aspect	Social Aspect	Spatial Aspect
Agricultural Productivity	Rural Housing	Transport & Communication
Land Improvement	Drinking Water	Small Scale Industries
Minor Irrigation	Electrification	
Animal Husbandry	Education – Family Welfare	Village & Cottage
Fisheries	Family Welfare	Industry
Minor Forest Produce		

MEANING OR CONCEPT OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT

Rural development is directed at improving living standards of the masses of low-income population in rural areas and making the process of their development self-sustaining. It embraces all those programmes that deal with all aspects of rural living, agriculture and related matters, irrigation, communication, education, health, employment, housing, training and social welfare. The concept of rural development is a much broader concept than the concept of agricultural development. While agricultural development is concerned primarily with cultivation and allied activities, rural development embraces all areas and sectors including agriculture. Since agriculture is the mainstay of the rural life, rural development also has its focus on the issues facing the agricultural sector.

1st PHASE OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT

Community Development Programme (1952) CDP emerged as a result of inspiration derived from the success of same earlier pre-independence programmes for rural development. It looked at village as a common commodity - having a common interest of villagers. For Nehru CDP are of vital importance not in terms of materialistic achievements but much more so because they seem to build up community as well individual in making them builder of their own village.

Three phases of CDP

- National Extension Service. Areas selected under support for methods of providing services on ordinary pattern and ordinary government expenditure.
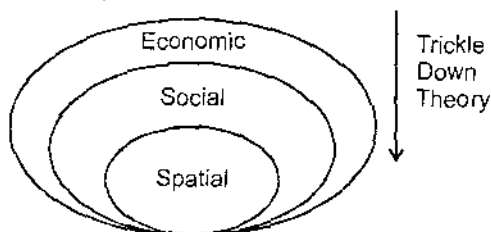
- Intensive Community Development phase: Blocks selected for purpose were subjected to intensive development schemes with high government expenditure.
- Post development phase: It was presumed that initial two phases have created a self-perpetuating process so, Government role was reduced to only supervisory role.

n 1957 the 4th evolution report of CDP divided it to 4 major categories:

Constructional programme (roads, schools etc.)

Irrigation (wells, tube wells, pump sets etc.)

Agriculture (waste land dev., soil, manure etc.)

Institutional programmes (youth, women clubs, dispensaries, smokeless chulhas etc.)

Critique of 1st phase (CDP)

CDP created community dependence on government rather than self-dependence.

Village divided into various sectional interests where interest of landed class was not common with service and occupational castes.

Bureaucracy responsible for its implementation lacked social service ethos.

- Development Communication was top down that led to confusion regarding functions within the bureaucratic organization .
- Land owners were the prime beneficiaries of CDP.
- Gram Sewak was often from land owning communities, he was only succeeded in heightening inequalities.
- According to **S.C.Dubey** general apathy remained on the part of the village population.
- Much emphasis on economic aspect with little emphasis on social and spatial aspect Strategy -

Economic / Social / Spatial — Trickle Down Theory

- **Satyadev** found out that how co-operatives benefitted to the local dominant castes that used loans for the co-operatives, occupied various posts of the co-operatives and subsequently hijacked subsidy benefits meant for the rural poor.

2nd PHASE OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT

- Land Reforms – 60's (early)
- Green Revolution –mid 60's
- Post Green Revolution
- Area Centric programmes – 70's
- Employment, Poverty alleviation 80's.

Land Reforms : The failure of CDP led to the land reforms in early 60's.

- It gave ownership rights to tenants.
- Many legislations were passed; Ninth schedule was included in the Constitution. As a result twenty million household become owner cultivators.
- Tenancy reforms regulated the rent and provided security of tenure.
- It was declared that rent should not exceed 25 % of produce without special permission of government.
- Consolidation of land holding became inevitable.
- Redistribution of surplus land. (For detail refer to Rural and Agrarian Social-Structure)

Critique of land reforms

- Implementation of land reforms was not as expected.
- Abolition of intermediaries was a success. Nearly twenty million households become landlords but it did not benefit land labourers.
- Ceiling was fixed very high of doubly cropped irrigated land which generated less surplus.
- Sizeable part of land remained locked in court cases even beneficiaries could not be properly identified.

- According to **Alexandra George** the ceiling laws were merely a Mann over for political ends.
- According to **Bandopadhyay** ceiling was very high. Still 12% land could be declared surplus. But in reality only 1.8% was declared as surplus.
- According to **V.M. Dandekar** barely 1% of area has been redistributed, 99% remained unchanged except for West Bengal where 10% was surplus and 7% was distributed.

Green Revolution

In mid 60's land reforms were followed by Green Revolution. After two wars (Indo-Pak and Indo China) the planning strategy shifted from self sufficiency to self-reliance which required increase level of production. High Yielding verities were introduced to increase the production which gave a great impetus to Indian agriculture.

Consequences of Green Revolution

- A middle peasant class structure emerged where rich landlords at the top followed by middle peasantry and then landless labouerers and small peasantry.
- Resource distribution was highly skewed at rural level due to which there was straight correlation between caste and class.
- It results in more inequality where wages increased but the difference was maintained.
- HDG group (NGO) found that wages increased by 89% but the price rises by 93%
- **Bhalla and Chadha** in their study on Punjab observed that in long run labour demand increased. But after mechanization labour demand decreases. Increase in land alienation.
- **Francis Frawell** found that green revolution is successful in wheat growing areas most that in rice growing areas. Polarization is much greater in Green Revolution areas.
- According to **Joan Mencher** in Chingleput even official attitude was to ignore the farmers

having 5 acres of land. Money begets money. Very few farmers in lowest category who owned a tube well got the benefits. Thus benefits accrued unequally so disparity increased.

3rd PHASE OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT

Post Green Revolution - Soon after green revolution it was realized that the benefits were not accrued by the poor farmers. Structured mass poverty remained intact. Rate of rural unemployment also increased. Government focused its attention on two key areas;

Area development programmes :

- Draught prone Area Programme
- Hill Area development Programme
- Command Area development

Programmes meant for specific groups and areas :

- 20 point programme
- Rural electrification programme
- Comprehensive child development programmes
- Informal literacy plan etc.
- Eighties saw versatile programme touching different aspect of rural development but with special emphasis on poverty alleviation and employment centric programmes.
- Indira Awas Yojana
- Rural cleanliness programme
- Crop Insurance Scheme
- Social Security Insurance Scheme
- National rural employment scheme
- Rural landless employment guarantee scheme etc.
- Minimum Need Programme
  Increased productivity :
  (i) Growth (ii) Employment
  (iii) Generation
- Poverty alleviation.

Critique

- Growth with redistribution was the slogan in 80's but growth remained lack sided.
- Social Work Research Centre found that agricultural workers were employed for 3 months only.
- Class conflict took caste dimension. Political leaders and bureaucrats lack will to disturb this structure.
- Landless labourers were unable to create demands.
- Fourth rural labour enquiry commission (1983) observed that almost half of the population was in perpetuative debt. These debts have little chance to repaid.
- There was a decline in poverty but in absolute number poverty.
- We had a subsidy based approach to pull people above poverty line which at best created a perpetual dependence upon state.
- They remain highly vulnerable enough to sustain back to poverty.

FOURTH PHASE OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT

Steps taken during 90's became the watershed in strategies of rural development. The India economic was getting alienated with the world economy. Technological upgradation was also lacking. In this background 90's saw open policy of Liberalization, Privatization and Globalization. Privatization implies a greater role for private enterprise and capital in the functioning of an economic. Liberalization implies giving greater freedom to economic agents to take their own economic decisions. Globalization means increasing integration between different economies, cultures, societies of the world.

COOPERATIVES

Evolution of Cooperative in India : The First Plan approached the issue more judiciously and recommended that small and medium farms in particular should be encouraged and assisted to group themselves into **cooperative farming societies**. The Plan did not talk of any enforcing powers to the state through it did envisage some amount of compulsion when it suggested that if a majority of the owners and occupancy tenants in a village, owning at least half the land of the village, then their decision should be binding on the village as a whole.

The early planners had hoped that the village panchayat activated by motivated party workers and aided by the trained workers of the newly launched Community Development programme (in October 1952) would not only help implement rural development projects but would help bring about critical institutional changes in Indian agriculture, for example by assisting in the implementation of land reforms, by organizing voluntary labour for community work and by setting up of cooperatives. Further, there was a high and growing level of expectation, in the initial years, regarding how much such institutional changes, particularly cooperativization, would substitute for investment outlay in agriculture, in achieving the planned targets of rapid increases in agricultural production.

The Second Plan reflected this expectation by declaring that 'the main task during the Second Five-Year Plan is to take such essential steps as will provide sound foundations for the development of cooperatives so that over a period of ten years or so, a substantial proportion of agricultural lands are cultivated on cooperatives lines. However, even the ambitious plan of having a 'substantial' proportion of agricultural lands under cooperatives within ten years soon appeared to be too modest once exaggerated reports started pouring in of the dramatic increases in agricultural output achieved by China through measures such as cooperativization. (It was many years later, after Mao's death in 1976, that this myth was destroyed. By one estimate, China agricultural growth rate between 1954 and 1974 was only 2 per cent, which was actually lower than India's which was 2.5 per cent.)

In the middle of 1956 two Indian delegations, (one of the Planning Commission, the other of

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the Union Ministry of Food and Agriculture), consisting of leaders of the cooperatives movement in India, members of parliament bureaucrats involved with cooperatives, technical experts and planners, were sent to China to study how they organized their cooperatives and achieved such rapid increases in agricultural output. Underlying these visits was the feeling that the targets of agricultural growth envisaged by the Second Plan were inadequate and required an upward revision and the Chinese experience could show how these targets could be achieved without significant increases in outlay.

The two delegations arrived at quite similar conclusions. It was reported that China had achieved remarkable increase in foodgrains production and extension of the agricultural infrastructure through cooperativization. They both recommended a bold programme of extending cooperative farming in India. Jawaharlal Nehru, who was deeply committed to the idea of cooperativization, started putting pressure on the states to emulate the Chinese example and commit to higher food production on the basis of institutional changes in agriculture, i.e., without demanding additional funds for investment in agriculture. The National Development Council and the AICC now set targets even higher than the one envisaged by the Second Plan, proposing that in the next five years agricultural production be increased by 25 to 35 per cent if not more, mainly by bringing about major institutional changes in agriculture such as cooperativization. The states, however, resisted any large-scale plan for cooperativization, agreeing only to experiments in cooperative farming and that too if they remained strictly voluntary.

The Congress under Nehru's persuasion continued to mount pressure in favour of an agricultural strategy based critically on institutional change.

The Third Plan, in sharp contrast to the Second, reflected the mellowed position regarding cooperativization and took a very pragmatic and cautious approach. As regards cooperative farming, it accepted a modest target of setting up ten pilot projects per district. At the same time it put in the caveat that 'cooperation in credit, marketing, distribution and processing, the growth of rural industry, and the fulfilment of the objectives of land reform. This sounded like a wishful platitude not a plan of action.

Structure and Significance of Co-operatives

The cooperative structure in India consists of different constituents. At the bottom of this structure are the **primary societies** which render various types of services. Of this large number about 80% is concerned with agriculture. Most of these societies, about 60% deal with credit only. Thus a large majority of primary societies are related to agriculture and credit. They perform various functions such things as credit, irrigation, marketing, transports etc. These are generally divided into two groups:

- Credit societies, and
- Non-credit societies.

Each of these two sub-groups is further split up into sub groups:

- Agricultural societies, and
- Non-agricultural societies.

Agricultural societies (both credit and non-credit are found in urban areas. For supervision and financial assistance to cooperative credit societies there are central banks and state cooperative banks. The central banks supervise the functioning of the primary societies of a district or part of a district and offer financial assistance to them. Their capital is drawn from public deposit, share capitals and loans from other sources. Because of variety of sources from which these banks can draw money, they act as a link between cooperative societies and the money market. They function is balancing centers by diverting funds of surplus societies to the needy societies; they also perform ordinary banking functions also.

At the top of the cooperative credit are the **state cooperative banks,** at the state level,

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known as the apex bank. It controls the working of central banks and provides finance to them. It also acts as the link between Reserve Bank of India from which it borrows and the central banks and primary societies. It directs the cooperative movement in the state. Its capital comes from share capital, public deposits and loans and advances from the state and Reserve Bank of India. The National Cooperative Union of India is the apex organization promoting the cooperative movement in the country.

All the above mentioned institutions are concerned with short and medium term credit of people. Long term loans are given by Land Development banks which have a unitary structure having branches at different places. These banks obtain their funds from share capital, reserve deposits, issue of bonds and debentures. However the major part of their resources is drawn from the floating of ordinary debentures in the market.

The investors in these debentures are LIC, commercial banks, cooperative banks, central and state governments and Reserve Bank of India. Cooperation in a vast country like India is of great significance because.

- It is an organization for the poor, illiterate and unskilled people.
- It is an institution of natural help and sharing.
- It softens the class conflicts and reduces the social cleavages.
- It reduces the bureaucratic evils [illegible] political functions.
- It overcomes the constraints of agricultural development.
- It creates conducive environment for small and cottage industries.

Limitations of cooperativization

Given the policy statements touched upon, it is not surprising that the progress that the cooperative movement in India by and large fell far short of the goals set by the early proponents. Much of the weakness that Daniel Thorner, the [illegible] economist, had observed during his survey of [illegible] of the [illegible] cooperatives all over India between December 1958 and May 1959 remained largely [illegible]

As [illegible] types of cooperatives were observed:

- First, there were those that were formed essentially to evade to land reforms and [illegible] incentives offered by the state. Typically these cooperatives were formed by [illegible] influential families. Forming a cooperative helped evade the ceiling laws [illegible] lands got the lands tilled by the [illegible] members [illegible], forming these cooperatives [illegible] the influential families [illegible] take advantage of the substantial financial assistance offered by the state in the form of subsidy, as well as get priority for acquiring scarce agricultural inputs like fertilizers improved seeds and even tractors, etc.
- Second, there were the state-sponsored cooperative farms in the form of pilot projects [illegible] were generally poor, [illegible] uncultivated [illegible] was made available to the landless [illegible], displaced persons and such underprivileged groups. The poor quality of [illegible] lack of proper irrigation facilities, and the fact that these farms were run [illegible] government [illegible] projects rather than [illegible] efforts of the cultivators [illegible] generally expensive unsuccessful experiments.
- In any case, the hope that the service cooperatives [illegible] the transition to cooperative farming was completely belied. [illegible] farming had spread to negligible [illegible] the government projects and [illegible] cooperatives.

[illegible] of the Indian [illegible] cooperatives

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i.e., its president and treasurer, consisted of the leading family or families of the village which not only owned a great deal of land also controlled trade and money lending. These well-to-do families, the 'big people' or the 'all in alls' of the village were thus able to corner for themselves scarce agricultural inputs, including credit. In fact, quite often, low interest credit made available through cooperative rural banks was used by such families for non-agricultural business, consumption and even money lending!

- It was a case of public subsidy being used by a non-target group for private investment. These institutions were in taken over by the dominant section in the village, which used them to further buttress their economic and political influence.

- The village poor got little out of these institutions in the early years. An example at hand is the constant refusal to implement the elaborate recommendation made by the Reserve Bank of India in 1954 that rural credit cooperatives were to give credit to the cultivator as the producer of a crop and not as the owner of land. This refusal of the cooperatives to issue 'crop loans' or loans in anticipation of the crop being produced, and their insisting on credit being given land as security, meant that the landless were essentially excluded from this scheme.

- In 1969, The Reserve Bank observed that tenant cultivators, agricultural labourers and 'others' secured only 4 to 6 per cent of the total credit disbursed. The Report of the All-India Credit Review Committee, 1969, and the Interim Report on Credit Services for Small and Marginal Farmers produced by the National Commission on Agriculture, 1971, confirmed the virtual exclusion of the landless and added that the small and marginal farms were also at a considerable disadvantage vis-à-vis the bigger cultivators in accessing credit from the cooperatives and even from the nationalized banks.

- A common shortcoming of the cooperatives movement was that instead of promoting people's participation it soon became like a huge overstaffed government department with officials, clerks, inspectors, and the like, replicated at the block, district, and state levels. A large bureaucracy, generally not in sympathy with the principles of the cooperatives movement and quite given to being influenced by local vested interests, instead of becoming the instrument for promoting cooperatives, typically become a hindrance.

- Yet, over time, the service cooperatives, particularly the credit cooperatives, performed a critical role Indian agriculture. The Primary Agricultural Credit Societies (PACS), which were village level cooperative societies performed better.

- The cooperative credit societies, however, suffered from a major drawback, that of failure to repay loans and, consequently, a very large percentage of overdues. Between 1960 and 1970, overdue of the primary societies rose from 20 to 38 per cent of the credit disbursed. The situation continued to deteriorate with the allIndia average of overdue. Rising to 45 per cent in the mid-seventies and many provinces reaching totally unviable figures, like 77 per cent in Bihar. Quite significantly, it has been observed that the defaulters were not necessarily the poor and small farmers but more often the well-to-do ones. With the growing political and economic clout of the well-to-do peasant, the problem of overdues had reached dangerous proportions, affecting the viability and growth rate of rural credit institutions. Populist measures like the decision of V.P. Singh's National front government in 1990 to write-off all rural debts up to Rs 10,000 not only put a heavy burden on the national exchequer but further eroded the viability of rural credit institutions.

- Service cooperatives had started to play a very important role in rural India. Their role in

making available a much increased amount of cheap credit to a wider section of the peasantry was critical. They not only helped in bringing improved seeds, modern implements, cheap fertilizers, etc., to the peasants, they also provided them with knowledge how to access them. And, in many areas they also helped market their produce. In fact, in many ways they provided a necessary condition for the success of the Green Revolution strategy launched in the late sixties, which was based on intensive use of modern inputs in agriculture.

- **A study done by the World Bank** of Operation Flood details how the effort to replicate the 'Anand Pattern' paid rich dividends. A brief summary of the finding of this study how the complex multi-pronged, similar to those achieved in Gujarat, were now spread to other parts of the country.

- The obvious impact of Operation Flood was the considerable increase in milk supply and consequent increase in income of the milk producers, particularly the poor. While national milk production grew at 0.7 per cent annum till 1969, it grew at more than 4 per cent annually since the inception of Operation Flood. Further, village level enquiries showed that dairying was increasingly becoming an important activity of the farmer and in some cases becoming the main source of income, particularly among the poor. It was estimated that 60 per cent of the beneficiaries were marginal or small farmers and landless, and the extremely poor and needy (destitute, widows, landless, and near landless) in certain "spearhead" villages (was) unusually noteworthy. Milk cooperatives thus proved to be a significant anti-poverty measure.

- In this connection, the World Bank report highlighted an important lesson learnt from Operation Flood, a lesson with major politico-economic implications. The 'lesson' was that by focusing a project on a predominant activity of the poor, "self-selection" is likely to

result in a major portion of the beneficiaries being poor' thus reaching 'target' groups which generally prove 'elusive to reach in practice'. Further, it may be added that the Anand type milk cooperatives reached the poor irrespective of caste, religion or gender, without targeting any of these groups specifically. Similar objectives were met by the Employment Guarantee Scheme first launched in rural Maharashtra in the mid-seventies, followed by a few other states including Andhra Pradesh. The chief beneficiaries of this scheme were the landless who were predominantly from among the Scheduled Castes or Scheduled Tribes, i.e., they got 'self-selected' though the scheme did not exclusively target these groups. Such programmes had the important advantage of reaching certain deprived section without exclusively targeting them. This prevented an almost inevitable opposition or even a backlash among the groups excluded, which has so often been witnessed in scheme in India as well as in other countries, such as the US, where benefits were sought to be given exclusively to a particular community or group.

- As in the case of Anand, the impact of milk cooperatives and Operation Flood went way beyond just increase in milk supply and incomes. As the World Bank study reported, 'A by-product impact of Operation Flood and the accompanying dairy expansion has been the establishment of an indigenous dairy equipment manufacturing industry (only 7 per cent of dairy equipment is now imported) and an impressive body of indigenous expertise that included animal nutrition, animal health, artificial insemination, management information system, dairy engineering, food technology and the like. The indigenization of the infrastructure and technology and the training of rural labour for performing a wide range of technical functions is said to have considerably lower costs, making it possible

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to procure and account for minute quantities of milk brought in by the producers, without raising costs to an unviable level.

- Operation Flood spread and even intensified the impact of the milk cooperatives on women and children and on education. Realizing the potential of empowering women through this movement, Operation Flood in cooperation with NGOs like SEWA (Self-Employed Women's Association) established about 6,000 women dairy cooperative societies (WDCS) where only women were member and the management committees also were constituted exclusively of women. These cooperatives were seen to be generally more efficiently run than the male-dominated cooperatives. They gave women a greater control over their lives through the milk income accruing to them and also enabled them to participate in decision-making outside their homes, giving full play to their managerial and leadership potential. Further, field level observation showed that the milk income in the poorer villages often made it possible for children to attend school, while in better-off villages it contributed to children staying in school longer, that is, it reduced the dropout rate. In still wealthier villages, where all children went to school, a part of the earning of the cooperative was used to improve the facilities in the school. The field surveys also confirmed that increased school attendance for girls was perceived as a very common effect of the dairy cooperative societies. Greater family income and the women involved in dairying being able to stay at home instead of going out for wage labour relieved children from having to earn a wage or look after household chores. Instead, they attended school.

- The spread of the 'Anand Pattern' was not to be limited to milk. Cooperatives for fruits and vegetable producers, oilseeds cultivators, small-scale salt makers and tree growers were started at the initiative of the NDDB.

Again the Kaira Union provided the technology as well as the trained personnel to help this process. Often the resistance from vested interests, particularly the powerful oilseeds traders, was vicious. In some regions of the country, the NDDB team which tried to make the initial moves towards setting up cooperatives was threatened with physical violence and there were cases where workers died in 'mysterious' circumstances. Yet, the movement has progressed. In many parts of the country cooperative of fruits and vegetables are beginning to be as common as milk outlets. The 'Dhara' brand of vegetable oils, a child of the NDDB effort, is beginning to represent in the area of vegetable oils what 'Amul' does in the area of milk and milk products.

CONCLUSION

This has been one of the major achievements of post-independence India. The search for cooperatives led to Indian delegations going to China in the mid-fifties; today scores of countries send delegations to India to study and learn from the Anand experience. An indication of the impact this experiment had at the grassroots level was the statement, made by a poor farmer in a village near Anand in 1985, 'Gujarat is fortunate to have one Kurien; if only God would give one Kurien to every state, many of India's problems would be solved.' This poor Gujarat peasant who in his personalized way trying to explain to us the magnitude of the success of this experiment with reference to Kurien, a Syrian Christian from Kerala, will surely feel out of tune with the Hindu communal upsurge his state witnessed in early 1999, where Christians were hounded and attacked, their religion presumably making them anti-National!

POVERTY ALLEVIATION SCHEMES

Many poverty alleviation schemes have been launched by the central government for the rural poor, comprising small and marginal farmers, landless labourers and rural artisans. The important programmes currently functioning are.

- **20 Point Programme:** Launched for reducing poverty and economic exploitation and for the uplift of the weaker sections of society. The important goals were: controlling inflation, giving impetus to production, welfare of the rural population, lending help to the urban middle classes and controlling social crimes. The programmes included in the 20 point programme were: increase in irrigational facilities, increase in pogrammes for rural employment, distribution of surplus land, minimum wages to landleless labourers, rehabilitation of bonded labour, uplift of the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes, growth of housing facilities, increasing power production, formulating new programmes of family planning, tree plantation, extension of primary health facilities, programmes for the welfare of the women and children, making primary education measures more effective, strengthening of public distribution system, simplification of industrial policies, control of black money, betterment of drinking water facilities and developing internal resources.

- The Integrated Rural Development Programme (IRDP) was launched by the centre in 20 selected districts, but from October 1982, it was extended to all districts in the country. This programme considers a household as the basic unit of development. IRDP is a major instrument of the government to alleviate poverty. Its objective is to enable selected families to cross the poverty line by taking up self-employment ventures in a variety of activities like agriculture, horticulture and animal husbandry in the primary sector, weaving and handicrafts in the secondary sector and service and business activities in the tertiary sector. The aim of the IRDP is to see that a minimum stipulated number of families are enabled to cross the poverty line within the limits of a given investment and in a given time-frame. Thus, the three variables involved are: (a) number of poor households, (b) resources available for investment, and (c) the time-span over which the investment would yield an income which would enable the family to cross the poverty line.

- A number of institutions have undertaken studies with respect to the implementation of working of the IRDP. They point out flaws in the implementation of the programme. None of these studies have, however, questioned the utility of the programme. The main criticisms against this scheme are:

- There are leakages in the programme and all assets created under IRDP are not with the poor. Thus is mainly because of three factors: the poor are unable to pay large bribes, fill up complicated forms, influence the village headman and find 'guarantors' for themselves; bank officials are often reluctant to deal with poor borrowers because they believe that giving loans to the poor is risky since recovery is often used as a major indicator of the performance of a particular branch of a rural bank; the poor themselves take inadequate interest in the programme because they are afraid of being cheated or of not being able to repay.

- There is much corruption, misuse and malpractice in the implementation of the loan programme. The loans are often misallocated with little apparent violation of the guidelines of the schemes.

- The programme is household-based and is not integrated with the development needs or resource base of the area. Thus, the IRDP loan neither raises the living standards of the beneficiaries nor does it have any impact on rural poverty by raising the poor people above the poverty line. This has been indicated by studies in several districts in Rajasthan, Gujarat, West Bengal, Uttar Pradesh and Karnataka. The latest study was conducted in seven districts in Rajasthan under a World Bank project on poverty.

- The scheme called Training Rural Youth for Self-Employment was started on August 15,

1979 to provide technical skills to the rural youth to enable them to seek employment in the fields of agriculture, industry, services and business activities. Only youth in the age group of 18-35 and belonging to families living below the poverty line are eligible for training. Priority for selection is given to Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribe persons, ex-servicemen and those who are ninth pass. One-third seats are reserved for women, Stipend to the trainee's ranges from Rs. 75 to Rs. 200 per month. On completion of training, TRYSEM beneficiaries are assisted under the IRDP. The main criticisms against this progrmme are: its coverage is very small in relation to need; skills provided have not been linked with rural industrialization process. Training is provided on the basis of ad hoc considerations and skills imparted are of low level and amount of stipend is rather inadequate to motivate the youth to go for training.

- The National Rural Employment Programme (NREP) was planned for creating additional employment opportunities in the rural areas with the help of surplus foodgrains.

- Initially, this programme was called Food for Work Programme (FWP). Under this scheme, millions of man days of employment were created every year by utilizing lakhs of tones of foodgrains.

- The works undertaken were flood protection, maintenance of existing roads, construction of new link roads, improvement of irrigation facilities, improvement of irrigation facilities, construction of panchayat ghats, school buildings, medical and healthy centres and improvement of sanitation conditions in the rural areas.

- It took care of those rural poor who largely depended on wage employment and virtually had no source of income in the lean agricultural period. These important points on which stress was laid in the implementation of this programme were: 10 per cent allocation was earmarked exclusively for drinking water well in harijans colonies and community irrigation schemes in Harijan areas. Likewise, another 10 per cent was earmarked for social forestry and fuel plantations; only such works were undertaken which had some durability. Allocations were made both at the inter-state and inter-district/block levels. The central government released the state's share of the NREP allocation in cash every quarter. Maintenance of assets created under this programme was the responsibility of the state governments. PRIs were actively involved in this programme. This programme has now been merged in Jawahar Rozgar Yojana.

- **The Rural Landless Employment Guarantee Programme** (RLEGP) aimed at providing supplemental employment to the poor on public works at a very low wage of Rs. 3 per day. Maharashtra was one state which had used the Employment Guarantee Scheme (EGS) for the unemployed in rural areas by levying EGS surcharge or collections land revenue, sales tax, motor vehicles, irrigated holdings and on professionals. The amounts so collected, with matching contributions from the state government, were credited to an EGS fund for taking up employment works. This programme too has now been merged into the JRY.

- **Jawahar Rozgar Yojana:** Under the scheme, it is expected that at least one member of each poor family would be provided with employment for 50 to 100 days in a year at a work place near his/her residence. About 30 per cent of the jobs under this scheme are reserved for women. Both the rural wage employment programmes (i.e., the REP and the RLEGP) were merged in this scheme. Central assistance to the scheme is 80 per cent. The scheme is implemented through village panchayats. This scheme covers 46 per cent of our population.

- **Antyodaya Programme:** 'Antyodaya' means development (udaya) of the people at the lowest level that is, the poorest of the poor. This programme for special assistance to the people below the poverty line. The idea was to select five of the poorest families from each village every year and to help them in their economic betterment. Initially, a random survey was undertaken in 25 villages situated in different ecological region of the state and information about individual families with regard to indebtedness, dependency ratio, physical assets of land, cattle, occupation, educational level, income and size of the family was collected. Thereafter, a detailed scheme of Antyodaya was frown up.

- The task of identification of the families was entrusted to the village assembly (Gram Sabha). Under this scheme, help was given in the form of allotting land for cultivation, monthly pension, bank loan or help in getting employment. Each selected family was given a pension of Rs. 30-40 per month. A bank loan was sanctioned for purchasing bullocks, carts, animal husbandry (purchasing buffaloes, cows, goats and pigs), basket making, purchasing carpentry tools, operating a tailor's shop or tea shop or a barber's shop or a grocer's shop and for manufacturing activities like soap-making etc.

- **National Rural Employment Guarantee Programme:** Salient Features of the Programme Right Based Frame work Adult members of a rural household who are willing to do unskilled manual work may apply for registration to the local Gram Panchayat, in writing, or orally.

- The Gram Panchayat after the verification will issue a Job Cart. The Job Cart will bear the photograph of all adult members of the household and is free of cost.

- A job Card holding household any submit a written application for employment to the Gram Panchayat, stating the time and duration for which work is sought. **Time Bound Guarantee**

- The Gram Panchayat will issue a dated receipt of the written application for employment, against which are guarantee of providing employment within 15 days operates. If employment is not provided within 15 days, daily unemployment allowance, in cash has to be paid. Liability of payment of unemployment allowance is of the States.

- Work should ordinarily be provided within 5 km radius of the village or else extra wages of 10% are payable.

- Wages are to be paid according to minimum wages. Disbursement of wages has to be done on weekly basis and not beyond a fortnight. **Women Empowerment**

- At least one-third of persons to whom work is allotted, work have to be women. **Work Site Facilities** Work site facilities such a crèche, drinking water, shade have to be provided. **Decentralized Planning**

- The shelf of project has to be prepared by Gram Sabha. At least 50% of works have to be allotted to Gram Panchayats, for execution. Panchayat Raj Institutions (PRIs) have a principle role in planning and implementation. **Labour Intensive Works**

- A 60-40 wage and material ratio has to be contained. Contractors and use of labour, displacing machinery is prohibited. **Public Accountability**

- Social Adult has to be done by the Gram Sabha.

- Grievance redressal mechanisms have to be put in place for ensuring a responsive implementation process. **Transparency**

- All accounts and records relating to the Scheme are to be made available to any person desirous of obtaining a copy of such records, on demand and after paying a specified fee.

Evaluation of Programmes

Various studies have shown that programmes have not been able to make a dent in the poverty level of the rural people. A large mass of villagers still live without basic needs. This is because,

- Policies are guided by ideologies of politicians and bureaucrats whims rather than by compulsions of the ground realities and requirements of the rural people, with the result that the dimensions of rural economy are ignored.

- Since every programme is launched often with an eye to the next election, the programme is carried out in a piecemeal fashion and many programmes thus wither away after some time.

- Programmes are designed in such a way that they are in fact imposed on the rural economy without taking into accounting their unique vocational patterns and local requirements. Consequently, the assets created are not durable.

- Programmes focus more on the agricultural sector. Rural industrialization seems to be getting nowhere near the attention that it deserves.

- Despite the fact that the government has given top priority to agricultural production and productivity, removal of social and economic disparities and reduction in income inequalities, the fruits of these schemes, have not reached the poorest in all parts of the country. Water resources, credit, subsidy and other facilities have been usurped by a handful of big farmers and the medium and poor farmers have to by these things at a much higher price.

- There is no coordination among various programmes. After the merger of various employment pogrammes into the Jawahar Rozgar Yojana, the government is even now not able to pass on funds to the panchayats on time.

- Officials associated with these programmes do not appear to have much faith in the goals set by the government. They lack commitment to the roles assigned to time. As such, they take least pains either in creating necessary awareness among people for the success of these programmes or in getting their cooperation and confidence. No wonder, the government has not been able to use even the available resources in the most effective manner.

- Central funds in schemes like Jawahar Rozgar Yojna are diverted for party purposes by the states. For example, one study has revealed that money sanctioned by the central government for new irrigation wells in Nalgonda district in Andhra Pradesh were swindled and not a single well was sunk (as shown in the Shyam Benegal's Film Well Done Abba). Planning by itself is not enough. What really matters is sincere and honest efforts on the part of the implementing agencies to make anti-poverty drive a big success.

GREEN REVOLUTION AND SOCIAL CHANGE

What is Green Revolution?

The fundamental change and phenomenal increase in foodgrains production in late sixties in India has earned the name of 'Green Revolution'. The word 'green' here refers to green fields of the countryside and 'revolution' indicates a substantial change.

Story of Green Revolution in India

The availability of adequate foodgrains has been a serious problem in the country till. Foodgrains had to be imported from the developed countries to feed the vast population. Shortage of food was mainly caused by low productivity of land, over-dependence on monsoon and the outmoded agrarian structure. Under these conditions, achieving self-sufficiency in foodgrains became the top priority of our national efforts.

The new agricultural strategy was based on the thinking that intensive application of science

and technology in agriculture would bear fruits in the form of massive increase in foodgrain production. Under this strategy, adopted in early sixties, agricultural development programmes were revised to the needs of the farmers. Major programmes undertaken in this regard are discussed briefly in the paragraphs that follow.

The Intensive Agricultural District Programme (IADP), popularly known as the Package Programme, was started in 1961 on a pilot basis in seven district of the country. The programme was subsequently extended to cover some other districts. It aimed at combining improved technology credit, high yielding seeds and assured irrigation for stepping up agricultural production. This experiment of intensive agriculture yielded significant results. Production of foodgrains remarkably increased and the programme was extended to cover larger areas. It resulted in giving rise to a new progrmme called the Intensive Agricultural Aras Programme (IAAP).

Encouraged by the unprecedented success of this programme some other schemes were introduced in large sixties. They included the High-Yielding Varieties Programme (HYVP), Small Farmer's Development Agency (SFDA) and the Marginal Farmers and Agricultural Labourers Development Scheme (MFALDS). All these schemes were supplemented by the assured supply of inputs like fertilizers, pesticides institutional credit and increased irrigational facility. Among all these programmes, the HYVP made spectacular impact. The progressive increase in areas under high yielding varieties resulted in substantial increase in foodgrain production. Wheat procuction more than doubled by 1977-78 and rice production also started increasing. The progress under maize, jawar and bajra was, however, rather slow, but did not remain too far.

Green Revolution, which saw the light of the day in the late sixties, has sustained till date. It began with Wheat Revolution. Other crops like pulses, jawar, maize and bajra also did not remain too far. It was widespread and it continued its journey from Punjab to other regions of the country. Now we are not only self-sufficient in foodgrains but also have started exporting it. Our view in this regard is amply supported by the latest foodgrains statistics available to us.

Socio-economic Consequences of Green Revolution

Green Revolution has certainly improved the food situation in the country. It has solved the problem of hunger and has given a strong base to the Indian economy for further growth. It has transformed the mindset of farmers. In this respect **Andre Beteille** has aptly remarked, "The Green Revolution has indeed created a new faith in the dynamism of the Indian farmer who has shown himself to be capable not only of quickly absorbing technological innovations but also of handling social arrangements with considerable dexterity."

However, the impact of this programme has not been equally favourable for all sections of agrarian population. Green Revolution has brought destabilizing impact on the socio-economic conduction of small and poor peasants, share-croppers and landless agricultural labourers.

- The new technology and the other inputs such as improved seeds, fertilizers, pesticides, water etc., are beyond the reach of small and marginal farmers. Naturally some regions with large landholdings like Punjab have performed better than others like Bihar and Orissa where marginal and poor farmers are in plenty and institutional credit is not easily available. This has widened the gap between the small and the rich farmers.

- The affluent farmers are enjoying the fruit of increased profits from land but the real wage rate for agricultural labourers has been declining in most places. Most of the share-croppers are now joining the rank of landless labourers because small holdings are not available for leasing out to these share-croppers.

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- Economic inequality in agrarian sector has widened resulting in increased agrarian unrest in rural areas. During the late sixties and the early seventies numerous cases of conflicts were reported particularly from the Green Revolution belts.

- **The Ministry of Home Affairs** of the Government of India studied the causes and nature of agrarian tensions and admitted the socio-political implications of the new agricultural strategy. The Report concluded that new agricultural strategy has created 'widening gap between the relatively affluent farmers and the large body of small holders and landless agricultural workers'.

- **P.C. Joshi** has argued that conflict and discontent are inherent in the 'outmoded agrarian structure'. While such an agrarian structure provides the basic cause of tension, the 'proximate causes' which have led to the eruption of 'latent' discontent into 'manifest' tension are located in the new agricultural strategy and the Green Revolution.

- The poor peasants, share-croppers and landless agricultural labourers have not been able to share profitably in the general prosperity, which came in the wake of the green revolution. In this context **T.K. Oommen** shows that "the green revolution as such does not led to the welfare of the agrarian poor unless substantial alterations in the prevalent socio-economic and political structure are effected at the grass roots."

- Increased agricultural production has been visible mainly in areas like Punjab, Haryana, western Uttar Pradesh, Tamil Nadu and Maharashtra. In this fashion, substantial areas in the country have not been benefitted by this agricultural change.

- Likewise a new class of capitalist farmers has emerged in the green revolution belts.

- Another important trend suggests that the agricultural production has increased but the social index has not changed in the same proportion. For example, the gender-ratio in those areas where agricultural prosperity has been achieved is still unfavourable.

- However, despite these limitations the Green Revolution has undoubtedly paved the way for faster economic growth and corresponding social change.

CHANGING MODES OF PRODUCTION IN INDIAN AGRICULTURE

The introduction of new technology in agriculture has transformed **the mode of agricultural** production. Resources other than land have assumed importance. Resources such as tractors, mechanized ploughs, pump sets, power threshers and other are acquired through the market. Today even if one has not inherited land through the traditional channel, it is possible for one to join the class of landowners.

- In the wake of changing mode of production the composition of the traditional landowning class is changing in the country. Earlier, most of the landowners inherited land from their ancestors. Land could not be purchased in the market because the land market was not fully developed. But this situation has changed now.

- The restructuring of agrarian system has set in as a result of the land, the reforms and the Green Revolution. In this fashion, a new class of farmers is emerging consisting of persons with different skills and experiences. They no longer belong to the traditional landowning upper castes. They are the people who have retired from the civil and military services and have invested their savings in agricultural farms. This is the story behind the emergence of Gentleman Farmer.

- This group now attracts the people who are educated and wish to make agriculture their vocation. The increased profitability of agriculture is the primary reason behind it. These agricultural farms are run like business firms with all features of modern organizations. In this respect, there is a substantial

difference between the traditional agricultural system and the emerging system.

- The emergence of capitalist farmers is another important development in independent India. The question whether and to what extent capitalism has penetrated Indian agriculture is still being debated. But the trend in agriculture as in industry is clearly towards infusion of capital.

- A capitalist form of wage labour agrarian system has replaced the traditional customary land relation. There is a clear transformation from the peasant family farms to the commercial capitalist farms.

- A powerful class of rich peasants, undoubtedly, existed even earlier but they could not be characterized as capitalist farmers because there was no capitalist penetration in agriculture as such. However, in the recent past, apart from the land reforms, other forces are at work in agricultural sector.

- Introduction of new technology along with several other schemes of agricultural development have facilitated a small section of rich peasantry to emerge as powerful commercial and capitalist farmers.

- Extensive facilities and resources such as supply of high yielding variety of seeds, fertilizers, and improved implements, irrigation a well as facilities of credit and improved transport and communication – all have been fully utilized by these farmers.

- The capitalist farmer hires labourers for accomplishing her/his requirements. The actual tillers of the soil are the wage labourers employed by the capitalist farmers. The later is involved in agriculture only to appropriate profits from it.

- A surplus is, thus, generated in agricultural production that is reaching to the market.

The size of the class of capitalist farmers is still small in the country today. But its emergence and growth reveal a significant aspect of change in the agrarian social structure. The emergence of this class has not only increased the efficiency and productivity of agriculture, but also has helped industrial growth and development. However, this trend has widened the between the rich and the poor farmers inequalities between the top and the bottom layers of the agrarian classes have accentuated leading to unrest in rural areas.

PROBLEMS OF RURAL LABOUR-BONDAGE, MIGRATION BONDAGE

Bondage can be conceptualized as a social condition when a 'person sells himself away' to his employer on condition of specific economic privilege. It is a system of institutionalized slavery where the labour does not have independence and freedom of right to work. The service is rendered for debt or in lieu of the interest accruing to the debt.

BONDED LABOUR

Labour which remains in bondage for a specific period for the debt incurred are called bonded labour. The debtor agrees to mortgage his service or services of any or all members of his family for a specified or unspecified period.

Two basic features

- Indebtedness

- Forced labour

Types of Bondage : National Commission on Rural Labour spelled out those four kinds of bonded labour practice present in India:

- Inter-generational bondage

- Loyalty bondage

- Bondage through land allotment

- Bondage of the distressed widows.

CAUSES OF BONDAGE: The main causes of origin, growth and perpetuation indebtedness and bonded labour system are economic. Though the social and religious factors too support the custom.

Economic factors

- Extreme poverty of people
- Inability of people to find work for livelihood
- Inadequate rise of land- holdings to rapport family
- Lack of alternative small scale loan for the rural and urban poor
- Natural calamities like drought flood etc
- Meaning income from forest produce (tribes)
- Inflation and constant rising price.

Social factors

- Expenses on occasions like marriage, death, feast, birth of a child etc., leading to heavy depts. (R.S.Sharma)
- Caste based discrimination
- Lack of concrete social welfare schemes to safeguard against hunger and illness
- Non-compulsory and unequal educational system
- Migration.

Religious factors : References from religious texts are given and religious arguments are used to convince the people of low castes that religious enjoins upon them to serve people of high castes. Illiteracy, ignorance, immaturity and lack of stability and professional training sustain such attitude.

Broadly speaking it may be concluded that bondage originates mainly from economic and social pressures.

1. **Utsa Patnaik:** Persistence of Feudalism in Indian agriculture is greatly responsible for the continuity of bondage in the countryside. In rural sector feudalism is persistent because traditional landlords do come from upper caste and hence relationship between caste and agriculture is absolutely profound. Low castes either work as tenants or share-croppers going for traditional method of contract and low caste of untouchables who are landless in order to avoid distance migration opt for bonded labour.

2. **Ashok Rudra, Pranav Vardhan and Arvind S. Das**: Bonded labour persists under the disguise of attached labour in capitalist agriculturalist market. More intensive is the capitalist development, highest is exploitation that results in consolidation of bonded labour.

3. **Shashi Kumar** : When man migrates from village the women and children are reduced into bonded labour by the local landlords.

4. **Lahiri:** In West Bengal Baramasic contract system is a form of disguised bonded labour. In this system the labourer is given some advance, free food, shelter to work for the master throughout the year. Due to poverty borrowing continues so is attachment with the family.

5. **Hanumanth Rao:** Bonded labour is a product of regular natural disaster, uneven distribution of land in countryside, fragile ecology, intensive caste based exploitation, perpetual poverty, lack of alternate source of livelihood.

6. **Jodhka:** Bonded labour practice in the country is the product of the survivalist necessity of the rural poor corresponding with the innovative saving techniques identified by rural rich.

7. Due to Green Revolution the states like Punjab and Haryana received high rate of migrant labour from poor states who got trapped in bondage.

Today's Scenario – Magnitude of Bondage in India : Bonded labour system has been enlisting in Indian Society among agricultural labourers in the name of beggar and ryots. Today it has extended to workers working in brick kilns, bidi factories, stone queries, glass factories and in detergent, carpet, gem stones and many other factories.

1. The cultural environment of exploitation under which the practice of bonded labour flourished witnessed all forms of exploitation and oppression ranging from child labour to the sexual exploitation of bonded women.

2. **Nadeem Hasnain** in his study of Kolta bonded labour found that untouchables were barred by custom from owning land. It was further compounded by the social ban on keeping or touching gold, thus making him totally vulnerable to any economic exigencies when a Kolta would be having nothing except his body which becomes a ready object of mortgage.

3. **Foundation and National Labour Institute** in combined study of bonded labour in 1978 found out that around 2.6 Lakh of workers in India are either bonded worker or are attached workers. It is based on survey of thousand villages spreading in ten states.

4. **National Commission on Rural Labour** in a study found out that bonded labour is largely used in agriculture sector, plantation sector. Child labours is bonded from are greatly used in hazardous sectors.

5. Among many socio-economic disabilities the untouchables have been suffering form their customary landlessness, the scheduled castes of today are the worst victims of dept bondage.

6. **Deccan Development Society** found out in its study that 533 children and 786 adults are pushed into the state of bonded labour.

7. **NHRC** in a case brought before it found out in Jharkhand how a person was forced to work for 20 years because of non-payment of Rs.2000.

Steps taken and Suggestions

1. Constitution prohibits begar (forced labour) under Act 23.

2. Through Bonded Labour System (Abolition) Act 1976 the Government tried to tackle debt bondage head on.

3. NHRC has development a core groups for the identification and rehabilitation of bonded labour.

4. Centrally-sponsored scheme is launched for the abolition of bonded labour for the provision of offering Rs.20000 to every bonded labourer rehabilitated.

5. Different NGOs like Sahyog, Mahila Samakhya, Sankalp and Bachpan Bachao Andolan are working in the area of the abolition of bonded labour.

6. The problem of bonded labour should be understood from the perspective of larger social situation.

7. Various policies to eradicate it need to emphasise on poverty alleviation measures.

8. Elimination of feudalistic ideology.

9. Intensive caste based inequality need to be checked.

LABOUR MIGRATION

Labour migration is an important factor affecting the course of socio-economic development in India. Accelerated movement of people originating mainly from the rural and backward areas in search of employment has been one of the most important features of the labour market scenario in India during the post-Independence period.

According to the 1991 Census, 226 million persons have changed their places of residence within the country. Such large scale labour migration obviously has raised a number of concerns in relation to the social and economic policy framework in India. Concern has been expressed over the economic, social and political marginalization of migrant workers, especially of those unskilled people moving from relatively deprived and depressed areas in search of gainful employment and living.

Nature of Labour Migration

- As majority of the occupation in which migrant labourers are engaged do not prefer women workers, most of migrants are males who migrate individually.

- This is, however, not the case in certain occupations in which family migrations is cheaper for the employer. Sugarcane is a case in point. Brick kiln and construction are other examples which attract family labour.

- Majority of the migrants belong to the backward and scheduled castes as well as scheduled tribes being either landless or too poor.
- Labour migration is a complex phenomenon and encompasses different streams which vary in duration, nature of origin and destination areas and characteristics of migration process.
- The nature of contemporary labour migration can be examined at various levels depending on the degree and extent of vulnerability to which the migrant worker is exposed. These levels are : migration for survival, subsistence,

Magnitude of Migration

Of the 226 million persons who changed places within the country as per the 1991 Census, only 17.3 million or 8.8 per cent persons are reported to have moved for employment reasons. Several studies and reports on migration, however, have indicated that the Census data suffers from several limitations while estimating labour migration for employment. The main limitation is that the data ignores or severely underestimates short duration and seasonal/circular migrants. The extent of this under reporting is very clearly brought out by the National Commission on Rural Labour (1991). The Commission estimates more than 10 million circular migrants in the rural areas alone. These include an estimated 4.5 million inter-State migrants and 6 million intra-State migrants.

Main reasons for Labour migration

- Accelerated development of capitalist form of agriculture i.e. non-participation of family labour among the rich and middle peasants and changes in frequencies of cropping due to the adoption of advanced technology in agriculture,
- Reduced demand for permanent labour due to mechanized farming and marginalization of farmers and artisans in rural areas due to resource constraint and compulsion to augment their earnings by seasonal labour also affect the migration,

- Other reason which cause the migration are failure of land reforms,
- Depletion of resource base for tribes,
- High rates of population growth in the rural areas,
- Increase in the proportion of landless labourers, and
- Lack of adequate expansion of non-farm employment.

CONDITION OF MIGRANT LABOURERS AND THERE EXPLOITATION

- The migrant workers are generally exploited. They are made to work for long hours and the wages paid to them are lower than the local labourers, in fact, below the level of prescribed minimum wage.
- Taking advantage of their illiteracy and poverty, middle-men practice exploitative recruitment practices and in many cases, retain a major portion of their wages as their own commission. Moreover, wages are adjusted only at the end of the season and workers are paid some advance, which are not at all sufficient to meet even the basic requirements.
- The conditions of women labourers are far more unsatisfactory. Contrary to provisions of equal Remuneration Act, women migrant labourers are invariably paid lesser wages as compared to their male counterparts in many sectors. Sexual exploitation of the women migrant labouerers especially the tribals is also a matter of deep concern.
- In addition, migrant workers do not have access to the public distribution system or other municipal services. They are provided with free medical facilities.
- Their non-inclusion in electoral rolls also deprives them of political patronage and results in their extreme political marginalization.
- The employers and contractors also adopt exploitative practices against the migrant labour. They employ various methods to

circumvent the provisions of the Inter-State Migrant Workmen Act (ISMW) farmed by the Centre in 1979 to regulate the employment of inter-State migrant workers. The contractors inter-alia, split establishment in such a way so that license is not required as envisaged under the Act for employing more than 5 migrant workers.

- The contractors also evade the provisions of the ISMW Act by registering migrant labour with the local employment exchange and then contend that ISMW Act does not apply.

- A major shortcoming of the ISMW Act is that it does not apply to those migrants who undertake migration on their own and also to long distance migration whether voluntary or sponsored within the state boundaries. Thus, a significant proportion of migrants are excluded from the purview of the Act.

- The effective implementation of the ISMW Act hinges on its Section 20, which provides for appointment of inspectors to inspect whether provisions of this Act, in relation to payment of wages, conditions of service and facilities are being complied with. But none of the State governments have evolved any institutional modalities for carrying out inspections outside States for enforcement of the Act.

Some interesting insights on migration provided by Census of India 2001

- During the reporting period, 30% reported as migrants by place of birth.

- During the last decade (1991-2001), the number of migrants in India (excluding J & K) rose by 32.9%, the total number of migrants by place of last residence in India (excluding J & k) grew by 34.7% during 1991-2001.

- High growth (53.6%) among inter-state migrants was also observed.

- Total migrants by last residence (0-9 yrs.) accounted to 98.3 million.

- 43.8% moved due to marriage, 21.0% moved with their households, 14.7% migrated due

to work, 6.7% moved after their birth, 3% for educational purpose, 1.2% for business and 9.7% specified other reasons.

- About 42.4 million migrants out of total 65.4 million female migrants cited marriage as the reason for migration. Among males the most important reason for migration was 'Work/ Employment', 12.3 million out of 32.8 million total male migrants migrated due to this reason.

- During the decade, out of the urban growth of 30.3 per cent, 6.6 per cent is accounted for by migration to urban areas.

- If one takes away those migrants who moved due to marriage, the total number of migrants falls from 98.3 million to 55.2 million. Total number of migrants among males and females were 32.2 million and 22.9 million respectively.

- Migration streams (during the last decade)
  * Rural to rural migration within the country: 53.3 million
  * Rural to urban migration: 20.5 million
  * Urban to rural migration: 6.2 million
  * Urban to urban migration: 14.3 million.

- Uttar Pradesh (2.6 million) and Bihar (-1.7 million) were the two states with largest number of net migrants migrating out of the state.

- The total number of inter-state migrants was 42.3 million and those who were born abroad account for 6.1 million. About 97% of these migrants by last residence were from the eight neighboring countries (including Afghanistan).

Major Problems Encountered By Migrant Labourers

Some major problems encountered by the migrants in their areas of employment include,

- Premature termination of job contracts,
- Hanging the clauses of contract to the disadvantage of the workers,
- Delay in making payments,
- Violation of minimum wage standards,

- Forced over-time work without returns,

- In the case of most intra-state and inter-state unskilled and semiskilled migrants, migrant labourers run high risks of exploitation for they are exposed to large uncertainties and lack access to information and knowledge. Thus making it very difficult for them to switch jobs in case of dissatisfaction with the current employer.

- Because of their optionless situation, these labourers lack bargaining power and thereby fail to negotiate reasonable pay scales and fair working conditions with the contractors.

- Most migrants live in open spaces; make shift shelters or illegal settlements, which lack the basic infrastructure and access to civic amenities. They have no local ration which can provide them their food at subsidized rates through the Public Distribution system.

- They are highly prone to occupational health hazards and vulnerable to epidemics including HIV/AIDS.

- Since the migrants are mobile, their children have no crèche facilities or access to schooling. They do not come under the purview of either the local government or the NGO Programmes for they do not belong to that particular region. So citing the problem of monitoring, most agencies leave them outside the scope of development intervention.

- In India, migrant labours are largely found in the developed states. The traditional migrants coming from underdeveloped regions of the country are the most marginalized sections of society, namely the Tribals and the Scheduled Castes. These migrants are entirely without legal protection or social security. They are "invisible", and are not acknowledged. They are denied access even to basic amenities in most of the cases. They have no identity in the places where they live and no voice in the places they have left behind.

- Migration offers a very fertile ground for traffickers. In India, migrants who leave their homes in search for better employment opportunities and marital prospects, fall easy preys to traffickers for want of adequate information. Alongside cross-border trafficking, internal trafficking of women, children and men for purpose of sexual exploitation, domestic servitude, bonded labour and indentured servitude too is widespread.

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11 INDUSTRIALIZATION AND URBANIZATION IN INDIA

— Evolution of modern industry in India
— Growth of urban settlements in India
— Working class: structure, growth, class mobilization.
— Informal sector.
— Slums and deprivation in urban areas.

WHAT IS INDUSTRIALIZATION?

Industrialization refers to the emergence of machine production, based on the use of inanimate power resources like steam or electricity. In most standard western textbook of sociology we learn that in even the most advanced of traditional civilizations, most people were engaged in working on the land. The relatively low level of technological development did not permit more than a small minority to be freed from the chores of agricultural production. By contrast, a prime feature of industrial societies today is that a large majority of the employed population work in factories, offices or shops rather than agriculture. Over 90 per cent of people in the industrialized societies live in towns and cities, where most jobs are to be found and new job opportunities are created. Not surprisingly, therefore, we usually associate urbanization with industrialization. They often do occur together but not always so. For instance in Britain, the first society to undergo industrialization, was also the earliest to move from being rural to a predominantly urban country.

Many of the great works of sociology were written at a time when industrialization was new and machinery was assuming great importance. Thinkers like **Karl Marx, Max Weber and Emile Durkheim** associated a number of social features with industry, such as urbanization, the loss of face-to-face relationships that were found in rural areas where people worked on their own farms or for a landlord they knew and their substitution by anonymous professional relationships in modern factories and workplaces. Industrialization involves a detailed division of labour. People often do not see the end result of their work because they are producing only one small part of a product. The work is often repetitive and exhausting. Yet, even this is better than having no work at all, i.e., being unemployed. Marx called this situation alienation, when people do not enjoy work, and see it as something they have to do only in order to survive, and even that survival depends on whether the technology has room for any human labour.

Industrialization leads to greater equality, at least in some spheres. For example, caste distinctions do not matter any more on trains, buses or in cyber cafes. On the other hand, older forms of discrimination may persist even in new factory or workplace settings. And even as social inequalities are reducing, economic or income inequality is growing in the world. Often social inequality and income inequality overlap, for example, in the domination of upper caste men in well-paying professions like medicine, law or journalism. Women often get paid less than men for similar work.

While the early sociologists saw industrialization as both positive and negative, by the mid 20th century, under the influence of modernization theory, industrialization came to be seen as inevitable and positive. Modernization theory argues that societies are at different stages on the road to modernization, but they are all heading in the same direction. Modern society, for these theorists, is represented by the West.

EVOLUTION OF MODERN INDUSTY IN INDIA

In India the impact of the very same British industrialization led to deindustrialization in some sectors. And decline of old urban centres. Just as manufacturing bummed in Britain, traditional exports of cotton and silk manufactures from India declined in the face of Manchester competition. This period also saw the further decline of cities such as Surat and Masulipattnam while Bombay and Madras grew. When the British took over Indian states, towns like Thanjavur, Dhaka and Murshidabad lost their courts and, therefore, some of their artisans and court gentry. From the end of the 19th century, with the installation of mechanized factory industries, some towns became much more heavily populated.

The experience of industrialization in India is in many ways similar to the western model and in many ways different. Comparative analysis of different countries suggests that there is no standard model of industrial capitalism. Let us start with one point of difference, relating to what kind of work people are doing. In developed countries, the majority of people are in the services sector, followed by industry and less than 10% are in agriculture (ILO figures). In India, in 1999-2000, nearly 60% were employed in the primary sector (agriculture and mining), 17% in the secondary sector (manufacturing, construction and utilities), and 23% in the tertiary sector (trade, transport, financial services etc.) However, if we look at the contribution of these sectors to economic growth, the share of agriculture has declined sharply, and services contribute approximately half. This is a very serious situation because it means that the sector where the maximum people are employed is not able to generate much income for them.

Industrialization in the Early Years of Indian Independence

The first modern industries in India were cotton, jute, coal mines and railways. At independence, the government took over the 'commanding heights of the economy.' This involved defiance, transport and communication, power, mining and other projects which only government had the power to do, and which was necessary for private industry also to flourish. In India's mixed economy policy, some sectors were reserved for government, while others were open to the private sector. But within that, the government tried to ensure, though it's licensing policy, that industries were spread over different regions. Before independence, industries were located mainly in the port cities like Madras, Bombay, and Calcutta. But since then, we see that places like Baroda, Coimbatore, Bangalore, Pune, Faridabad and Rajkot have become important industrial centres. The government also tried to encourage the small-scale sector through special incentives and assistance. Many items like paper and wood products, stationery, glass and ceramics were reserved for the small-scale sector in 1991; large-scale industry employed only 28 per cent of the total workforce engaged in manufacture, while the small-scale and traditional industry employed 72 per cent (Roy)

Globalization, Liberalization and Change in Indian Industry

Since the 1990s, however, the government has followed a policy of liberalization. Private companies, especially foreign firms, are encouraged to invest in sectors earlier reserved for the government, including telecom, civil aviation, power etc. Licenses are no longer required to open industries. Foreign products are now easily available in Indian shops. As a result of liberalization, many Indian companies have been bought over by multinationals. At the same time

some Indian companies are becoming multinational companies. An instance of the first is when. Parle drinks were bought by Coca Cola. Parle's annual turnover was Rs. 250 crores, while Coca Cola's advertising budget was Rs. 400 crores. This level of advertising has naturally increased the consumption of coke across India replacing many traditional drinks. The next major area of liberalization may be in retail. Do you think that Indians will prefer to shop in departmental stores, or will they go out of business?

The government is trying to sell its share in several public sector companies, a process which is known as disinvestment. Many government workers are scared that after disinvestment, they will lose their jobs. In Modern Foods, which was set up by the government to make healthy bread available at cheap prices, and which was the first company to be privatized 60% of the workers were forced to retire in the first five years. More and more companies are reducing the number of permanent employees and outsourcing their work to smaller companies or even to homes. For multinational companies, this outsourcing is done across the globe, with developing countries like India providing cheap labour. Because small companies have to compete for orders from the big companies, they keep wages low and working conditions are often poor. It is more difficult for trade unions to organize in smaller firms. Almost all companies, even government ones, now practice some form of outsourcing and contracting. But the trend is especially visible in the private sector.

To summarize, India is still largely an agricultural country. The service sector-shops, banks, the IT industry, hotels and other services are employing more people and the urban middle class is growing, along with urban middle class values like those we see in television serials and films. But we also see that very few people in India have access to secure jobs, with even the small number in regular salaried employment becoming more insecure due to the rise in contract labour. So far, employment by the government was a major avenue for increasing the well-being of the population but now even that is coming down. Some economists debate this, but liberalization and privatization worldwide appear to be associated with rising income inequality.

At the same time as secure employment in large industry is declining the government is embarking on a policy of land acquisition for industry. These industries do not necessarily provide employment to the people of the surrounding areas, but they cause major pollution. Many farmers, especially Adivasis, who constitute approximately 40% of those displaced, are protesting at the low rates of compensation and the fact that they will be forced to become casual labour living and working on the footpaths of India's big cities.

SOCIO-CULTURAL IMPLICATIONS OF INDUSTRIALIZATION IN INDIA :

Industrialization got under way in India in the last quarter of the nineteenth and first half of the twentieth century. Cities grew around the new industries. Before industrialization, we had :

- agrarian non-monetized economy,
- a level of technology where the domestic unit was also the unit of economic exchange,
- a non-differentiation of occupations between father and son and between brothers and brothers, and
- a value system where authority of the elders and the sanctity of tradition were both supported as against the criterion of 'rationality'.

But Industrialization has brought about economic and socio-cultural changes in our society:

- the economic field, it has resulted in specialization in work, occupational mobility, monetization of economy, and a breakdown of link between kinship and occupational structures;

- in the social field, it has resulted in the migration of people from rural to urban areas, spread of education, and a strong centralized political structure; and

- in the cultural field, it has brought secularization of beliefs.

There have been three important effects of industrialization on family organization

Firstly, family which was a principle unit of production has been transformed into a consumption unit. Instead of all family members working together in an integrated economic enterprise, a few male members go out of the home to earn the family's living. This has affected not only the traditional structure of the joint family but also the relations among its members.

Secondly, factory employment has freed young adults from direct dependence upon their families. As their wages have made them financially independent, the authority of the head of the household has weakened further. In the city, in many cases, along with men, their wives also have started working and earning. This has affected intra-family relations to some extent.

Finally, children have ceased to be economic assets and have become liabilities. Although in a few cases, the use and abuse of child labour has also increased, law does not permit children to work. At the same time, educational requirements have increased, lengthening dependence upon parental support. Accommodation in the cities is expensive and child-care is demanding. Thus, work and home have become separated due to industrialization.

Some sociologists have, however, recently challenged the theory of emergence of nuclear families due to industrialization. This challenge is based on the results of empirical studies and the documentation of the variety of family systems in different parts of the world. Studies by scholars like **M.S.A Rao, M.S. Gore and Milton singer** have shown that jointness is more preferred and prevalent in business communities, and many

nuclear families maintain widespread kin ties. Several recent researchers in the industrialized West have also emphasized the supportive role, of kin and their function of acting as a buffer between the family and the impersonal wider world. Social historians too have shown that the nuclear family was prevalent as a cultural norm in Europe and the United States even before industrialization. However, it has to be noted that the supportive role of the kin does not have the compulsory character which is found in the family obligations of the Indian nuclear family. The youngsters in nuclear family still willingly follow the normal responsibility towards the primary kin (such as parents and siblings), solidarity of the close kin, and some sense of unity of the family, even though living in separate households. (Dube)

All these changes have modified our family system. While the population movement from the rural to the urban areas has led to decline in authoritarian power, growth of secularism has developed a value system which emphasizes individual initiative and responsibility. Individual now functions without any restrictive familial controls. Formerly, when man worked in the family and all family members helped him in his work, there was more intimacy among the family members but now since he works in the industry away from the family, the intimacy in relations has been adversely affected. The effect of industrialization on the pattern of family relationship is also evident from the decline in self-sufficiency of the family, and attitudinal changes toward family. Industrialization has, thus contributed markedly to the creation of a new social and psychological setting in which the survival of the early joint family with its authoritarian organization has become very difficult.

The social profile of communities under the impact of industrialization is indicative of many dimensions of linkages and interactions among segments of region, culture, social categories and communities. It is reflected in migration of people from one region to another which has contributed to increase of bilingualism. The Census of India,

1991 placed bilingualism to about 15 per cent, which in reality has been estimated to be as high as 60 per cent in survey of communities. Interaction and commonality among cultural regions too, is reflected in shared cultural traits, which is also true for large number of communities across reigns and territories. Such cultural traits belong not only to rituals and institutional practices but also to technologies of occupation, skills and division of labour. Most communities have also moved away from their traditional occupations and show keen awareness of developmental programmes sponsored by the government. This awareness, together with high aspirations, introduces in the social system a measure of tension and conflict now manifest in various dimensions of our social life.

GROWTH OF URBAN SETTLEMENT IN INDIA

Understanding the Meaning of Growth of Urban Settlements or Urbanization in India
Sociologists define Growth of urban settlement or urbanization as the movement of people from village to town/city where economic activities are centered around non-agricultural occupations, such as trade, manufacturing, industry and management. Broadly speaking, in order to explain to process of urbanization we can discuss the following three aspects:

- **The demographic-spatial aspects** of urbanization deal with shift of people from rural to urban areas, population density in urban areas and change in the pattern of land use from agriculture to non-agricultural activities.

- **Economic aspects of urbanization** relate to the change form agricultural to non-agricultural occupations. As cities have been the centres of diverse economic opportunities, they attract people from rural areas. This attraction pulls a significant section of the rural population to the urban areas. Rural poverty, backwardness of agricultural economic and the destruction of cottage and small industries also push villagers to urban areas. These pull and push factors of migration play an important role in the process of urbanization.

- **The socio-cultural aspects urbanization** highlights the emerging heterogeneity in urban areas. The city has generally been the meeting point of races and cultures.

- **Some features of Urbanization in Ancient and Medieval India :** The process of urbanization various periods of Indian history had distinctive spatial, economic, religious, socio-cultural, political features. There features are described here under three broad headings.

1. **Political, Demographic and Spatial Factors**

The early processes of urbanization had their close relationship with the rise and fall of sponsoring political regimes and cultural history of India, Indeed, cities emerged in those periods mainly based on political considerations. "The composition of these towns was built around the ruler and his kinsmen and followers, whose principal interests were centered on agricultural activities in their vicinity and the surplus they could extract from these" (Sabarwal).

Fortification in the form of a girdle of walls and defensive ditches was an important physical feature of the tradition at towns. Town planning of ancient cities not only took note of the needs of defence but also of the settlement of various castes in separate wards, and the location of different activities connected with manufacturing, commerce, trade, religion, recreation, administration and justice.

2. **Economic**

In spite of the rise and fall of the political powers and shifting religious biases, the social and economic institution of the traditional cities has shown certain stability. Guild formation was an important feature of traditional towns. Merchants and craftsmen were organized into guilds called shreni. In those towns there were the guilds based on the occupation of one caste shreni and also the guilds based on different cases and different occupations called puga. **Rao** points

out that the guilds performed important function in the traditional towns in terms of banking, trading, manufacturing and to a limited extent judicial.

3. Religious and socio-cultural

Authorities of the traditional urban centres patronized particular religion or sects. This had been delineated in the social organization and culture of the towns. For example, Pataliputra reflected the Brahminical Hindu civilization under the rule of Chandra Gupta Maurya, while under Ashokan rule Buddhism flourished. Similarly the Islamic civilization was concertized by the Muslim rule in the imperial capitals of Delhi, Lucknow, and Hyderabad and in other places. The traditional towns were erogenous in terms of the multiplicity of the religious, sectarian and caste groups. Strain specialist castes like florist, tailor were to be found only in big towns. Each ethnic or religious group was governed by its own customary laws. The caste and the occupational guilds also had their own laws sanctioned by the political authority (Ray).

NEW FEATURES OF URBANIZATION IN EARLY COLONIAL PERIOD

With the coming of European colonial traders in India, the process of urbanization entered into a new phase. Cities grew up in the coastal areas as ports-cum-trading centres. In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, European trading posts were established initially for trading purposes. As the British power grew in the 19th century, Calcutta, Bombay and Madras became the political centres too, Indeed, in this period with the introduction and development of advanced technological knowledge, we find the emergence of new economic and political institutions, new modes of communication such as telegraph, railways, advanced system of roads and waterways. The process of urbanization became smooth and widened the structure of economic opportunity and widened the social horizons of people.

In the nineteenth century, though the process of urbanization grew in a modest way, the countryside suffered from the gradual process of the destruction of the cottage and small industries in the rural areas. In this situation, the new economic opportunity structure pulled a significant section of population to the urban areas. Many of the artisans became unemployed. Hence, the displaced rural artisans and labourers were also pushed to urban areas for employment. The late nineteenth century, however, witnessed a large scale migration of the rural labour force especially from Bihar and eastern United Provinces towards the jute mills of Calcutta and other industrial destinations. To avail the new economic opportunities many people migrated either temporarily or permanently to the urban areas.

With the spread of education, the institutional arrangements of the urban centres also changed. The educated people joined the bureaucracy, and also took up jobs as teachers, journalists, lawyers and so on. They brought about a new worldview. The urban centres gradually grow up to be the centres of new social and political ideas, diverse economic activities and of heterogeneous populations. The new process of urbanization presented various economic opportunities and scope for occupational and social mobility; it was only the upper caste and class people who were able to make use of these opportunities.

GROWTH OF URBAN SETTLEMENT IN CONTEMPORARY INDIA

The new process of urbansation which began with the advent of the British received a momentum at the beginning of twentieth century. The process of this urbanization has some distinctive features.

India is passing through a phase of rapid urbanization in the contemporary phase of the transition of society. The modern urban centres perform diversified functions in terms of economic, administrative and political and so on. Here, it is very difficult to classify the towns and cities in terms of a single activity. Generally, people classify urban areas on the basis of some prominent socio-economic and political features. For example, people mention that there are historical cities like

Delhi, Calcutta, Banaras, Lucknow etc., industrial cities like Ghaziabad, Modinagar, Kanpur, Jamshedpur, Bhilai etc., religious cities like Mathura, Hardwar, Madurai, Allahabad etc., Cities reputed for film making, like Bombay and Madras, have a special appeal for a villager or a small-town dweller. In sociology, we discuss the pattern of urbanization in terms of its demographic, spatial, and economic and socio cultural aspects. But before we take up these aspects, let us also briefly explain how we define a town in the Indian context.

Any place which satisfied the following criteria of

- a minimum of 5,000 persons,
- at least 75% of the working occupations are non-agricultural,
- a density of not less than 1,000 persons per square mile, and
- a place should have certain industrial areas, large housing settlements, places of tourist importance and civic amenities.

Spatial Pattern

Spatial disparities have marked the Indian urban scenario. These disparities emerged mainly due to regional disparities, imbalanced population concentration and some times because of the change in the census definition of "urban areas'. In this context we need to mention about two concepts, namely over-urbanization and sub-urbanization. Towns or urban areas have certain limitations in accommodating population, providing civic amenities or catering to such needs as schooling, hospitals etc. Beyond certain optimum capacities, it becomes difficult for the town administration to provide facilities for the increasing population. Bombay and Calcutta are two such examples of cities (among others) which have urban population growth beyond their capacities to manage. This feature refers to **over-urbanization**.

Closely related to over-urbanization of a town is a feature called sub-urbanization. When towns get over-crowded by population, it may result in sub-urbanization. Delhi is a typical example (among others) where sub-urbanization trend is taking place around it. Sub-urbanization means urbanization of rural areas around the towns characterized by the following features:

- Increase in the 'urban (non-agricultural) uses' of land,
- Inclusion of surrounding areas of town within its municipal limits, and
- Intensive communication of all types between town and its surrounding areas.

Economic Aspect

According to **Mill and Becker**, urbanization is a natural and inevitable consequence of economic development. Urbanization accompanies economic development because economic development entails a massive shift of labour and other inputs from predominantly rural sectors to those predominantly urban. **The National Commission Urbanization of India** recognizes the economic importance of the Indian cities and towns. It considers "urbanization as a catalyst for economic development and that the towns and cities despite their problems are for the millions and millions of our people the road to a better future".

When we examine the various cities in India, we find that some cities have come up during the last eighty years in places where there was nothing but forests earlier. One of the first steel cities in India, like Jamshedpur in Bihar, has provided employment to a large number of people including the Santhals. These tribals who were relatively isolated earlier have come into contact with a wide section of Indian population, coming from different regions, speaking different languages, and so on. Besides Jamshedpur, three more steel towns have emerged after Independence. These are Bhilai in Madhya Pradesh, Rourkela in Orissa and Durgapur in West Bengal. Emergence of these steel factories has brought about not only property but has led to the modification of the whole social scenario of this area. **According to Srinivas**, areas which were

socio-economically backward have now become prosperous and cosmopolitan.

While talking about the economic features of urbanization in contemporary India, occupational diversification and migration appear to be the key aspects.

The degree of urban-industrialization and planned development through the Five Year Plans could not bring about a significant shift in occupational structure in Indian. The percentage of Indian labour force in agriculture remained static between 1901 and 1971. In the said period 69.4% of the total labour force was in agriculture respectively. Though the percentage of urban population increased substantially during this period there has not been corresponding increase in the percentage of the labour force in the urban manufacturing, construction and service sector.

The proportion of urban population engaged in the primary sector (comprising cultivation, household industry, mining quarrying, and fishing) showed an increase and that in the secondary sector (Comprising manufacturing and processing) showed decrease contrary to expectations. The tertiary sector (comprising commerce and service) showed a slight recovery. Even within the urban sector, there is a distinct traditional/rural component of occupation which is significant.

This brings out the still persisting, and unabsorbed rural element in the urban sector, mostly in the periphery of large urban settlements and in the medium and small towns with a strong agricultural base. It appears that the urban commercial sector responded more to urbanization than did the industrial sector in terms of working population.

There is widespread unemployment among the unskilled and other marginal workers in most of the cities. Again, unemployment among educated classes in urban areas is a peculiar feature in Indian society. It is estimated that 46% of the total educated unemployed are reported to be concentrated in the four major metropolitan cities in Indian (Sabarwal).

Urbanization and Migration

In the process of urbanization in India, migration of the rural people to the urban areas has been continuous and is an important feature. The Urban Commission of India viewed rural urban migration to be "of vital importance for the development of rural areas". The commission again points out that besides releasing the surplus labour from the rural areas, for the landless labourers, harijans and adivasis these cities provide the opportunities which are enshrined in our Constitution. For these millions, our urban centres will continue to be havens of hope, where they can forge a new future (Mehta).

In India, this increase in urban-ward migration is of fairly recent origin which began in the late 1930s. Of the total migrants in urban areas 20% persons are displaced from Pakistan, 51% from rural areas of the same state and 25% from the rural areas of other states. An important feature of the immigrant stream in urban areas is its predominantly male character (Sabarwal).

Due to the increase of unemployment in the rural areas, surplus rural labour force gets pushed to urban centres with the hope of getting employment. The other factors which have pulled sections of the rural population including the affluent sections) toward the city has been the expectation of a variety of glamorous jobs, good housing medical, educational and communication facilities.

Here it is significant to note that industrialization should not be taken as prerequisite for urbanization, as the process of migration from village starts when a relative saturation point is reached in the field of agriculture. This is a result of an imbalanced land/man ratio in the countryside.

SOCIO-CULTURAL ASPECT OF GROWTH OF URBAN SETTLEMENTS

Urbanization has been viewed as an important force of social change in India, this process has on the one hand, meant economic growth, politica change new values and new attitudes. It reflects

also the elements of continuity between rural and urban social structures. In the process of urbanization the towns and cities of India have achieved heterogeneous character in terms of ethnicity, caste, race, class and culture.

In the urban areas there has always been coexistence of different cultures. Studies show that though various ethnic and/or caste groups have adjusted themselves with each other in the city they have also tried to maintain their traditional identity. The migrants have maintained distinctive cultural traditions in the towns. Various migrant groups have maintained their own cultural identity.

- **N.K. Bose** points out that the migrants tend to cluster around people with whom they have linguistic; local regional, caste and ethnic ties.

- **Jagannath and Haldar** in there study on the pavement-dwellers in Calcutta shows that they retain close ties with kingship and caste groups for socializing and transmitting or receiving information from the village. Thus cultural-pluralism has been an important socio-cultural dimension of the urbanites.

- **According to Srinivas** many of the Indian towns have a "mixed" character, i.e., they are the capital cities, centres of trade and commerce, important railway junctions etc. In these types of cities we find a "core" area which consists of the old inhabitants. This area is the oldest in the city and on its fringe we find the new immigrants. The pattern of residence of this "core" population shows a close relation to language, caste and religion. Bombay is cited as an example of this type of city.

- **Lynch** also points out that in many Indian cities, especially in the traditional cities like Agra, neighbourhoods have remained homogeneous in terms of caste and religious groups. There the untouchable Jatav caste is concentrated in particular areas called mohallas (ward). But changes have taken place mostly because of politicization, spread

of education, and occupational diversification. But **D'Souza** noted that in the planned city like Chandigarh neighborhood has not been developed on the basis of ethnicity, common interest and other similarities. In this city the religious activities, friendship and educational ties are often outside one's own neighbourhood.

- **Family, Marriage and Kinship in Urban India**

Marriage and family are two important aspects of social life. In the urban areas caste norms have been flexible with regard to the selection of mates. There have been increasing opportunities for the free mixing of young men and women. Again the voluntary associations have encouraged inter-caste marriages. As a result there have been more inter-caste and inter-religious marriages in the urban areas than earlier. Though it has been pointed out that joint families are breaking down in the urban areas, studies conducted in several parts of the country also suggest that joint families do exist in the cities among certain castes like Khatris of Delhi and Chettiars of Madras.

It is usually assumed that the process of urbanization leads to decline in family size, weakening or family ties and break up of joint family system into nuclear families. This assumption presupposes that joint family, as it is found in India, is an institution of rural India associated with agrarian economy.

But as a matter of fact joint families are found in urban areas as well. The correlation of "joint" family with rural areas and "nuclear" family with urban is not tenable. Sociologists have gathered ample proof that joint families are as common in urban areas as in rural and that in both rural and urban areas a family may undergo a process of cyclical change from nuclear to joint and back to nuclear within a period of time.

When we observe the household dimension of family in urban India, the studies by **K. M. Kapadia, I. P. Desai, A. M. Shah, R. Mukherjee**, indicate that there is no correlation between urbanization and 'separate' unclear households.

Assumption that Indian urbanites live in nuclear households and that urbanization leads to breaking up to joint families cannot be sustained. Some studies show that not only kinship is an important principle of social organization in cities but also that there is structural congruity between joint family on one hand, and requirements of industrial and urban life, on the other.

- **Milton Singer,** from a detailed case study of nineteen families of outstanding business leaders in Madras city, argues that a modified version of traditional Indian joint family is consistent with urban and industrial setting.

- **I.P. Desai** studied the role of wider family relationships. He points out that when there is some serious illness and people need to utilize the hospital facilities not available locally, members of the family and close kin residing in the bigger cities are called in for help. Likewise when a person in rural areas needs educational or economic advancement, be calls upon his urban counterparts for help.

- **Recent studies** show the important role of family and kinship 'networks' for the rural based boys seeking new avenues in the urban setting. They also show how the elders negotiating with urban institutions like banks, the administration, or the polity, ask for the help of their young relatives in cities.

This does not however suggest that there have been no changes in the family structure. Some of the changes, which call attention to the gradual modification of the family structure in urban India, are:

- Diminishing size of the family, owing to the increasing awareness of family planning measures,

- Reduction in functions of family as a result of relegation of certain educational, recreational and other functions previously performed by families to other institutions, and

- Relative equality in regard to status and rights of women as a consequence of more and more women seeking employment resulting in economic independence of women.

The phenomenon of inter-caste, inter-communal and inter-regional marriage no matter how infrequent, in cities point to the changing attitudes of the urban individual. Similarly one can see the change in the selection pattern too. In selection for their bride, a higher proportion of men from urban middle class background tend to favour urban educated, preferably working girls. Thus, the non-traditionalists as regards bride selection are found largely in urban areas. The evidence also suggests that the new concept of wifehood, i.e., emphasis on conjugal relationship, in India is associated with urban living. There has also been some evidence of increase in age at marriage in urban areas. Simplification of rituals at marriages and incidence of court marriages in the cities reveal a gradual separation of the institution of marriage from its sacred religious complex. Attitude of Indian urban youth towards marriage reflects willingness to depart from the traditional practices but often they are not able to put it in practice due to traditional sanctions and moral pressure which have retained their rigours to an appreciable degree in cities.

Still there is a general preference for arranged marriage, marriages within one's caste group and dowry. The increasing incidence of bride burning or dowry deaths as they are called clearly shows the increasing emphasis on dowry both in terms of cash and goods like colored television sets, cars etc. In this regard, value of the college educated urban youth of India has increase in the matrimonial 'market'.

Caste in Urban India

Generally caste is thought to be a phenomenon of rural India mainly associated with agrarian economy. Caste system has been viewed as a system which has restricted the development of non-agrarian economy. It is assumed that urbanization along with industrialization would induce certain essential changes in the caste-based system of stratification.

Sociologists, like **Srinivas, Ghurye, Gore, D'Souza, Rao**, have conducted studies in urban areas. Their studies have shown that caste system continues to play an important role in urban areas. Opinions are, however, divided regarding the degree of persistence or degree of flexibility in the caste system found in urban setting. In this section we will discuss how the caste system has continued to persist and exert its influence in some sectors of urban social life while it has changed its form in some other sectors. When it comes to every day reality caste plays a significant role.

- **Harold Gould's study of the rikshawalas of Lucknow** shows that, as far as their occupation is concerned, they (i.e., the rikshawalas) follow secular rules but when it comes to personal, family matters, such as marriage, the caste identities are all important. Thus, a dichotomy exists between workplace and domestic situation.

- M.S.A Rao, in another example, has shown that caste system exists in cities. But he points out some significant organizational changes in the way it exists in cities. He says that due to the introduction of modern industry, growth of professions and the emergence of new occupational categories there has emerged a new class structure along with new status groups. Due to the impact of democracy and the electoral system adopted by India, the power axis, i.e., distribution of power and the formation of different kinds of elites, has changed from the traditional system.

- In respect of the *change in the distribution of power* we find that in pre-British India, upper caste was also the upper class. It would seem that now with education and new types of occupations this correlation of caste and class is no longer the case. **A. Beteille** has pointed out that higher caste does not always imply higher class. This disharmony is most often found in the Indian cities where new job opportunities have developed.

- In spite of these changes caste has not disappeared and in the process of establishing social identities it is still widely used in all parts of India. In fact, some sociologists say that it is not necessary at all that with the process of urbanization it will give way to class system of stratification in urban areas.

- *The establishment of caste association* in order to help their caste fellows in terms of educational and occupational opportunities, political power, etc. again reveals the vitality of caste system. The most powerful role that caste identity is playing in contemporary period is in politics which governs the power dimension. The need to gain power through the modern political system has forced leaders to mobilize people of not only one's immediate subcaste but the wider caste group itself. Caste provides a ready made identity along which people align themselves. In India we have at all levels a parliamentary democracy where the numbers of votes become very important. Therefore, in today's India, horizontal unity of caste over a wide area, in both rural and urban sectors, provides a vote 'bank' that can ensure the election of a candidate from one's own caste.

- Caste seems to have also become a basis for organizing trade union like associations. These associations are nothing but interest groups which protect the rights and interest of its caste members, such as the Gujarat Bania Sabha; the Kshatriyas Mahasabha (Gujarat), Jatav Mahasabha of Agra; etc. These are caste associations which perform the functions of a trade union for its members. On the one hand, this can be viewed as the strength of a caste; on the other, as pointed out by **Leach,** once a caste becomes a trade union-like organization, it becomes competitive and therefore, it becomes a class group.

Certain aspects of behaviour associated with caste ideology have now almost disappeared in

the urban context. The rules of commensality have very little meaning in the urban context where one may not know or may ignore the caste identity of one's neighbours, friends, servants, etc. Though in family and marriage matters, caste is still quite important but other factors such as, education, occupation etc., of the partners are also just as important as caste. The frequency of inter-caste, inter-region marriages have increased with the young people coming more in contact with each other in urban areas. It is clear that caste is still significant in urban areas, although its functions have changed and become modified. We may say that it has lost some of its earlier rigidities and has become more flexible.

Sylvia Vatuk has shown that there has not been any marked change in the traditional family and kinship system in the urban areas. Neither does the Indian urbanite suddenly become an anonymous, city-bred person who is totally isolated from primary contacts outside the nuclear family. She found that the kinship organization in the old wards (mohalla) of Meerut city in the past and amongst the poorer section of the population in the city even today, follows the same pattern as in the rural districts of this region. The persistence of the similar pattern of kinship organization, as found in the villages, in the older and poorer sections of the city goes to show that there is no sharp cultural discontinuity between the masses of the pre-industrial towns and the peasants of the countryside.

Social stratification in Urban India

Social stratification has taken a new form in the urban society. It is assumed that with urbanization caste transforms itself into class in the urban areas. But caste systems do exist in the cities though with significant organizational differences. **Ramakrishna Mukherjee** demonstrates that people in Calcutta rank themselves in terms of caste-hierarchy. Stratification has also taken place on the basis of occupational categories. For example, **Harold Gould** points out that the rikshawalas of Lucknow belonging to several religious and caste group's

exhibit uniformity in the pattern of interaction and attitudes in respect to their common occupation. Again it has been found that caste has not played a significant role in determining the choice of occupation in the urban areas. But it is important to note that both the caste and the class have their respective based on time and space and situational focus (Rao).

Cities of India have to be studied in the context of cultural heritage. In the cities many little traditions have been brought in by the migrants and the great traditions have also achieved dimensional change. It has been pointed out that many forms of the great traditions are modified in the modern cities. **Milton Singer** shows that "the intellectual and ritualistic approaches to God are being discarded in favour of the devotional approach which is more catholic and suited to urban conditions in Madras city. Technological innovations like microphone, cinema automobile etc., are used in promoting religious activities. Religious activities are not on decline in the metropolitan city of Madras but are being modernized".

Status of Women in Urban India

Status of women in urban areas is higher than that of women in rural areas. Urban women are comparatively more *educated and liberal*. Against 25.1 per cent literate women in rural areas, there are 54 per cent literate women in urban areas according to the census of 1991. Some of them are working too. Now they are not only aware of their economic social and political rights but they also use these rights to save themselves from being humiliated and exploited. The average age of girls at marriage in cities is also higher than the corresponding age in villages.

However, in the *labour market*, women are still in a disadvantaged situation. The labour market discriminates against women and is opposed to equality of opportunity-understood in a comprehensive sense to include equality of employment, training and promotional opportunities. In this sense, change is not

possible in the sex segregated labour market whose structures ensure that the career patterns of women will normally be marked by discontinuity, unlike the normal male career patterns which assume continuity. Because of the constraints of the sex segregated labour market, women tend to cluster in a limited range of occupations, which have low status and are poorly paid. Women normally prefer teaching, nursing, social work, secretarial and clerical jobs – all of which have low status and low remuneration. Even those women have surmounted the hurdles to professional education are disadvantaged as they find it difficult to harmonize competing demands of a professional career and home.

Generally speaking, it is difficult for a woman to remain single or to combine marriage with career. Apart from the general expectation that all wives must be housewives, it has been noted that women are called upon to sacrifice their carrier when the need arises, thereby subordinating their own career to that of their husbands. This often creates frustration among women, leading even to psychotic illness in a few cases. Rural women, however, do not have to face such problems.

It has been further found that in the cities of India, high level education among girls is significantly associated with smaller family size. Though education of women has raised the age of marriage and lowered birth rate, it has not brought about any radical change in the traditional pattern of arranged marriages with dowry. **Margaret Cormack** found in her study of 500 university students that girls were ready to go to college and mix with boys but they wanted their parents to arrange their marriage. Women want new opportunities but demand old securities as well. They enjoy their newly-found freedom but at the same time wish to carry on with old values.

Divorce and remarriage are new phenomena we find among urban women. Today, women take initiative to break their marriages legally if they find adjustment after marriage impossible. In Delhi alone 20 couples file cases every week seeking divorce from their spouses. About 2,000 divorce

cases were filed in Delhi courts in five months between January and May, 1999 (The Hindustan Times, June 12, 1999). Surprisingly, large number of divorces is sought by women on the grounds of incompatibility and mental torture.

Politically also, urban women are more active today. The number of women contesting elections has increased at every level. They hold important political positions and also possess independent political ideologies. It may, thus, be concluded that while rural women continue to be dependent on men both economically and socially, urban women are comparatively independent and enjoy greater freedom.

CONCLUSION

Thus, it may be said that though we may accept the views of scholars like **Ashis Nandy,** who have talked about new aspects of urban social organization which have replaced traditional ties, yet we cannot reject the prevalence of traditional aspects in the functioning of family, caste, kinship and religion in urban settings.

WORKING CLASS: STRUCTURE, GROWTH, CLASS MOBILIZATION

The modern working class came into being with the rise of capitalist mode of production. This mode of production brought with it the factory type of industry. In other words, rise of factory system of production and working class happened simultaneously. Conversely, without a factory industry there can be no working class but only working people.

In Marxian scheme, the capitalist society will be characterized with two principle classes: bourgeoisie and proletariat. Bourgeoisie will own the means of production and proletariat will sell their labour for wages in order to live. The Marxist meanings of these terms have been specified clearly by Engle in a footnote to the Communist Manifesto. By bourgeoisie is meant the class of modern capitalists, and by proletariat the class of modern wage-labourers. Hence, bourgeoisie is synonymous with the capitalist and proletariat with the working class.

In recent years, Marxist view on working class has been countered essentially from two views giving contradiction of analysis. The first view is that working class is literally disappearing. With the automation of industry and apparent displacement of blue-collar jobs, the working class is fast shrinking in size. However, the fact is that it is not the disappearance of working class as a whole, but blue-collar workers are disappearing. Second view states the opposite. In this view all society is becoming working class. That is, students, teachers, blue-collar workers, white-collar workers and salaried employee of various kinds are all workers. The working class is not disappearing by elimination, but is in fact expanding with everybody joining it except a few capitalists at the top. This view emphasizes the so-called blurring of class boundaries but overlooks the important social distinctions between classes. Moreover those distinctions are still very much prevalent in the society.

However, the question still remains, who are the working class? As M. Holmstorm defines it 'people commonly refer to industrial workers, and sometimes other kind of wage-earners and self-employed workers, as the 'working class'. Usually this means a group who share similar economic situation, which distinguishes them from others, like property owners, employees and managers. It suggests a common interest and shared consciousness of these interests'. This implies that like other classes the defining feature of working class is their understanding of 'a common interest' and 'shared consciousness'. However, in recent times these two concepts have become difficult to actualize for the working class due to their own internal divisions and diverse socio-economic and ethnic backgrounds.

GROWTH

With the growth of modern factory industries the factory workers gradually shaped themselves into a distinct category. The concentration of the working class in the cities near the industrial enterprise was an extremely important factor in the formation of the workers as a class. Similar conditions in factories and common living conditions made the workers feel alike and react in similar fashion. In other words, the principle factors underlying the growth and formation of working mass as a class in India in the latter half of 19th century and at the beginning of 20th century although bears similarities with the advanced countries of Europe. Hence, the consciousness of being exploited by the capitalists/owners of factories was evident as early as 1888, when workers of Shyamnagar Jute Mill assaulted the manager Mr. Kiddie. That is, the reactions against the exploitation in early phases were marked by riots, affrays, assaults and physical violence.

Side by side with these forms of protest there were also other forms of struggle characteristic of working class. Typical working class actins such as strike against long hours of work, against wage cuts, against supervisors' extortion were increasing in number and the tendency to act collectively was also growing. As early as 1879-80 there was a threat of a strike in Champdany Jute Mill against an attempt by the authorities to introduce a new system of single shift which was unpopular with workers. Presumably because of this strike threat the proposed system was ultimately abandoned.

The end of 19th century and beginning of 20th was marked by the organized national movements and consolidation of working class. The national movement especially in Bengal and Maharashtra had already assumed a developed form which exerted a great impact on the later national awakening of the entire country. Partition of Bengal in the year 1905 aroused bitter public indignation and gave rise to mass national upsurge. This political development worked as a favourable condition for the Indian working class too for moving ahead with its economic struggles and raising them to higher pitch. The period from the beginning of the century till the out break of the pitch First World War was marked with widespread and dogged struggles of the workers. And not only economic struggles, the Indian

working class achieved the feat in the political struggles also. That is, these struggles led to the laying of foundation of first trade unions of the country. Moreover, the turn of the century was also marked with the advance in industrializations with concomitant swelling of the working class in numerical strength.

On the eve of First World War the capitalist development in India got accelerated. The government widely used the country's industrial potential for the needs of war. But for the working class it was tough time. This was because the soaring up of prices reduced the living standards of working class. While rural areas were affected by the rise of prices of manufactured goods, the towns faced the higher food prices. The expansion of industrialization saw swelling of numbers of factory workers. October socialist revolution and subsequent sweeping mass and working class struggle formed the background under which the first organization of the Indian working class called **All India Trade Union Congress (AITUC)** was born. In other words, the end of World War I, Success of the October revolution and the first general crisis of capitalism added new strength to the anti-imperialist struggle of India.

The working class did not fail to occupy its own place in anti-imperialist struggle. In this regard it is important to note that the background of political struggle during 1905-8 is the unprecedented dimension of class struggle waged by Indian working class in the national and international set-up of the post-war period against capitalist exploitation bore more significance from the point of view of workers' class-consciousness. Then the birth of the central class organization of Indian working class at the right moment when national political awakening was at its peak and they were conscious as class.

Recession in Indian industry and economy began already in the year 1922 and continued intensifying. In 1929 the impact of the world economic recession and general crisis of world capitalism veritably shocked Indian economy. The mill owners attempted to reduce wages of the

workers. It is particular misfortune of the Indian working class that they ultimately have to fall victim to the intense rivalry between imperialists and native capitalists. But the workers did not lie low before that onslaught, they resisted. So in order to safeguard its position the working class of India had to proceed through a path of bitter struggle.

World War II broke out on 1939. This had devastating effect on the Indian economy and working class in particular. The colonial government reoriented the economy, where by the industrial units introduced double to triple shift of work and leave facilities were curtailed. This done to cater to the war needs of England. As far as workers were concerned their economic conditions were miserable in pre-war period, and the new war made the situation more worse. This was because of the steady fall in the wage rates across the industry. In such a situation the working class of India had to wage struggle for protecting the existing standard of living. The working class embarked on a series of strikes in Bombay, Kanpur, Calcutta, Bangalore, Jamshedpur, Dhanbad, Jharia, Nagpur, Madras, and Digboy of Assam. This event along with other struggles indicates that during this period the outlook of the Indian working class did not confined solely to the economic demands. The working class rather fully kept pace with the national and international political developments and played key role in the political struggles. In such event the imperialist government directed severe attack to forestall the struggle of working class.

The defeat of fascism and end of World War II saw the emergence of the Indian working class as a highly organized, class-conscious and uncompromising force against the colonialist. An unprecedented and irresistible struggle for national liberation and democratic advance engulfed the country. Side-by-side the working class had to engage in sharp economic struggles. The phenomenal rise in the number of strike actions in the year 1946 was an indication of the stiff resistance. All India Trade Union Congress raised the demand of stopping retrenchment, minimum

wage, eight hours work, health insurance scheme, old age pension, unemployment allowance and several other social security measures.

As soon as India became independent, the political climate of the country changed. This was particularly so for the working class. That is, till independence political and economic struggle of the working class was directed against the colonial masters. But with independence began a new political dynamics, where power was in the hands of capitalist and landlords. Their economic interests were directly counter to those of the working class.

The Independence though roused immense hopes and aspirations among all sections of the society, but was accompanied with huge rise in prices and continuous fall in the real wages of the workers. Moreover, the ruling classes had embarked upon a path of building capitalism in the newly independent country. This brought in immense hardships and suffering to the toiling masses which generated powerful resistance of the working class all over the country.

STRUCTURE

India has a multi-structural economy where a number of pre-capitalist relations of production co-exist with capitalist relations of production. Correspondingly, here exists a differentiated working class structure i.e., the numerous types of relations of production, consumption and accumulation of surplus combine to produce a variety of forms of the existence of the working class. This is further compounded by the structural features of Pan-Indian society along with local conditions. So the composition of the working class is affected by the caste, tribe, ethnic origin and the gender based division of labour between male and female and associated patriarchy. This implies that despite internal structural differences and the relations of production through which working people have been and continues to be, there exists a group of people denoted as 'working class'. Then, it becomes pertinent to analyze the growth of working class in India. This particularly so, when one considers two facts. First, in India

prior to 19th century there were vast working people not working class. Second, the growth of capitalist mode of production along with industrialization was imposed by colonial masters.

Given such an eventful history and growth of the working class in India, it is worthwhile to examine structure nature of the working class in the present day circumstances. As mentioned above, due to the existence of multi-structural economy and effects of primordial affiliations, variety of forms of the working class exists in India. On top of all the differences the differences in wage is also the basis of divisions among the working class. On the basis of wage there are four types of workers.

- **First,** those workers who are permanent employees of the large factory sector and get family wage; (by 'family wage' it is meant that wage of the worker should be sufficient to maintain and reproduce to only the individual but also the workers family. They are mostly employed in the public sector enterprises and modern sectors of petrochemicals, pharmaceuticals, chemicals and engineering.

- **Second,** a large and preponderant section of the working class that does not get a family wage. This includes workers in the older industries like cotton and jute textiles, sugar and paper. Even the permanent workers in the tea plantation come in the same category because the owners refused to accept the norm of family wage for an individual worker.

- **Third,** this section of the working class is at the bottom of the wage scale. They are the mass of contract and sometimes casual labourers in industry, including construction, brick making and other casual workers.

- **Fourth,** below all these lie a reserve army of labour, who work in petty commodities production in petty trading, ranging from hawking to rag-picking. They are generally engaged in informal sector and carry on for the want of sufficient survival wage.

The existence of majority of workers, who are not paid family wage means that either the worker gets some form of supplement from other non-capitalist sector or the worker and his/her family cut down their consumption below the minimum standard. This also means that there is more than one wage earner per household. And as **Das Gupta** mentions that both men and women work in the plantation or bidi manufacturing. At the same time they also supplement these earnings with various kinds of agricultural activities including not only cultivation as such but also poultry and milk production. Even in plantation workers were given plots of land with which to carry on agricultural production. It is the supplementary agricultural activities that enable wages in these sectors to be kept low. In this sense, supplementary activities by the workers under pre-capitalist relations of production are a tribute to capitalist sector.

Not only there is wage differential among working class, but **variations are also there in the terms of working conditions**. Hence, better paid labour has also much greater job security. However the workers on the lower end of wage scale have not only job security but also have considerable extra-economic coercion and personal bondage which leads to lack of civil rights. Similarly, working conditions for the low paid workers are uniformly worse than for high paid workers. So, in the same plant or site there is a clear difference in the safety measures for the two groups of workers. The situation worsens further with regard to women workers. For example, women are not allowed to work in the steel plants for safety reasons, but are not prohibited to be employed on the same site as contract labour. With such major divisions amongst the working class of India on the basis of wage, one would expect that there would be large scale mobility among the workers. So a worker would start as casual or contract labour in a firm and then would move to permanent employment either in the same or other firm. **A study by Deshpande** of Bombay labour found

the reverse to be true. That is, around 87 per cent of the regular employees, who had changed their job, had started as regular employee and only 13 per cent had started as casual labour. In this regard, **Harris, who conducted study in Coimbatore,** reported that 'individuals do not move easily between sectors of the labour market. Among the 826 households surveyed there were only less than 20 cases of movement from unorganized into organized sector. Many in the unorganized sector had the requisite skills, experience and education for factory job. But they lack the right connections or to put it in another way, they do not belong to the right social network'. This means that mobility to a large extent is dependent upon the way recruitments are done. The above-mentioned study of Bombay labour, though dealing with private sector, found that recruitments are done mainly through friends and relatives. **A study of Ahmadabad by Subramanian and Papola** found that 91 per cent of the jobs were secured through introduction by other workers. This in a way then denies the disadvantaged groups access to the high wage employment. In public sector though substantial portion of the vacancies are filled through employment exchange, but it does not in any way means that the causal, contract or other disadvantaged groups have equal access.

CLASS MOBILIZATION

Indian working class, as mentioned earlier, came from diverse social backgrounds in which primordial identities such as caste, ethnicity, religion and language played very important roles. In recent years the significance of these elements has been to new not reduced but they do persist nonetheless.

- In this regard the **Ahmadabad, study of Subramanian and Papola** points out that where jobs are secured through introduction by other workers, the latter was a blood relation in 35 per cent of the cases belonged to the same caste in another 44 per cent and belonged to the same native place in another

12 per cent. Friends helped in 7 per cent of the cases. Several other studies have pointed not only play a significant role in securing the employment, but also in the placement in wage scale.

- **K. L. Sharma** in his five studies of Pune, Kota, Bombay, Ahmadabad and Bangalore covering large number of industries found that 61 per cent of workers were upper caste Hindus.

- The dominant position of the workers from upper caste was also brought out in **a study of Kerala.** This study point out that in higher income jobs upper castes dominate whereas Dalits/Adivasis have preponderance in low wage jobs. The middle castes are concentrated in middle to bottom ranges. Even in public sector, the representation of backward caste, schedule caste and tribe is not up to their proportion in population.

- Moreover, it seems that caste-based division of labour is followed in the class III and IV jobs in government and public sector enterprises. So the jobs of sweepers are reserved for Dalits and Adivasis. In coal mines, hard physical labour of loading and pushing the coal tubs is done by dalits and adivasis. In steel plant the production work in the intense heat of coke oven and blast furnace is mainly done by adivasis and dalits. This is because, as **Deshpande** points out of 'pre labour market characteristic' such as education and land holding. So those who possessed more land and education ended up in higher wage sector. But then if upper and lower caste people own comparable levels of landholding and education, the upper caste worker will get into higher segment of the wage than lower caste worker. This is because of the continuing importance of caste ties in recruitment.

- According to Nathan, Caste also serves the function in ensuring the labour supply for different jobs with the fact of not paying more than what is necessary. In other words, the depressed conditions of adivasis and dalits helps in ensuring a supply of labour, who can be made to work at the mere subsistence level.

Hence, caste on one hand plays the role in keeping the lower sections of the society into the lower strata of the working class, on the other hand, the upper caste get a privilege in the labour market. Further, caste is not only a matter of marriage and to an extent; residence; but more so a continuing pool of social relation for the supply of various kinds of labour for the capitalist mode of production.

CONCLUSION

The working class, which is the product of capitalist relations of production, came into being with industrial revolution and subsequent industrialization in England, in particular and Europe, in general. In this relation of production, unlike other epochs, they did not own anything except the labour, which they sold for survival. At the other spectrum, there were capitalists who not only owned all the means of production but also appropriated the entire surplus generated out of this relation of production.

The working class at the conceptual level seems to be fairly simple, but if one ties to define it, the problem magnifies. The reason is that this is not a homogeneous entity. Rather it is a complex, contradictory and constantly changing entity. Other reason is that the concept of 'class-consciousness' is very slippery with regard to the working class. The consequence of this is that it is often proclaimed that either working class is shrinking in size or everybody except a few at the top is working class. However the fact is that working class is a distinct entity, with characteristics of its own. In India, the situation is much more complex because of several reasons like, (a) the forced intrusion of British capital in India; (b) simultaneous existence of multiple relations of production; and (c) never ending identification of working mass with

primordial features such as caste, religion and other ethnic divisions of the society.

Their coming into being and consolidation of working class in the world as well as in India has been affected by local and international events of both economic and political nature. So for carrying out further studies on the working class, these peculiarities have to be taken into account.

INFORMAL SECTOR IN INDIA

Scholars often make a distinction between the organized or formal and unorganized or informal sector. There is a debate over how to define these sectors. According to one definition, the organized sector consists of all units employing ten or more people throughout the year. These have to be registered with the government to ensure that their employees get proper salaries or wages, pension and other benefits. Informal sector could best be understood through its composition.

Composition of the Informal Sector in India

In most Indian cities the urban poor survive by working in the informal sector. Poverty and lack of gainful employment in the rural areas and in the smaller towns drive large numbers of people to the cities for work and livelihood. These people generally possess low skills and lack the level of education required for the better paid jobs in the formal sector. Besides, permanent protected jobs in the formal sector are shrinking hence even those having the requisite skills are unable to find proper employment. For these people work in the informal sector are the only means for their survival. For the urban poor, street vending is one of the means of earning a livelihood, as it requires minor financial input and the skills involved are low though the income too is low.

- **A large section of street vendors in urban areas are those with low skills and who have migrated to the larger cities from rural areas or small towns in search of employment.** Other employment opportunities for the illiterate or semi-literate migrants are working in small factories or workshops having low level of technology, and hence having a greater reliance on physical labour, and casual day labourers in construction sites or other places.

- **There is another section of the urban population that has joined the informal sector; namely, those once engaged in the formal sector.** These people or their spouses were once engaged in better paid jobs in the exile miles in Mumbai and Ahmadabad and engineering firms in the formal sector (Bhowmik). A study conducted by SEWA in Ahmadabad shows that around half the retrenched textile worker are now street vendors. We can hence see that the urban informal sector has a variety of occupations, though incomes are low and social security is non-existent.

- **The third category of workers in the informal sector is those who are employed in the formal sector.** These people are engaged as temporary or casual labour in industries or establishments in the formal sector. In large factories or undertakings one can find permanent workers and also workers who are employed as temporary or casual labour. In many such organizations, there are sections where casual labour is employed. This could be in the canteen or in cleaning. In many companies the security staffs are not employees of the company. They are hired from a separate company. These people are on contract with that security company. They are hence contract workers. Therefore, we have casual and contract workers working in the formal sector organizations. In many organizations we will find that contract labour and casual or temporary labour is used extensively.

- The employment of such labour is because many companies do not want to increase the number of permanent workers. The reason is that if a worker becomes permanent then the employer has to make provision for provident fund, give gratuity payment at the time of retirement, provide for medical leave and

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facilities if the person falls ill, allow the pension after retirement.

- The most important reason is that the employer cannot remove a permanent worker from his work. In other words, the employer can hire a worker but he/she cannot fire the worker as easily. There is a long legal process involved. On the other hand, temporary and casual workers do not get any of the facilities cited above and they can be removed from their jobs at anytime. In 1993, a book containing case studies in eight industries (Davala, 1993) shows that in some industries casual and contract labour form more than half the total number of workers employed in that industry.

Above description brings about certain aspect of the informal sector. The overwhelming majority of the work force in India lies in the informal sector. Over 90% of the work, whether it is in agriculture, industry or services is in the unorganized or informal sector. Workers in the formal sector do not get most of the security given to workers of formal sector. There jobs are insecure, as most of the laws do not protect them. Though in principle labour laws in India are expected to apply to all sections of industrial labour, there are inbuilt provisions which exclude large sections of our labour force. For example, the most important law regulating work in industries is Factories Act. All other Acts such as Employee State Insurance Act, Workmen's Compensation Act, Provident and Pension Act etc., apply only to establishments covered by the Factories Act. This Act is applicable only to manufacturing units which employ a minimum of 10 workers and which use power and a minimum of 20 workers if the unit does not use power. Hence a large section of industrial workers employed in small industries do not have legal protection in there work.

Broadly speaking, Informal sector is characterized by

- Low levels of skill: Workers in this sector have low levels of education and thus they have

low levels of skills. This is the reason why they are engaged in jobs involving low technology. Worker in the formal sector have skill and there position in the labour is better.

- Easy entry: Getting work in informal sector is comparatively easier than in the formal sector. Any able bodied person, irrespective of the skills possessed can become a day labourer. With minimum investment the same person can become a street vendor and sell her/his wares in the market. The people need no money to invest in a shop. In this way the informal sector is able to absorb more workers who would not get any work because they are either not qualified or they do not have capital for investing in business.

- Low paid employment: Because of the requirement of low skill and the easy entry, work in the informal sector has low returns. Workers who offer their labour are not paid high wages. In fact, the biggest grievance against this sector is that the wages are many times below sustenance level. In many cases, low wages drive other members of the family in informal workforce because the main wage earned is not sufficient for sustaining a household. In this sense, children too, may be encouraged to join the labour force.

- Immigrant labour: Informal sector is largely composed of immigrant. Most of the workers come to the city from rural areas in search of a livelihood. Hence migrant status is a characteristic of informal sector.

- Informal sector in India is broadly characterized as consisting of units engaged in the production of goods and services with the primary objectives of generating employment and incomes to the persons concern.

- These units typically operate at low level of organization, with little or no division between labour and capital as factors of production and on a small scale.

- Labour relations, where they exist, are based mostly on casual employment, kinship or personal or social relations rather than contractual arrangements with formal guarantees. Thus, production units in informal sector are not constituted as separate legal entities independently of the household or household members that own them. There is no complete sets of accounts are available which would permit a clear distinction of the production activities of the enterprises from the other activities of their owners.

- The owners of their production units have to raise the finance at their own risk and are personally liable, without limit, for any debts or obligations incurred in the production process.

- Expenditure for production is often indistinguishable from household expenditure. For statistical purpose, the informal sector is regarded as group of production units, which form part of the household sector as household enterprises or equivalently, unincorporated enterprises owned by households.

- One major difference between developing and developed countries is the number of people in regular salaried employment. In developed countries, the majority are formally employed. In India, over 50% of the population is self-employed, only about 14% are in regular salaried employment, while approximately 30% are in casual labour.

What are the social implications of this small size of the organized sector?

- First, it means that very few people have the experience of employment in large firms where they get to meet people from other regions and backgrounds. Urban settings do provide some corrective to this – your neighbours in a city may be from a different place – but by and large, work for most Indians is still in small scale workplaces. Here personal relationships determine many aspects of work.

If the employer likes you, you may get a salary raise, and if you have a fight with him or her, you may lose your job. This is different from a large organization with well defined rules recruitment is more transparent and there are mechanisms for complaints and redressal if you disagree with your immediate superior.

- Second, very few Indians have access to secure jobs with benefits. Of those who do, two-thirds work for the government. This is why government jobs are so popular. The rest are forced to depend on their children in their old age. Government employment in India has played a major role in overcoming boundaries of caste, religion and region. One sociologist has argued that the reason why there have never been communal riots in a place like Bhilai is because the public sector Bhilai Steel Plant employs people from all over India who work together. Others may question this.

- Third, since very few people are members of unions, a feature of the organized sector, they do not have the experience of collectively fighting for proper wages and safe working conditions. The government has laws to monitor conditions in the unorganized sector, but in practice they are left to the whims and fancies of the employer or contractor.

Relevance of the Informal Sector in Indian Context

- Broadly, the informal sector provides income-earning opportunities for a larger number of workers. In India, there is large magnitude of workforce getting their livelihood from the informal sector.

- Thus informal sector has a crucial role in our economy in terms of employment and its contribution to the National Domestic Product, savings and capital formation.

- Since majority of Indian Workforce is illiterate and poorly trained, role of informal sector becomes crucial for providing employment to such workforce

CONCLUSION

At present Indian Economy is passing through a process of economic reforms and liberalization. During the process, merger, integration of various firms within the industry and upgradation of technology and other innovative measures take place to enhance competitiveness of the output both in terms of cost and qualitative to compete in the international market. The low inefficient units either wither away or merge with other ones performing better. In this situation, there is a special need to take care of the interests of the workers by providing them training, upgrading their skills, and other measures to enable them to find new avenue of employment, improve their productivity in the existing employment, necessary to enhance the competitiveness of their product both in terms of quality and cost which would also help in improving their income and thereby raising their socio-economic status. It has been experienced that formal sector could not provide adequate opportunities to accommodate workforce in the country and informal sector has been providing employment for their subsistence and survival. Keeping in view the existing economic scenario, the unorganized sector will expand further in the years to come. Thus, it needs to be strengthened and activated so that it could act as a vehicle of employment provider and social development.

SLUMS AND DEPRIVATION IN URBAN AREAS

Slums have been defined as those areas where buildings are unfit for human habitation, or are by dilapidation, overcrowding, design of buildings, narrowness of streets, lack of ventilation, light or sanitary facilities or any combination of these factors, are detrimental to safety, health or moral (Slum Area Improvement and Clearance Act 1956).

The growth of slums is considered to be a major bane to human society next only to population explosion in this century. It is a substandard housing within a city. It is an inhabited uninhabitable habitation.

Magnitude

- There has been no systematic scientific survey or updating of the slum population carried out on an all India basis, though some city specific ad hoc surveys have been done.

- The percentage of slum population in the four mega cities are – Bombay 34.30%

  Calcutta   32.90%

  Madras   32.10%

  Delhi   31.40%

- An all India average where the cities with 10 lakh and above population have 29.10% population living in slums.

- The slums are also deficient of various basic services, water supply and sanitation facilities being most acute.

- Empirical evidences shows that higher the intensity of urbanization, higher is the percentage of slum population.

- Juvenile delinquency and mal-socialization of more or less prevalent in the slum society.

- Slums act as cover for hide-outs for all sorts of crimes and vices like gambling which prevail and thrive upon the city population.

Genesis and growth of slums

- Higher intensity of economic activities in cities mainly attracts poor people particularly from the adjacent rural areas. Most of this population have practically no resources for living and are instrumental in establishing slums and squatters settlements.

- A large population of such urban poor provides services to the other segment of population i.e., vending, plumbing, waste disposal service, domestic and transport services.

- No amount of legal and regulatory mechanism could stop this process because of the

economic reality of bargaining for the cheapest labour, goods and services by the city consumers and readiness of this migrant poor population to provide the same.

- To earn max income with least possible cost for living and community while providing goods and services the urban poor frequently invades open lands if these are optimally located.

- The cost of housing schemes made for economically weaker sections at times tend to be beyond the affordability of slum dwellers pricing then out from housing supply.

Types of Slums

1. **Original slum :** An area which from very beginning consisted of unsuitable buildings. These are usually areas around an old factory or mining site which is now given up or is the zone in transition. These sections are beyond recovery as they consist of age old structures and they need to be razed in order to be eradicated e.g. Mexican Slum; slums in Kolkata.

2. **Transitional zone slum**: It is created by the departure of middle and upper class families to other sections or it may be due to the starting of a new industry or due to congestion and subsequent deterioration of the living area. These are to be found in the transition zone of developing cities.

3. The third and most unpleasant type of slum is mainly a phenomenon of transition once the area around a main business district has become blighted. Physical and social deterioration spreads rapidly. This type of slum looms with flophouses, one night accommodations for the destitute, houses of prostitution. It is populated by chronic alcoholics, beggars, homeless men and habitual criminals.

Possible solution and steps taken

- Earlier the stress was on clearance of slums, which is now replaced by an approach for the Environmental Improvement of Urban Slums (EIUS) by the provisions of basic services such as water supply, community toilets, drainage, paved pathways and street lights.

- Soft loans for slum upgradation and environmental improvement schemes have been provided by HUDCO.

- Since 1989, the Government of India has also launched the shelter upgradation scheme under the Nehru Rozgar Yojana.

- While preparing the master or structure plan for a city, adequate provision should be made in the land use for the habitats/workplaces of the required urban poor/low income service population which constitutes an overwhelming majority in Indian cities.

- Rather than snatching land from slum dwellers they should be provided adequate habitable land at affordable cost at any other site or the same location where they are staying.

- This system of land banking will be more beneficial with long term sustainability.

- The given land should be duly linked preferably by cycle tracks with the industrial/ organized economic activity centres in the city.

- Such optional locations will reduce the cost of transportation and save time thereby reducing the cost of goods and services to consumers besides reducing the stress in the city transportation system.

- The allotted lands should accrue the right to the individual household and no right to sell, to prevent transfer and resquatting.

- Such habitats should have adequate provisions for social facilities like education and health facilities for a wholesome life.

- HUDCO has suggested that all housing agencies earmark 5 to 15% of the housing development area to be utilized for the shelter less service population. As a result a land

bank of 341 hectares a have been created in different states.

- HUDCO has also requested all the state Governments to consider issuing suitable order for reserving land for the shelterless category as done by the Government of M.P.

- There is no single solution to the problem of slums, nor a simple one.

- Slum Area (Improvement and Clearance) Act that seeks to clear slums and properly rehabilitate the discoursed population.

- A programme for providing housing in urban areas called Valmiki Ambedkar Aawas Yojana (VAMBAY) has been started for lower caste slum dwellers.

- The Jawaharlal Nehru Urban Renewal Mission (JNURM) which envisages a total investment of ever 520 billion has a component for the urban poor called Basic Services for Urban Poor (BSUP).

The problem of slums is widespread in overweight cities of developing countries. The prime concern is not that slums are breeding ground of crime and disease, rather than slums residents do not get a good quality of life. Only a multi-pronged approach backed by motivated administration can tackle these problems.

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12 POLITICS AND SOCIETY

— Nation, democracy and citizenship
— Political parties, pressure groups, social and political elite.
— Regionalism and decentralization of power
— Secularization

NATION, DEMOCRACY AND CITIZENSHIP

What is a nation?

A nation is a community which considers itself one. It is held together by many ties. One of its ties is that of territory; they live on the same land. Another tie is language; sometimes nations have single language. The people of Bangladesh for instance, speak Bengali. Sometimes a nation may have more than one language. Yet it may have a feeling of unity and can be called a nation. Nation has a common tradition or history and a common consciousness of right and wrong. They also have a common heritage of memories of glory or of sacrifice and suffering.

In a nation people have feelings which are unique and valuable to group. They have a right to enjoy means in order to realize certain communally cherished goals. This feeling is called nationalism. Though such feeling might be present earlier, it was during the British rule that the nationalism arose prominently. It was the common feeling of all Indians that they were one and that British rule was unjust. It was unjust because people should rule themselves and have their own state. They must have independence or self rule. So one of the major aspects of Indian nationalism was its claim that India should not be a colony of Britain. It should be an independenent state. But nationalism is not just a negative feeling. It was not just the feeling that the British should go back and leave the government to Indians. They thought of this also because they felt that all Indians were one nation, one people. This feeling of commonness and of unity is called nationalism.

But nationalism in India grew slowly. It did not appear all of a sudden. The story of how India became a nation is linked with our history. From early Indian civilization one set stories, epics, symbols flowed down into different areas.

Sometimes this tradition blended itself with religious and local customs. The epics were the epics of the whole country, not only of one group or one section. The rulers who set up empires in India in the medieval period belonged to different religions including Islam. The cultural traditions that Muslim rulers brought with them from Central Asia slowly mixed the then existing patterns of India. Fusion happened in many fields and not only in the field of art. In north India, the language of Urdu developed out of a mixture of Hindi, Arabic and Persian. The musical forms that are known as Hindustani classical music today were created by both Hindus and Muslims. These two cultures mixed so completely that they formed a new Indian culture. A modern India feels instinctively proud of the temples of Konark, the cave painting of Ajanta and the Taj Mahal. But these are cultural objects of three different religions – Hinduism, Buddhism and Islam. They are magnificent pieces of India culture.

This is how culture helped shape the Indian nation. Of course, when these monuments were built and paintings were done, no one thought of nationalism. But these symbols of a shared past give Indians a sense of belonging together. The British rule helped the growth of nationalism in two ways.

- As we saw politically, India became one for the first time under the British. India gradually came under one system of law, one type of administration and a uniform type of educational system.

- The second result the British never foresaw. Since British imperialism represented foreign rule in India, it gradually led to a united nationalist movement.

- Our national movement provided a number of directions to our country. For more than fifty years, the national movement was the most significant unifying factor in Indian politics. It created a national feeling in two waysA

- First it was a movement for national freedom. The movement wanted to make India free and independent of the British. It nurtured the urge for freedom – the feeling that a country should be governed by its own people, not by foreigners.

- But it united Indians in another way too. People of different areas, different religious, different languages made a united attempt to bring freedom to India. It created a sense of belonging to the nation.

The national movement was spread over the whole country. Consider first its leadership. When we think of Surendranath Banerjee, Gopal Krishna Gokhle, Tilak, Mahatma Gandhi, Jawaharlal Nehru, C. Rajagopalachari, Sarojini Naidu, Maulana Azad, we think of them as leaders of our national movement. They were not leaders of particular communities or religious. They came from various parts of the country, spoke different languages and wore different dresses. But that did not hinder them from working for our Indian nationalism. Surendranath Banerjee was a Bengali; Tilak came from Maharashtra, Gandhi from Gujrat and Rajagopalachari from Tamil Nadu.

But the national movement was successful because the Indians identified with India as a whole and not with its particular parts.

Culture had heightened our feeling of unity all along. The national movement fostered it consciously. Since people really felt united, Indian culture grew more and more unified during the twentieth century. Poems written by poets from different parts became symbols of nationalism. 'Sare Jahan Se Achcha' was written by Iqbal in Urdu and 'Jana Gan Mana' by Tagore in Bengali. But all Indians accepted them and expressed their national feeling through them. So the national movement united Indians not only in politics but also in culture. Nationalism is not a feeling that is needed only in the struggle for freedom against foreign colonialists. For a nation to develop, the feeling of nationalism is necessary. In independent India too, citizens must feel that they are one nation. The process of creating and strengthening this feeling of national unity is called national integration.

When the British rulers had gone, the task for Indians was to stay together as a nation and work for a better life. How has India performed this task?

The national movement set some ideals before the Indian people. After freedom came, the Indian people initiated efforts to turn these ideals into reality. These ideals, at least the most important political ideals among them, are set out in our Constitution. The Constitution clearly shows that the task after independence was not only to stay together as an independent nation but also to set up a society which was secular, democratic and socialist. Let us try first to see democratic and socialist mean-what kind of society would it be.

UNDERSTANDING RELATION BETWEEN NATION/STATE AND SOCIETY

NATION

The term refers to a group of people who have developed solidarity on the basis of common

identity of culture, region, language and state etc. The national identity of any group, which defines itself as such, may be based on any number of criteria, such as, the place of residence, ethnic origin, culture, religion, language.

STATE

The state is a political associating which is characterized by:

* Territorial jurisdiction
* A more less non-voluntary membership
* A set of rules which define the rights of its members by way of a constitution
* Claims to legitimacy of power over its members.

The member of a state is usually referred to as a citizen. More often than not, the state is coterminous with national.

SOCIETY

It is the broadest category of social organization which includes a large number of social institutions like kinship, family, economy and polity. In this sense, the term society refers to social relationships which are interlinked. In interacting with each other people from social relationships. Repeated and regularized patterns of social relationships become institutionalized and hence as a relational concept society includes the study of social institutions.

On the other hand, as a substantial concept the term society is a general term which may encompass the state or the nation. It can also be coterminous with either or both of them. For example, the Germanic Society may include the German speaking people of East Germany, West Germany, Austria, Italy, Switzerland etc. Take another example, Hindu society may include the citizens of Nepal, India, Sri Lanka and Bangladesh.

The state may similarly include a number of societies. For example, the Indian state includes diverse societies based on region, religion or language. The tribal societies, such as the Bhil, the Gond or the Naga, from an integral part of the Indian State.

WHAT IS A NATION STATE?

A nation state refers to a state organized for governing a nation, or perhaps two or more closely related nations. The territory of such a nation is determined by national boundaries and its law is determined, at least in part, by national customs and expectations. In this sense, India can also be discussed as a nation state and to discuss the nature of its national politics, we must first look at the way in which the Indian nation state emerged.

EMERGENCE OF INDIAN NATION

Indian national politics is influenced by the historical experience of nation-building. This experience is marked by efforts to bring together a large number of social groups in a common national identity. The nature of national politics in the post-independence period can be easily grasped if we outline a brief sketch of the historical experience.

Before the advent of the British rule in India and establishment of sovereign rule of the British crown in 1858, India was characterized by a large number of small and large political units. These units waged a constant struggle to maintain their authority over the dominions and protected themselves from the attacks by other political units. Although there were some large scale empires such as the Maurya, the Gupta, the Chola and the Pandya, the entire country that we know of as India was never united politically under any rule. As such, we had no Indian State to speak of until the British imposed their hegemony of India.

However this does not mean that we had no Indian national identity, even without a politically unified territory, many factors combined and gave the country an identity of oneness. As stated by **Kothari** although people live all their lives in villages, there villages were not as self-contained isolated islands as was made by some Western scholars. People moved for marriage; for pilgrimage and for trade. The religious beliefs, practices and institutions provided the people unifying force. One example of the unity can be

seen in the setting of four seats of religious authority in four corners of India by Adi Sankaracharya.

We may thus see the awareness of commonality, however nebulous it may be. This awareness grew out of one's participation in the world which existed beyond one's immediate geographical area. This consciousness did not, however, get translated into the political domain and we had therefore, no national identity as a nation and not as a political identity as a nation.

The establishment of the British rule, although it enslaved us, paradoxically also started a process or our liberation. It made us think of ourselves as not only a cultural unity but also as a political unity. The growth of nationalism can be seen in the efforts made by Indians for removing the British rule from this country.

Although we were always divided in numerous ways in terms of language, religion, ethnic composition, and two factors facilitated the emergence of Indian nationalism.

- One was the presence of common enemy, i.e., the British rule, and
- The other was the existence of a common cultural identity that preceded the unification of India as one state.

The various struggles–violent, non-violent, constitutional, extra-constitutional–against the British further unified the diverse groups in India. Thus, Nehru's well-known phrase 'unity in diversity' was not merely a cliche but a factual description of the Indian experience.

The process of nation-building was not complete on attaining independence. It is, in fact, a continuing process and is reflected in the nature of politics. We can also say that it is a process of translating cultural identity into a political national identity.

Nation Building Continued After Independence. The major task for the independence movement was not merely to attain political independence from the British rule but also to develop a modern nation state. We can say that some definite steps in this direction were taken at the political level while others were at the economic level. We can discuss both types of strategies followed in India for nation-building.

Strategy at the Political Level

The political organization, which was carrying out the activity of nation-building in India, was mainly the Congress Party. This political party consisted of diverse sections of population and activists, in some cases, with diametrically opposite political ideology. The members of the Congress Party belonged to different strata of society from the so-called untouchables, on the one hand and to the Brahmin and Thakur, on the other. There were those who swore by Marxism and some others who wanted 'Hindu Rashtra' and yet others who wanted to promote Islamic nationalism. Such diversity was not accidental. The leaders of the party were drawn from the urban professional classes. They were convinced that nation-building was as important as political independence. Hence the major thrust of their political activity was to bring together as many diverse groups as possible. The same theme is also visible in the politics after the independence of India.

- The Constitution of India, adopted in 1950, was the first attempt at nation-building. We have a written Constitution which is a comprehensive document. It provides the foundation or the design of the government.
- India has a federal government. A federal government in India implies that authority is divided between the centre and the states.
- The Constitution has established a parliamentary system of government, at both the centre and the states. The word 'Parliament' has different connotations, the important ones being that it is an assembly of representatives of the people and it is a body of persons gathered for discussion. In our context, Parliament refers to the legislative organ of the government. The President is the

constitutional head of the country and the council of ministers headed by the Prime Minister. The Prime Minister is the head of the executive which is responsible to the Lok Sabha. The Parliament consists of the President and the two Houses, namely the Council of States (Rajya Sabha) and the House of the people (Lok Sabha).

- In the states, the council of ministers is headed by the 'Chief Minister' who is responsible to the Legislative Assembly. Every state has a legislature. Some states have one House while others have two. Where there is one House it is known as the Legislative Assembly or Vidhan Sabha and where there are two Houses, one is called the Legislative Council (Vidhan Parishad) and the other is known as Legislative Assembly (Vidhan Sabha).

- India is a parliamentary democracy and this means that the government is derived from public opinion. It requires parties, rule by the majority and a responsible government through discussion.

- By way of building up a united nation state the Constitution of India also lays down, among other things, some "Fundamental Duties" of Indian citizens. Some of them are– to abide by the Constitution and respect its ideals and institutions– the National Flag and the National Anthem, to promote harmony and the spirit of common brotherhood amongst all people of India, to protect natural environment, to develop the scientific temper, humanism and the spirit of inquiry and reform, to value and preserve the rich heritage of our composite culture and so on.

- Our Constitution not only provides fundamental rights to citizens but also gives directives to the state to provide the necessary economic, social and political benefits to the citizens. It goes to the credit of the leaders of the early phase of independent India who were sensitive to the potential disruption of the Indian polity. Our national leaders believed that the Constitution of India will help to integrate the people into a united nation.

- The adoption of socialist pattern of society in order to reduce inequalities in society constituted another attempt of the Indian polity toward nation-building. This tool helped to contain divisive tendencies. The inclusion of as many segments of the population as possible was achieved by granting special privileges to the scheduled caste, the tribals, the backward classes and the religious minorities.

One of the remarkable features of the early phase was that despite the struggle for political power, political parties had no major dissension regarding the thrust of politics. The thrust was to keep together diverse elements of the population and to include the hitherto excluded categories into the mainstream of national politics.

The process of nation-building is not yet complete. This is one reason why we cannot and should not say anything much with finality about this process. Instead, we should now turn to the process of nation-building at the economic level.

Strategy at the Economic Level

The second major step taken by the political leadership was the economic resurgence of the country. Any political regime gains legitimacy when it can satisfy the needs of the people. The satisfaction of the people in turn depends upon the availability of goods to be distributed. Hence the first task for the Indian state was to build the economy. This was more so in the light of the bad shape of Indian economy at that time. The colonial policies of the British were largely based on exploitation of the raw materials available in India at cheapest possible rates, to be used by industry in Britain. India was used as market place for their finished goods. The result of the policy was that industry did not develop in the country. The little industrialization that took place during the British rule was due to its importance in international politics. This did not at all help the economic development of the country. Thus, it was inevitable that after the independence, definite steps were

taken to revise the economy. Formulation of Five Year Plans for regulating the economic activity was one such step. For this purpose the Government of India established the Planning Commission.

- The planning process is not merely an economic activity. It is also a political activity. The Planning Commission not only decides about which sector has to produce how much, it also allocates projects to various states. This is where political decisions have to be made. Let us take a concrete example. Suppose the government decides to establish a steel plant. It is not only in terms of the economic viability of location of a steel plant that a decision is made. The Commission takes into account the costs and benefits in economic terms and it also considers the decisions in terms of possible offsetting regional imbalance in location of industries.

- Similarly, the balance has to be maintained between the various interest groups which have emerged around different sectors of the economy. For this purpose, take the simple example of the use of electric power. How much electricity should be made available to industry as against agriculture is a political decision. In the economic sphere, as in the social and political spheres, national politics has followed the policy of reconciling different interests and thereby avoiding conflicts to surface.

- The Indian nation state not only concentrated on making available goods for distribution, but is also decided to follow the path of distributive justice. Distributive justice refers to achieving a fair and equal distribution of goods and services and all people. The intentions for distributive justice are clear in India's adoption of a socialist pattern of society.

- A socialist pattern of society denotes that people have equal opportunities and equal rights. The state as an administrative devise guarantees individuals their rights. It

distributes goods and services equally and fairly for the welfare of the people.

- It also strives for elimination of rigid systems of control. For example, private property is permissible in India, but only in so far as it does not amount to a system of control of the owner over another who does not own it. We can also find instance of distributive justice in much social legislation, such as the Industrial Disputes Act, which protects the rights of the industrial workers, or the Untouchability Offences Act, which protects the untouchable castes from discrimination or the Hindu Marriage Act, which grants rights to Hindu women. Thus our nation-building efforts involve not only goals of development but also equality and social justice.

- Now let us look at the factors which have challenged our efforts for nation-building.

FORCES WHICH CHALLENGE NATION-BUILDING EFFORTS

A host of inter-related factors have disrupted efforts to achieve goals of equality and social justice as well as building a nation state. We can see at least three main forces,

- the diversity of groups which constitute Indian society,
- regional and cultural identities, and
- Casteism.

Diversity of Constituents

India is a heterogeneous society. It is made of a number of diverse groups. The first potential threat to the Indian nation state lies in this plurality. The Indian society was and is divided in terms of religion, caste, language and ethnic origin.

The British were able to somewhat control the diverse groups by following the policy of pitting one group against the other. But the divisive tendencies were sharply manifested even during the nationalist movement when different groups apparently united to remove the British rule from India.

One of the more serious challenges that Indian national leaders in India face even now is how to integrate the interests of the divergent groups. Each of them has its own distinctive aspirations, history, and way of life. Attempts to minimize confrontation between conflicting groups do not always succeed. As we have already seen, the adoption of an egalitarian model of society is one important strategy to contain the divisive tendencies. It is, of course, necessary that these divisions are not allowed to threaten the nation state.

Regional and Cultural Identities

The task of nation-building has also faced a threat from regionalism. We find that national politics in our country is still marked by emergence of regional nationalities. This is quite evident in the formation of states on linguistic basis. It is also evident in demands by some regional identities such as the Gorkha for Gorkhaland or demand for separate Telangana state.

This does not mean that the regional identities should not be emphasized. Some may like to argue that regionalism does not augur well; it harbingers political disintegration of the country. But as the nation has faced such problems earlier, the process of reconciliation has given its polity the ability to accommodate regionalism within its orbit. The politics of reconciliation harmonises the diverse interests of various groups in a national framework.

Despite the early gains of consolidation of the nation state, diverse cultural identities asserted themselves. One example of this is the opposition in the southern states to Hindi as the national language. Another example is the demand for reorganization of state. Yet another example is the assertion by religious minorities of their right to regulate the lives of their members.

As a matter of fact, the national level politics has recognized the existence of regional and cultural identities and the central government has been provided legal sanctions. India recognizes fifteen national languages. It allows each state to carry out its administration in the regional language. It does not interfere in the religious, social and political activities of the minorities. To some people this may appear to be catering to the minorities. The number of people holding this view is not very small. But then there are others who consider protection of the rights of minorities as a major gain for the nation. This keeps the nation state together and forges a political unity.

Casteism

The issue of casteism in national politics has been discussed again and again by a number of people, public men, scholars and laymen alike. Caste is one of the more distinguishing institutions of Indian society. Its role in the political sphere is of recent origin. It is widely observed that caste has become the major basis for political articulation. This is so mainly because caste provides the mechanisms for bringing people together. This is also the requirement for a successful democratic state. By politicizing the institution of caste, political process in India has assumed a unique character. Political parties in India are formed on the basis of caste alliances and voting behaviour of the Indian electorate can be described in terms of caste identity.

As casteism is considered a social evil and caste ideology does not go well with the egalitarian model of a socialist society, role of caste in national politics is viewed as a necessary evil. It is seen a factor which poses a challenge to the task of nation-building. All the same in the absence of an alternative basis for people to come together, caste continues to play a decisive role in Indian national politics.

From the above discussion, it is obvious that the task of building a nation state is not an easy exercise. A growing realization is that national integration is the key to achieving a political identity.

Nation Building Through National Integration:

National integration is a process of developing the different parts of the national social system into an integrated whole. In an integrated society,

social institutions and values associated with them have a high degree of social acceptance. However, linguism, communalism, social inequalities and regional disparities are some of the factors which threaten the ideal of national integration in India.

Linguism

India is a multi-linguistic nation. Language has become, specially since Independence, a powerful source of political articulation. For instance, in the South, particularly in Tamil Nadu, language sentiments have been prorogated among the people for getting power within state politics. The language problem has two aspects, namely

- medium of instruction at the level of school, college and public service examination, and

- meeting the demands of non-Hindi and Hindi-speaking radicals.

- Responding to the first aspect, the Government of India decided to implement a three-language formula. This consists of

- teaching the regional language, or mother-tongue when the later is different from the regional language,

- Hindi or another Indian language in the Hindi speaking area, and

- English or another modern European language. Today for the Union Public Service Commission in India, examinations can be written in Hindi or English or in any regional language of the country.

Regarding the second aspect of the language problem, namely, demands of Hindi and non-Hindi speaking radicals, the Government of India passed the Official language (Amendment) Act, 1967. This act decided that English will continue to be the official language of the Indian union for all the non-Hindi speaking states until these states themselves would opt for Hindi. Thus, Hindi is today only one of the official languages of the Indian union. The provision made under the above mentioned act and the three-language formula have helped to reduce the possibility of conflict on the basis of language.

Communalism

Broadly defined communalism refers to the tendency of any socio-religious group to maximize its economic, political and social strength at the cost of other groups. This tendency runs counter to the notion of the secular nation state that India purports to be. Secularism in the Indian context is defined as the peaceful co-existence of all religions without state patronage to any of them. The state is to treat all of them equally. Yet, in a secular state like India, we very often hear, see and read about communal conflicts. While making conscious efforts towards the goals of democracy and socialism, the Indian nation state has not been free of communal clashes (Kishor).

Social Inequalities

In every society, there is a system of social stratification. Social stratification refers to inequality in society based on unequal distribution of goods, services, wealth, power, prestige, duties, rights, obligations and privileges. Take for example, the social inequalities—created by the caste system. Being a hereditary and endogamous system, the scope for social mobility is very little. Social privileges and financial and educational benefits are by and large accessible to only upper caste groups.

Processes of change, such as democratization, westernization and modernization, have helped to broaden the accessibility to privileges to a wide range of people. Today, caste and politics are also very closely associated. Various commissions for backward castes have been formed for reserving seats for their members in educational and occupational sphere. This is a reflection of the politicization of caste affiliations. While measures to uplift the hitherto exploited and suppressed section of the population are necessary, overemphasis on caste identities has a disintegrative effect on the process of nation-building.

Democracy and Indian Nation

Our system of government is a democratic one. Democracy means, above all equality of all

citizens. It means the end of inequality. Before democracy came, most societies were based on unequal political inequality. In Europe, democracy evolved slowly from the eighteenth to the twentieth century. In India democratic government was set up after we got independence.

Democracy is an excellent ideal. But it is not easy to achieve this. It is particularly difficult in a society like ours, in which there have been many kinds of traditional inequalities. The inequalities based on caste and class, and the conflicts between religious or language groups, make it difficult to run a democratic government. So these are sometimes called challenges before Indian democracy. If Indian democracy is to become strong, we must overcome these challenges.

Democratic government is built two very important ideas/ **freedom and equality**. Democracy is a form of government which gives people freedom. Within limits they can do what they want. They can think and say what they like. They have right which the government cannot take away. But all these are also related to the ideas of equality. Two people can be free together only if they are equal and if both of them have the right to freedom. So the ideas of freedom and equality are linked to each other. We talk of three types of equality–Political, Social and Economic.

Political Equality

Equality can mean many different things. First, of course, is political equality. This means that in a democratic country everybody has equal political rights. For instance, between two persons one be rich, the other poor; one can be a Muslim caste, the other to a lower caste; one may be a man, the other a woman political equality means that despite these differences both will have one vote.

Social Equality

Besides political equality, our Constitution places a lot of emphasis on social equality. This is because political is not the only field in which people come in touch with each other. Besides, elections, campaigns, voting or entering into legislatures, people have other types of social

contacts. At places of work in their everyday lives, citizens have to constantly interact of traditional Indian society which market these day-to-day activities with great inequality between people. The worst form of this inequality was the caste system, and particularly the inhuman practice of untouchability. This meant that people could not treat each other as equals. There were restrictions placed on marriage. People from different castes could not eat together. Most serious of course was that whatever the achievements of a person are, if she or he came from a lower caste, she or he would be treated as inferior by the upper caste people. Usually the different types of occupations were so divided that people from the lower castes were also the people with lower incomes. Quite obviously a society which practices this sort of social inequality cannot run a democratic system which requires that. Therefore, of the ideals of the Constitution is to establish social equality in India.

Economic Equality

Democracy does not mean just political and social equality. Our Constitution says that the Indian state has several objectives. These objectives are–liberty or freedom, equality, secularism and socialism. All these objectives are related to each other and to the ideals of a democratic society. Let us see how they are related. Political equality is equality in matters of government and enjoying rights. But today democracy has come to have a much wider meaning. Some people would ask: why should democracy and equality be restricted only to the political sphere? Why not extend it to other spheres of life too? Politics after all is not the only important aspect of our lives. Our economic life, i.e., how much money we earn and what we can do with that is equally important. Do we not need equality in that sphere too? Only having the right to vote is not enough. If some people are very rich, and others live in poverty, that kind of society is bad and should be improved. Individuals should be equal not only in politics but also in economic life. They should have equal opportunities to enjoy various things which money

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can get. It is called economic equality. Without it democracy cannot be complete.

Secularism

Our Constitution mentions another goal called secularism. It has specific reference to our situation. Unlike some other countries, India has number of religious groups. People belonging to all the religious co-exist in this country. It is therefore, essential for the Indian state to be secular. For a democracy to work well, it is very important that the government should treat all citizens equality, whatever their religions be. This is what is called the principal of secularism. Among Indians there are people of almost all important religions in the world. We have Hindus, Muslims, Christians, Sikhs, Buddhists, Jains and Parsis. But their religions are matter of their private belief. In matters of politics, such distinctions are irrelevant. A secular state means two things.

- Firstly, it means that all citizens are equal before law whatever their religions are. To put it different religion should not be mixed with political life.
- Secondly, this also means that people of all religions have equal right to practice their religions.

Indian democracy has been moving ahead since independence. We feel satisfied with the functioning of our democratic system. We know that in many other countries democracy has failed. As we have seen in previous chapters, the democratic system in India has been built upon the basic principles of equality, egalitarianism, socialism and secularism. The Constitution of India has made adequate provision to ensure that these principles are realized. It has also tried to reflect the major concerns of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights adopted by United Nations in1948. When all these ideals are realized substantially the democratic system becomes sound, successful. But history teaches us that these are not realized easily. Our democracy also faces a number of difficulties.

FACTORS THAT HINDER THE SUCCESSFUL FUNCTIONING OF INDIAN NATION AND DEMOCRACY

Inequality

As we understand, democracy means equality among citizens; all kinds of inequalities are detrimental to a democratic society. Unfortunately there are deferent types of inequalities in our society. Democracy is not against variation between people. On the contrary, it implies that differences between people–in their habit, customs, beliefs and opinions–ought to be respected. One group should not try to improve their way of life on others. There are lots of differences among Indians. Indians speak different languages; belong to different regions having distinct culture, follow different religions. But here we are mainly concerned with the inequalities– which are creating obstacles in the working of a democracy. There are various kinds of inequalities in our social life. There is inequality between the rich and the poor, inequality of income or of wealth. There are inequalities between the so called upper castes, the so called lower castes and those who are called the untouchables. There is inequality between man and woman, between literate and illiterate. Here it is important to note that people suffer from these inequalities because of no fault of theirs. It is the responsibility of a democratic society to ensure equal opportunities to all citizens, so that they do not suffer from these inequalities.

Communalism

The greatest danger to a democratic society comes from the tendency to place one's community above others. There may be communities based on religions, caste, language or region. But if one community is placed above the other communities, it will mean that the particular community will have more rights and opportunities than other communities. This is clearly against the principles of democracy. One great hindrance to Indian democracy is religious communalism. Communalism means placing

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one's own community above others, even above the nation. During British rule, India was one country/ during national freedom movement people belonging to all religions fought against the British for national freedom/ those who led the movement, those who fought for it on the streets, the martyrs who died for it, belonged to different religions. However, at the time of independence, the British split the country into two states–India and Pakistan. At the time of partition of the country ghastly communal riots broke out, and thousands of innocent people were killed and many more were forced to leave their homes. Thousands of Hindus from Pakistan and Muslim from India had to leave their homes in which they lived for generations. They had to leave their jobs, their property and had to flee to an unknown area to live as refugees. This left a long trail of mutual hatred among the two religious communities. It was very unfortunate that independence had to come to us this way. But communal problems did not and with the riots at the time of independence. Even Gandhi, the Father of the Nation, was assassinated by religious communalist.

Some People want India to be a Hindu state, because they feel that Hindus are in a majority but this is a wrong idea. Because India is as much a country of the Hindus as of the Muslims, Christians and others who have born and culture Precisely because it is not the culture of any one community, but of many. Take two examples. First of all we are Proud of the beautiful architecture of our Past. The whole world marvels at them. But these are the contributions of different communities. The great stone temples of Konark or Khajuraho were made by People who were Hinds. Many of the figures carved out on them are Gods of Hindu religion. The Taj Mahal was made by a Muslim equally feel Proud of the Taj built by Muslims and the great built by Hindus. Now, take the example of our classical music. We have great Muslim and Hindu musicians. Everybody honours them because they are artists of Indian music, not because they are Hindus or Muslims. We have similar feelings for our respect

for the unique and composite culture sustains our democratic system. Our culture and our secular state would be destroyed if all People belonging to different are not treated equally.

Minority Rights

India is a land of many religions and languages. This creates some special problems for our democracy. Democracy works on two Principles which are of equal importance. First, it is a government based on the majority Principle. Only government based on tolerance and consensus. It does not make People do things by force. This second Principle of democracy is the basis of minority rights. Our Constitution makes provision for such minority rights. These rights have been guaranteed by the Constitution. These cannot be taken away. These rights are universally Human Rights.

The question of minorities has come up very much in two fields–religious communities and cultural groups. If you take India as a whole, number of minority communities like Muslims, Sikhs, Christians, excite is because of this situation that the Constitution gives a fundamental right to the religious and linguistic minority communities to establish their own educational institutions. It is important to note that in our country the rights of the minorities are adequately protected. The intolerance of the majority can also harms democracy.

Regional Aspirations and Regionalism

Our country is so large that there is a great diversity among its many different regions. A region is an area, the inhabitants of which have a sense of unity and a feeling that they are distinct from others. But of late the more common use of this word refers to a sense of unity based on language, culture and economic interests.

After independence, states in India were reorganized on the basis of language. But regions do not always coincide with states. Within a state with a majority of citizens speaking one language, there may be other citizens speaking other languages. Moreover, People with different cultural

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background having different economic interests live within the boundary of state. Therefore, regions and regional problems are not confined within the boundaries of the state. These in fact cut across the state boundaries. Unfortunately we have been facing a number of regional problems throughout the length and breadth of the country. In a democracy, regional aspirations are not always wrong or bad which are related to our history of colonial exploitation. During British period, some areas which were close to ports, or towns which were important centres of administration were developed by the Government. Industries grew in and around them. In such places facilities like good educational institutions, transport system and other civic amenities were provided. By contrast, other areas which were often parts of the same region where people spoke the same language were left very backward. Tribal areas experienced very little effort at development. This kind of backwardness is the cause of inequality between regions.

Popular feelings against regional inequality have led to movements for regional autonomy or for a new state. Sometimes, people have demanded comparatively more economic and political autonomy for a particular region. In fact, this is called a demand for regional autonomy. Even such feelings have led to movements demanding creation of new states.

However, this also leads to what is known as the problem of regionalism. Sometimes demands of political parties or groups against neglect of a region appear to be against the unity of the nation as a whole. At times, this leads people to say that a particular region is only for its own inhabitants, it becomes a seriously wrong approach. First, this idea clearly goes against some constitutional provisions. Our Constitution gives us right to live or work and equality of opportunity, which would be harmed, if such idea is promoted. We all believe that we are, despite all differences, one single nation. If every region is supposed to belong only to the people of that region and not others, the idea of India as a nation

itself will be destroyed. In fact, regionalism does not always do well to the region itself as contribution of other regions is essential for its growth and development. Regional aspirations therefore are quite natural, and should be respected. But regionalism, as a feeling of hatred against other simply because they do not belong to the region, goes against the feeling of all Indians constituting one nation.

Caste and Untouchability

It is good to be proud of one's heritage. But one must not do it blindly. It is equally important to be critical about it. A practice is not good simply because it has been there for a long time. Whereas we have a great cultural heritage, many things in our traditional society are bad, and these must be changed, if we are to progress and have a democratic society.

One of the great problems facing our democracy has been the rigid caste system. It had divided our society into so called high and how castes. Thousands of years ago the Hindu society was divided into four categories: Brahmanas, Kshatriyas, Vaishyas and Shudras. These categories have been known as Varna. However, the caste system, and not so much the Varna system, has been responsible for maintaining the social inequality in India. The caste system had ordained professions by the accident of birth in a given family and jati. It has been believed that the four major caste categories have had types of work in every society. The Brahmins would do rituals, worship and educate the young. The Kshatriyas would learn warfare and defend the country. The Vaishyas were supposed to carry on trade. And finally, the Shudras the lowest of the four categories were to do all other types of work which needed physical labour-like agriculture and other menial work. We all now accept that such a system is not good for our society. This kind of inequality is entirely unjustifiable as the most important activities of a society include agriculture and the production of other necessary things. Do people not need food or clothes or other

to survive? And is it not very unjust to treat those people who produce these things for the rest of the society as the lowest of all? Besides, how does one say that the skills of mind and body travel in the family? As the sons of great poets or players do not necessarily become poets and players by virtue of their birth, similarly, what is the guarantee that the son or daughter of a Brahmin would like to study and be a scholar. Or, that the son of a warrior would also be good warrior? The caste system which existed in ancient India was thus a very unjust system.

With the passage of time, this caste system has become very complicated. Instead of four castes now there are innumerable castes. Each caste has its own rites and ceremonies that distinguish it from others. They ask their boys and girls to marry within their caste and not to outsiders. Each caste has many sub-castes. Accordingly people have to lead their lives under very odd restrictions. They cannot eat from others, or with others. It means that people belonging to one caste treat others with hatred and suspicion.

Worst of all has been the system called untouchability. People of upper castes would not even touch those of lower castes. It was shameful and inhuman aspect of our old society. People belonging to the lowest castes would not be given education. They could not eat with others. They had to live outside the villages. Sometimes they could not eat with others. They had to live outside the villages. Sometimes they could not even use the wells from which other people drew water. Yet often they were doing some of the most important works for the society. They tilled the land of other people because they were too poor to have land of their own. Society treated them most unjustly although it benefitted out of their labour. But it did not treat them as equal to others.

There were sometimes protests against such injustices. At aims, lower caste people rebelled. Later, social reformers tried to abolish these practices. Nationalist leaders, especially, Gandhiji tried hard to abolish untouchability. But to abolish a system that has continued for hundreds of years is not easy. Those who benefit from the system- the so-called upper castes would not let it go. After independence, laws were passed making untouchability an offence. But laws are not enough. It is important for others to respect the rights of those who belong to lower castes in your society. And, it is equally important for those of the so-called lower castes to assert their equal rights.

Ordinarily, people of the lower castes were poor. Because of their poverty, they were unable to have education and as a result, they could not get better jobs. To offset this, our Constitution has included certain revisions under which, some jobs are reserved for those belonging to the Scheduled Castes. This category is known as Scheduled Castes because the names of these lower castes are put into a schedule or a list prepared by the Government. Some seats can be reserved for them in educational institutions also. This is a way of undoing the injustices that the society had done to them for centuries. Like the Scheduled Castes the Constitution also guarantees some reservations for the Scheduled Tribes in jobs and admission in educational institutions. As long as discrimination against these castes and tribes remain, there can be no real democracy. It violates the principle of dignity of the human being. It goes against the main principle of a democratic society that all human beings should be regarded as equals.

Inequality of Women

Traditionally, another negative aspect of our male dominated society was the way it treated women. This has been the situation not only in India but also in any other societies of the world, but in the Indian society it has some peculiar forms. Society's laws and customs were made primarily by men which went in their favour. Women have sometimes been treated as little better than slaves. Often their own families would consider women as fit to cook, work in the household and lookafter their children. They had been given to understand that they can not do

important work outside the house, or take important decisions for themselves. This kind of view is doubly wrong. Firstly, these types of work-cooking for the family, keeping the house, or looking after children are not at all unimportant work. In fact, these are most important of all being extremely necessary for the society. To consider these types of work unimportant precisely show the prejudices that men often have against women. Secondly, it is also not correct to say that women need not work out of home. If one travels through the countryside during planting or harvesting time, one would find women working in the fields. Those who live in cities must have also seen women working in offices, schools and factories. So we see everywhere, in almost all walks of life, women do as much work as men. Although they do so much for the society, our traditional society often treated them very cruelly. They are even not allowed to take decisions for themselves. They have little say in the matters of the family. At one time, there was a horrible practice of sati. A woman whose husband died was burnt to death with him.

Another strange system was the purdah. In some homes, women were not allowed to come out in front of outsiders, or come in contact with any man who did not belong to their own family. Women could not go out of their house very often. And the potential they might have had was never realized. Of course, these practices have declined now. But still, if you look carefully around you, you will find many instances of people treating women differently from men. For example, even in the cities, among educated people, dowry is being demanded from the family of the bride. This practice treats the girl unequal to the boy. Discrimination against women also occurs in economic practices. Quite often women are paid less amount for doing the same work as compared to men. So, although the situation has changed, and some of the terrible practices of the changed to men, so, although the situation has changed, and some of the terrible practices of the past have gone, the question of raising the status of women still remains.

The change in the status of women that are coming, are the outcome of various factors. Living in cities is one of them. Education of women is another. Women now go to schools and colleges just as much as men. They work in offices. They often join politics, and become parliamentarians, ministers, even the Prime Minister. Still in our vast countryside, women are ruled by tradition and are bullied and oppressed. As democracy means equal treatment to all, such acts of inequality and prejudice against women have to be stopped.

Inequality between the Rich and the Poor

What we discussed till now are types of social inequality. One of the major problems before a country like ours is economic inequality. One of the most obvious forms of inequality is the inequality between the rich and the poor. This is inequality of income and wealth. As money helps buy all other goods and services, this extends to all aspects of peoples lives. The coming of industries helps reduce some inequalities, for example, caste discriminations in modern cities. But the most important question before our country is the question of economic inequality. A poor man is politically equal to a rich man. Both have a single vote in elections. But his equality does not mean that they are equal in other equally important fields.

The problem of poverty is the result of economic inequality. It is the question of some people having a large income that makes it easy for them to live comfortably and others being too the poor to even eat properly once a day. Poverty exists in different forms in cities, industrial centres and in villages where people depend on land. In cities, the poor are mainly workers. In villages poor are small peasants or those who have no land. Let us look into the problems of poverty in villages as well as cities or industrial places.

Still, there are certain things that have not changed. A poor man can become rich now, but the distinction between the rich and the poor remains. Formerly, it was rank and birth, now it is wealth and money. An industrial society left to

itself, continually increases this distinction. The socialists claim that in such societies, the rich become richer and the poor still poorer. Growth of industries improves the productivity which in turn improves the economy of a society, no doubt, but it also leads to greater inequality between various classes. Although advantages of industrialization cannot be denied, its capacity to create new problems cannot be overlooked either. Due to industrialization new classes arise, and with them new types of oppression, exploitation and inequality. In the cities, the problem of poverty is very acute among workers in industries. Indian democracy also faces challenges from wide spread rural poverty.

Poverty in the Indian Villages

The poverty in villages has a pattern quite different from that exist in cities. In Indian villages men tilled the same land for the same kinds of crops, with the same kinds of implements for years together. They lived in the same kind of houses, had the same kind of thought, and had exactly the same superstitious beliefs. Some changes have taken place in our village life after independence. The efforts of improved agricultural production have brought about such changes. But many of the problems still remain, particularly, there has been very little change in those aspects of village life, which cause poverty.

Land Reforms

One of the major problems in rural life has been related to land ownership. The man who actually tilled the land did not own it. On the other hand the owner of the land, without doing any work received benefit through his tenant's labour. This was a very unjust system. It reduced productivity of land causing poverty to sustain. Changes in such a system in favour of the actual tiller of the land that produced the crop was essential. This required measures which came to be known as Land Reforms. After independence, a number of land reform laws were passed by state government. But those who owned land have often managed to thwart the process of

implementation of such laws. When land ceiling laws were made to limit the extent of ownership, land was transferred in the names of other members of the family. So the law could be satisfied, but land still remained with the same people. Land reform legislation has thus not been able to remove the inequality in holding of land among peasantry in all the states of our country. Poverty is much greater among the landless rural folks who work for others who have land, and live on the wages. Wages are usually very low. During lean season, having no works the poor peasants and agricultural workers suffer great hardships. This can be removed if land is more equally distributed. Some relief is sought to be given to the poorer section of the village people by various programmes. Many states have the integrated Rural Development Programmes which are meant to help them. Sometimes some states run the food for work programme which can also be of great benefit to the rural poor at the time when they find it difficult to get work.

Besides inequality of land ownership, some other evils in the countryside were even more unjust. Sometimes, people were compelled to do bonded and forced labour. Sometimes, peasants or landless workers had to borrow money from the local landlords or money-lenders when they were hard pressed. They were charged incredibly high rates of interest. As they were never able to pay off the money, they were asked to work for the money-lenders to pay off their debts. This practice resulted in rural poverty due to indebtedness. Many of the debtors had to work for their whole lives for the landlord or the money lender, for a small sum of money they had to borrow at one time. This was called bonded labour. Now bonded labour has been abolished by law. But still one comes across occasional reports of such practices.

Such problems are also related to illiteracy. Many people in our countryside still cannot read or write. They are often cheated in matters of contract and employment as they cannot read what is written in the paper. So the powerful and

moneyed class exploits the poor. Thus the main problems in the countryside are inequal land distribution and debts of the peasantry.

Poverty in Towns :

Towns are usually centres of industry or trade. In both these sectors, there are thousands of labourers who migrate to cities in search of jobs. But cities have no plan or provision to accommodate such people, workers, therefore, have to live in vast slums which lack even the basic facilities like electricity and drinking water. Actually most of our industrial cities are vast slums with comparatively smaller pockets of better housing and sanitation. Workers often do hard labour for long hours but get low salaries with which they cannot buy good food. If they are sick, they often cannot afford medicine. Unhygienic conditions make their lives even worse. Once a worker gets too old or too sick to work, there is no provision for any kind of security.

Unemployment :

The problem of poverty has been a great hindrance to the successful functioning of democracy in India. Another major factor of poverty is the prevalence of unemployment. Our economy has not been able to create adequate employment opportunities. As a result, the number of the unemployed has been increasing. Besides, there are a large number of people who are unemployed. These people do not have opportunities to work to their potential. The problem of unemployment is very much visible in cities, but is less visible though equally acute in villages. Where three persons are enough to cultivate a plot of land, we find four or five person involved in that work. This kind of situation leads to disguised unemployment. The solution of the problem of unemployment lies in faster economic development.

Population :

Population has been a great challenge to development. Although population is considered an asset, the faster pace of its growth has been a cause of great concern. The population of India has grown three times since independence, It the

present trend of growth continues, the present population will double itself with the next three decades. The pressure of growing population in our country has been generating a lot of problems for it economy as well as environment. Even when the pace of economic development is accelerated to meet the needs of the growing population, the problems are not going to be solved. The faster pace of economic development will require more use of our limited resources. The best way of economic development is to utilize our resources carefully. The resources should be utilized in a way that adequate resources remain to be utilized by the coming generations. This kind of development is known as sustainable development. With this kind of development, we can be able to save environment from being polluted. It is therefore essential for us to reduce the rate of growth of population.

The causes of population growth in countries like ours are many. The main reasons for growth of population in India are prevalence of poverty and illiteracy, low status of women, high rate of deaths of people and particularly of infants and mothers. Because of these factors, the birth rate remains high, resulting the faster growth of population. The increasing population puts a lot of pressure on agricultural land in villages. In cities population grows due to large scale migration from rural areas in search of jobs. In order to ensure population stabilization four important steps are necessary. First, urgent steps are needed to remove poverty and illiteracy. It is more important to make our population literate. Females in particular are to be made literate. Secondly, there is a need to ensure gender equality. To attain this goal, it is necessary to provide special opportunities of education for girls. Females are as important members of society as males. Women must be given equal opportunities to work outside homes. Their potentials are to be fully utilized by the society instead of confining them to home. Thirdly, the health facilities need to be extended to all so that, greater care of the health of infants, children and mother can be taken

Fourthly, the country needs to adopt and realize the policy of sustainable development. It means that the development processes are to be promoted in a way which enables the economy to meet the requirements of all the people but does not lead to an over-utilisation of resources.

Nepotism and Bribery :

Many other types of problems also add to the challenges to Indian democracy. Some practices like nepotism and bribery reduce the efficiency of the government. This also causes frustration for the ordinary citizens, because, at times they fail to get their dues. Sometimes these result in violence among the youth. Certain degrading business practices like hoarding of goods and commodities for profits also lead to problems. There are some malpractices like smuggling and accumulating black money which make the administration corrupt and inefficient and hinder the development of the nation.

MEASURES TO SOLVE THESE PROBLEMS :

There are many types of measures which can be taken up to solve these problems.

- Education can improve people's economic conditions and pave way for better understanding. But it is not only formal education that is needed to fight the ills from which our society suffers. Literacy, of course, is of great help. A literate person knows more about rules and laws and her/his rights and duties.

- Awareness of laws can be created even among illiterate people. But the crux of these problems are essentially economic and these economic problems have to be tacked by measures like land reforms, reduction of unemployment or by providing under employment benefit to those who are out of jobs. This will bring greater social equality.

- The government has to legislate on these measures. But just legislation is not enough. It must also see that people do not find loopholes as to slip away through those.

- Increase in productivity is necessary both in industry and agriculture. In agriculture productivity is increased by use of better seeds and fertilizers, by the use of farming machines, etc. This has happened in some areas of our country through 'Green Revolution'. As a result of this, India has become self-sufficient in food. Earlier, we did not produce enough food for all Indians. Over the last many years, we have not only produced enough food but we have produced more than we need. So some of it is now exported.

- Productivity has to be increased also in industries. This can be done in two ways. If the machinery is improved, this can lead to more production by the same worker. Another way of improving productivity is by the worker learning more skills. Usually, these two have to go together. To use a more efficient machine, the worker has to be more skilled. Therefore, increased productivity also needs that education should be spread among workers. They should have the knowledge of new techniques and skills.

DEMOCRACY IS SUPPOSED TO

- Promote equality among citizens;
- Enhance the dignity of the individual;
- Improve the quality of decision-making;
- Provide a method to resolve conflicts; and
- All room to correct mistakes.

Are these expectations realized under democracies? When we talk to people around us, most of them support democracy against other alternatives, such as rule by a monarch or military or religious leaders. But not so many of them would be satisfied with the democracy in practice. So we face a dilemma: democracy is seen to be good in principle, but felt to be not so good in its practice. This dilemma invites us to think hard about the outcomes of democracy. Do we prefer democracy only for moral reasons? Or are there some prudential reasons to support democracy too?

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Over a hundred countries of the world today claim and practice some kind of democratic politics: they have formal constitutions, they hold elections, they have parties and they guarantee rights of citizens. While these features are common to most of them, these democracies are very much different from each other in terms of their social situations, economic achievements and their cultures. Clearly, what may be achieved or not achieved each of these democracies will be very different. But is there something that we can expect from every democracy, just because it is democracy.

Our interest in and fascination for democracy often pushes us into taking a position that democracy can address all socio-economic and political problems. If some of our expectations are not met, we start blaming the idea of democracy. Or, we start doubting if we are living in a democracy. The first step towards thinking carefully about the outcomes of democracy is just a form of government. It can only create conditions for achieving something. The citizens have to take advantage of those conditions and achieve those goals. Let us examine some of the things we can reasonably expect from democracy and examine the record of democracy.

Accountable, responsive and legitimate government

There are some things that democracy must provide. In a democracy, we are most concerned with ensuring that people will have right to choose their rulers and people will have over the rulers. Whenever possible and necessary, citizens should be able to participate in decision-making that affects them all. Therefore, the most basic outcome of democracy should be that it produces a government that is accountable to the citizens, and responsive to the needs and expectations of the citizens.

Before we go into this question, we face another common question: Is the democratic government efficient? Is it effective? Some people think that democracy produces less effective government. It is, of course, true that non-democratic rulers do not have to bother about deliberation in assemblies or worry about majorities and public opinion. So, they can be very quick and efficient in decision-making and implementation. Democracy is based on the idea of deliberation and negotiation. So, some delay is bound to take place. Does that make democratic government inefficient?

Let us think in terms of costs. Imagine a government that may take decisions that are not accepted by the people and may therefore, face problems. In contrast the democratic government will take more time to follow procedures before arriving at a decision. But because it has followed procedures, its decisions may be both more acceptable to the people and more effective. So, the cost of time that democracy pays is perhaps worth it.

Now look at the other side democracy ensures that decision-making will based on norms and procedures. So, a citizen who wants to know if a decision was taken through the correct procedures can find this out. She has the right and the means to examine the process of decision-making. This is known as transparency. This factor is often missing from a non-democratic government. Therefore, when we are trying to find out the outcomes of democracy, it is right to expect democracy to produce a government that follows procedures and is accountable to the people. We can also expect that the democratic government develops mechanisms for citizens to hold the government accountable and mechanisms for citizens to take pert in decision-making whenever they think fit.

If we wanted to measure democracies on the basis of this expected outcomes, we need to look for the following practices and institutions: regular, free and fair elections, open public debate on major policies and legislations, and citizens' right to information about the government and its functioning. The actual performance of democracies shows a mixed record on this.

Democracies have had greater success in setting up conditions for open public debate. But most democracies fall short of elections that provide a fair chance to everyone and in subjecting every decision to public debate. Democratic government does not have a very good record when it comes to sharing information with citizens. All one can say in favour of democratic regimes is that they are much better than any non-democratic in these respects.

In substantive terms it may be reasonable to expect from democracy a reasonable that is attentive to the needs and demands of the people and largely free of corruption. The record of democracies is not impressive on these two counts. Democracies often frustrate the demands of a majority of its population. The routine tales of corruption are enough to convince us that democracy is not free of this evil. At the same time, there is nothing to show that non-democracies are less corrupt or more sensitive to the people.

There is one respect in which democratic government is certainly democratic government is legitimate government. It may be slow, less efficient, not always very responsive or clean. But a democratic government is people's own government. That is why there is an overwhelming support for the idea of democracy all over the world. As the accompanying evidence from South Asia show, the support exists in countries with democratic regimes. People wish to be ruled by representatives elected by them. They also believe that democracy is suitable for their country. Democracy's ability to generate its own support is itself an outcome that cannot be ignored.

Economic growth and development

If democracies are expected to produce good government, then it is not fair to expect that would also produce development? Evidence shows that practice many democracies did not fulfil this expectation.

If we consider all democracies and all dictatorship for the fifty year between 1950 and 2000, dictatorship have slightly higher rate of economic growth. The inability of democracy to achieve higher economic development worries us. But this alone cannot be reason to reject democracy. As you have already studied in economics, economic development depends on several factors: country's population size, global situation, cooperation from other countries economic priorities adopted by the country, etc. However, the different in the rates of economic development between less developed countries with dictatorship and democracies is negligible. Overall, we cannot say that democracy is a guarantee of economic development. But we can expect democracy not to lag behind dictatorship in this respect.

When we find such significant different in the rates of economic growth between countries under dictatorship and democracy, it is better to prefer democracy as it has several other positive outcomes.

Reduction of inequality and poverty

Perhaps more than development, it is reasonable to expect democracies to reduce economic disparities. Even when a country achieves economic growth, will wealth be distributed in such a way that all citizens of the country will have a share and lead a better life? Is economic growth in democracies accompanied by increased inequalities among the people? Or do democracies lead to a just distribution of goods and opportunities?

Democracies are based on political equality. All individuals have equal weight in electing representatives. Parallel to the process of bringing individuals into the political arena on an equal footing, we find growing economic inequalities. A small number of ultra-rich enjoy a highly disproportionate share in the total income of the country has been increasing. Those at the bottom of the society have very little to depend upon. Their incomes have been declining. Sometimes they

find it difficult to meet their basic needs of life, such as food, clothing, house, education and health.

In actual life, democracies do not appear to be very successful in reducing economic inequalities. The poor constitute a large proportion of our votes and no party will like to lose their votes. Yet democratically elected governments do not appear to be as keen to address the question of poverty as you would expect them to. The situation is much worse in some other countries. In Bangladesh, more than half of its population lives in poverty. People in several poor countries are now dependent on the rich countries even for food supplies.

Accommodation of social diversity

Do democracies lead to peaceful and harmonious life among citizens? It will be a fair expectation that democracy should produce a harmonious social life. We have seen in the earlier chapters how democracies accommodate various social divisions. We saw in the first chapter how Belgium has successfully negotiated different among ethnic populations. Democracies usually develop a procedure to conduct their competition. This reduces the possibility of these tensions becoming explosive or violent.

No society can fully permanently resolve conflicts among different groups. But we can certainly learn to respect these differences and we can also evolve mechanisms to negotiate the differences. Democracy is best suited to produce this outcome. Non-democratic regimes often turn a blind eye to or suppress internal social differences. Ability to handle social differences, divisions and conflicts is thus a definite plus point of democratic regimes. But the example of Sri Lanka reminds us that a democracy must fulfil two conditions in order to achieve this outcome:

It is necessary to understand that democracy is not simple rule by majority opinion. The majority so that governments function to represent the general view. Majority and minority opinions are not permanent.

It is also necessary that rule by majority does not become rule by majority community in terms of religion or race or linguistic group, etc. Rule by majority means that in case of every decision or in case election, different persons and groups may and can form a majority. Democracy remains democracy only as long as every citizen has a chance of being in majority at some point of time. If someone is barred from being in majority on the basis of birth, then the democratic rule ceases to be accommodative for that person or group.

Dignity and freedom of the citizens

Democracy stands much superior to any other form of government in promoting dignity and freedom of the individual. Every individual wants to receive respect from fellow beings. Often conflict arise among individuals because some feel that they are not treated with due respect. The passion for respect and freedom are the basis of democracy. Democracies throughout the world have recognized this, at lest in principle. This has been achieved in various degree in various democracies. For societies which have been built for long on the basis of subordination and domination, it is not a simple matter to recognition that all individuals are equal.

Take the case of dignity of women. Most societies across the world were historically male dominated societies. Long struggles by women have created some sensitivity today that respect to and equal treatment of women are necessary ingredients of a democratic society. That does not mean that women are actually always treated with respect. But once the principal is recognized, it becomes easier for women to wage a struggle against what is now unacceptable legally and morally. In a non-democratic set up, this unacceptability would not have legal basis because the principal of individual freedom and dignity would not have the legal and moral force there. The same is true of caste inequalities. Democracy in India has strengthened the claims of the disadvantaged and discriminated castes for equal status and equal opportunity. There are

instances still of caste-based inequalities and atrocities, but these lack the moral and legal foundations. Perhaps it is the recognition that makes ordinary citizens values their democratic rights.

CONCLUSION

Expectation from democracy also functions as the criteria for judging any democratic country. What is most distinctive about democracy is that its examination never gets over. As democracy passes one test, it produces another test. As people get some benefits of democracy, they ask for more and want to make democracy even better. That is why, when we ask people about the way democracy functions, they will always come up with more expectations, and many complaints. The fact that people are complaining is itself a testimony to the success of democracy: it shows that people have developed awareness and the ability to expect and to look critically at power holders and the high and the mighty. A public expression of dissatisfaction with democracy shows the success of the democratic project: it transforms people from the status of a subject that of a citizen. Most votes make a different to the way the government is run and to their own self-interest.

CITIZENSHIP

Who is a citizen? In brief a citizen is a person who enjoys rights and performs his duties in a State. Anyone who lives in India is not an Indian citizen. Because besides citizens, aliens also live here. Therefore, every inhabitant of the country is not a citizen. A citizen is one who is a member of the State and who participates in the process of government. In a democratic society there must be two way traffic between the citizens and the government. All governments demand certain duties from its citizens and all citizens have to observe those duties. But in turn, the State must also admit some demands of its citizen on itself. There are called right. A person who is ruled by laws but who has no political rights is not a citizen.

People who live in States which are not democratic often do not enjoy political right. In such a State the government expects the subjects to perform their duties to pay taxes, to obey laws do whatever else the government wants of them. But they cannot question their rules or ask them to explain their action. Politics in these societies is like a one way traffic. The government tells the people what to do and what no to do but does not listen to them in return. Only the rulers have rights. The ruled have none and hence they are not citizens.

Democracy and Citizenship

Historically, the term 'citizen' was linked with the rise of democracy. The demand for democratic government came up first in a few western societies, like England, France and the United States of America. Democracy means that everybody should have political rights. When one has political rights, the right to vote and the right to participate in decision-making on important questions facing one's society, one is a citizen. Of course, all these ideas did not grow up all of a sudden. It took a long time for them to mature. They grew up gradually. Universal suffrage a system in which literally everybody can vote – is a fairly recent development. The ideals of democracy made people fight for their rights against monarchical government. Many of the ideas of which democracy is made up are accepted after great revolutions. For instance, after the revolution of 1789 France became a republic. All citizens, it was said, were equal: they had equal rights.

Not surprisingly, the word 'citizen' was made popular by the French Revolution in 1789. Later on, this word was used whenever democracies were set up.

- At present it is common to treat people in democratic societies as citizens. It means, above all, that in relation to the government, the individuals are active participants in the process of governance. They not only obey and listen to what the government says the government must also listen to them in turn.

- They have the right to express their opinion freely, to be consulted and to be involved in the politics of the country. In democratic politics, the common human being no longer is treated as an outsider.

- A good citizen is one who is conscious of both rights and duties. For instance, the right to vote is one of our most important rights and it is our duty also to exercise the right to vote. If a person does not vote she or he cannot be considered a good citizen, though otherwise she or he may be a good person.

- Good citizen should not only be conscious of their own rights alone, but also give the government what is its due they should obey laws that are made by the legislature and pay taxes. These are their duties towards the government. But they must also perform their duties to other citizens. And the most important duty of every citizen is to respect the rights of others.

- Our Constitution gives every one the right to practice one's religion. Every citizen, should practice religion in her/his own way; but in doing so one must respect the right of other citizens to practice their religion in the way they like.

- The qualities of good citizens must, therefore, include a consciousness of their own right tolerance for others and respect for laws.

- A democratic state particularly depends on the quality of its citizens. If citizens do not take interests in politics, a democratic state might also gradually become undemocratic.

- Conversely democracy can be strengthened if the citizens have a clear view of other own rights and the rights of others; if they demand what they can claim from the government; and if they know what the government can claim from them.

- Many social evils cannot be fought only by the government passing laws against them.

- There is a need to create an intense social

opinion against them. A society is after a made by humans and not by laws.

- One essential condition for a democratic stat is that citizens must participate in th governing process. The quality of democrac improves if citizen from all walks of lif participate in its activities and if they tak interest in the basic processes of makin importance decisions for their societ Democracy implies that the decision affecting the whole society should be taken far as possible by the whole society.

Understanding Citizenship in Detail

- The idea of citizenship means that not on the government has some claims on th citizen but the citizen also has claims on th government. A government, after all, is a association like many others in the societ But it is an association of a special kind.

- One can decide not to have anything to d with other associations. We may not join an political party, a religious organization, college or a cricket club. All thes associations have their special fields of activit and also their special rules. We may not lik their rules and decide not to join them. If w are not a member of these groups, we nee not observe their rules. But government different from all other associations. Its law will apply to you whether we like them or no

- Governments in modern society have muc power to control the ordinary people. This something that can-not be escaped. But the should be some mechanism by which th people can also control the actions of government. According to them, the best for of government is one which runs the count according to the wishes of its people. Th type of government is called participato government or responsible government.

- The idea of citizenship is closely linked the participation of people in government. Th is how the ideas of democracy and citizensh are linked to each other.

How one become citizen of India?

As we know, anyone living in the territory of a State is not automatically its citizen. Many people living in India are not Indian citizens; they are aliens. Aliens are – those who live on Indian Territory but who are citizens of other countries. Students from other countries, particularly Asian and African countries, often come to India to study. They sometimes live in India for several years. But that does not make them citizens of India. Similarly, tourists from other countries visit India. During their stay here they cannot claim all the rights that an Indian citizen enjoys. Businessmen from other countries may come and stay here for long periods. Diplomats who represent their countries also often do so. But they are not citizens. They cannot vote in the elections, and would not have the same rights that a citizen will enjoy.

Most of us do not have to try to become citizens of India. We are citizens simply because our parents, whether both or at least one of them, are Indian citizens. This kind of citizen is called a natural born citizen. Some countries have another rule for being a natural born citizen. Anyone born in the territory of that country, even if her or his parents are not citizens of that country, is automatically given citizenship. But the Indian Constitution does not follow that rule.

There is a second form of citizenship which is called acquired or naturalized citizenship. A person who is not a citizen of India can apply for Indian citizenship; and when this is granted the person is called a naturalized citizen. The procedure for acquiring citizenship is determined by a law made by the Parliament. To acquire citizenship a person has to fulfil some conditions, like living in the country for a fixed length of time or by marriage. A person can also lose her/his citizenship in certain cases. For some types of legal offence, the government can take away a person's citizenship. Besides a person accepting the citizenship of another country loses the citizenship of her or his own country.

POLITICAL PARTIES, PRESSURE GROUPS, SOCIAL-POLITICAL ELITES

Political Party

Political party is a group of people who come together to contest election and hold power in the government. They agree on some policies and programmes for the society with a view to promote the collective good. Since there can be different views on what is good for all, parties try to persuade people why their policies are better than others. They seek to implement these policies by winning popular support through elections.

Thus, parties reflect fundamental political divisions in a society. Parties are about a part of the society and thus involve partisanship. Thus a party is know by which part it stands for, which policies it supports and whose interests it upholds. A political party has three components:

- the leaders,
- the active member, and
- the followers.

Political parties are easily one of the most visible institutions in a democracy. For most ordinary citizens, democracy is equal to political parties. If we travel to remote parts of our country and speak to the less educated citizens, we could come across people who may not know anything about our Constitution or about the nature of our government. But chances are that they would know something about our political parties. At the same time this visibility does not mean popularity. Most people tend to be very critical of political parties. They tend to blame parties for all that is wrong with our democracy and our political life. Parties have become identified with social and political divisions.

Therefore, it is natural to ask – do we need political parties at all? About hundred years ago there were few countries of the world that had any political party. Now there are few that do not have parties.

Functions of Political Parties

What does a political party do? Basically, political parties fill political offices and exercise political power. Parties do so by performing a series of functions:

- Parties contest elections. In most democracies, elections are fought mainly among the candidates put up by political parties. Parties select their candidates in different ways. In some countries, such as the USA, members and supporters of a party choose its candidates. Now more and more countries are following this method. In other countries like India, top party leaders choose candidates for contesting elections.

- Parties put forward different policies and programmes and the voters choose from them. Each of us may have different opinions and views on what policies are suitable for the society. But no government can handle such a large variety of views. In a democracy, a large number of similar opinions have to be grouped together to provide a direction in which policies can be formulated by the governments. This is what the parties do. A party reduces a vast multitude of opinions into a few basic positions which it supports. A government is expected to base its policies on the line taken by the ruling party.

- Parties play a decisive role in making laws for a country. Formally, laws are debated and passed in the legislature. But since most of the members belong to a party, they go by the direction of the party leadership, irrespective of their personal opinions.

- Parties form and run governments. As we noted last year, the big policy decisions are taken by political executive that comes from the political parties. Parties recruit leaders, train them and then make them ministers to run the government in the way they want.

- Those parties that lose in the elections play the role of opposition to the parties in power, by voicing different views and criticizing government for its failures or wrong policies. Opposition parties also mobilize opposition to the government.

- Parties shape public opinion. They raise and highlight issues. Parties have lakhs of member and activists spread all over the country. Many of the pressure groups are the extensions of parties among different sections of society. Parties sometimes also launch movement for the resolution of problems faced by people. Often opinions in the society crystallize on the lines parties take.

- Parties provide people access to government machinery and welfare schemes implemented by governments. For an ordinary citizen it is easy to approach a local party leader than a government officer. That is why they feel close to parties even when they do not fully trust them. Parties have to be responsive to people's needs and demands. Otherwise people can reject those parties in the next elections.

Why We Need Political Parties?

This list of function in a sense answers the question asked above: we need political parties because they perform all these functions. But we still need to ask why modern democracies cannot exist without political parties. We can understand the necessity of political parties by imagining a situation without parties. Every candidate in the elections will be making many promises to the people about any major policy change. The government may be formed, but its utility will remain ever uncertain. Elected representatives will be accountable to their constituency for what they do in the locality. But no one will be responsible for how the country will be run.

We can also think about it by looking at the non-party based elections to the panchayats in many states. Although, the parties do not contest formally, it is generally noticed that the villages get split into more than one faction, each of which puts up a 'panel' of its candidates. This is exactly what the party does. That is the reason we find

political parties in almost all countries are big or small, old or new, developed or developing.

The rise of political parties is directly linked to the emergence of representative democracies. As we have seen, large societies need representative democracy. As societies became large and complex, they also needed some agency to gather different views on various issues and to present these to the government. They needed some ways, to bring various representatives together so that a responsible government could be formed. They needed a mechanism to support or restrain the government, make policies, justify or oppose them. Political parties fulfil these needs that every representative government has. We can say that parties are a necessary condition for a democracy.

How many parties should we have?

In a democracy any group of citizens is free to from a political party. In this formal sense, there are a large number of political parties in each country. More than 750 parties are registered with the Election Commission of India. But not all these parties are serious contenders in the elections. Usually only a handful of parties are effectively in the race to win elections and form the government. So the question then is: how many major or effective parties are good for a democracy?

In some countries, only one party is allowed control and run the government. These are called one-party system. In China, only the Communist Party is allowed to rule. Although, legally speaking, people are free to form political parties, it does not happen because the electoral system does not permit free competition for power. We cannot consider one-party system as a good option because this is not a democratic option. Any democratic system must allow at lest two parties to compete in elections and provide a fair change for the competing parties to come to power.

In some countries, power usually changes between two main parties. Several other parties may exist, contest elections and win a few seats in the national legislatures. But only two main parties have a serious chance of winning majority of seats to form government. Such a party system is called two-party system. The United States of America and United Kingdom are examples of two-party system.

If several parties compete for power, and more than two parties have a reasonable chance of coming to power either on their own strength or in alliance with others, we call it a multi-party system. Thus in India, we have a multi-party system. In this system, the government is formed by various parties coming together in a coalition. Even several parties in a multi-party system join hands for the purpose of contesting elections and winning power. It is called an alliance or a front. For example, in India there were three such major alliances in 2004 parliamentary elections – the National Democratic Alliance, the United Progressive Alliance and the Left Front. The multi-party system often appears very messy and leads to political instability. At the same time, this system allows a variety of interests and opinions to enjoy political representation.

So, which of these is better? Perhaps the best answer to this very common question is that this is not a very good question. Party system is not something any country can choose. It evolves over a long time, depending on the nature of society, its social and regional divisions, its history of politics and its system of elections. These cannot be changed very quickly. Each country develops a party system that is conditioned by its special circumstances. For example, if India has evolved a multi-party system, it is because the social and geographical diversity in such a large country is not easily absorbed by two or even three parties. No system is ideal for all countries and all situations.

NATIONAL POLITICAL PARTIES

Democracies that follow a federal system all over the world tend to have two kinds of political parties: parties that are present in only one of the federal units and parties that are present in several or all units of the federation. This is the case in

India as well. There are some countrywide parties, which are called 'national parties'. These parties have units in various states. But by and large, all these units follow the same policies, programmes and strategy that is decided at the nation level.

Every party in the country has to register with the Election Commission. While the Commission treats all parties equally, it offers some special facilities to large and established parties are given a unique symbol – only the official candidates of that party can use that election symbol. Parties that get this privilege and some other special facilities are 'recognized' by the Election Commission for this purpose. That is why these parties are called, 'recognized political parties'. The Election Commission has laid down detailed criteria of the proportion of votes and seats that a party must get in order to be a recognized party. A party that secures at lest six per cent of the total votes in an election to the Legislative, two seats is recognized as a State party. A party that secures at least six per cent of the total votes in Lok Sabha elections or Assembly elections in four States and wins at lest four seats in the Lok Sabha is recognized as a National party.

Over the last three decades, the number and strength of these parties has expanded. This made the Parliament of India politically more and more diverse. No one national party is able to secure on its own a majority in Lok Sabha. As a result, the national parties are compelled to form alliance with State parties. Since 1996, nearly every one of the State parties has got an opportunity to be a part of one or the other national level coalition government. This has contributed to the strengthening of federalism and democracy in our country.

Challenges before political parties

We have seen how crucial political are for the working of democracy. Since parties are the most visible face of democracy, it is natural that people blame parties for whatever is wrong with the working of democracy. All over the world, people express strong dissatisfaction with the failure of

political parties to perform their functions well. This is the case in our country too. Popular dissatisfaction and criticism has focused on four problem areas in the working of political parties. Political parties need to face and overcome these challenges in order to remain effective instruments of democracy.

The first challenge is lack of internal democracy within parties. All over the world there is a tendency in political parties towards the concentration of power in one or few leaders at the top. Parties do not hold organizational meeting, and do not conduct internal elections regularly. Ordinary members of the party do not get sufficient information on what happens inside the party. They do not have the means or the connections needed to influence the decisions. As a result the leaders assume greater power to make decisions in the name of the party. Since few leaders exercise paramount power in the party, those who disagree with the leadership find it difficult to continue in the party. More than loyalty to party principles and politics, personal loyalty to the leader becomes more important.

The second challenge of dynastic succession is related to the first one. Since most political parties do not practice open and transparent procedures for their functioning, there are very few ways for an ordinary worker to rise to the top in a party. Those who happen to be the leaders are in a position of unfair advantage to favour people close to them or even their family members. In many parties, the top positions are always controlled by members of one family. This is also bad for democracy, since people who do not have adequate experience or popular support come to occupy positions of power. This tendency is present in some measure all over the world, including in some of the older democracies.

The third challenge is about the growing role of money and muscle power in parties, especially during elections. Since parties are focused only on winning elections, they tend to use shot-cuts to win elections. They tend to use nominate those

candidates who have or can raise lots of money. Rich people and companies who give funds to the parties tend to have influence on the policies and decisions of the party. In some cases, parties support criminals who can win elections. Democrats all over the world are worried about the increasing role of rich people and big companies in democratic politics.

The fourth challenge is that very often parties do not seem to offer a meaningful choice to the voters. In order to offer meaningful choice, parties must be significantly different. In recent years there has been a decline in the ideological differences among parties in most part of the world. For example, the difference between the Labour Party and the Conservative Party in Britain is very little. They agree on more fundamental aspects but differ only in details on how policies are to be framed and implemented. In our country too, the differences among all the major parties on the economic policies have reduced. Those who want really different policies have no option available to them. Sometimes people cannot even elect very different leaders either, because the same set of leaders keep shifting form one party to another.

How can parties be reformed?

In order to face these challenges, political parties need to be reformed. The question is: Are political parties willing, what has prevented them from reforming so far? If they are not willing, is it possible to force them to reform? Citizens all over the world face this question. In a democracy, the final decision is made by leaders who represent political parties. People can replace them, but only by other set party leaders. If all of them do not wish to reform, how can anyone force them to change?

Let us look at some of the recent efforts and suggestions in our country to reform political parties and its leaders:

• The Constitution was amended to prevent elected MLAs and MPs from changing parties. This was done because many elected representatives were indulging in defection in order to become ministers or for cash rewards. Now the law says that if any MLA or MP changes parties, he or she will lose the seat in the legislature. This new law has helped bring defection down. At the same time has made any dissent even more difficult. MPs and MLAs have to accept whatever the party leaders decide.

• The Supreme Court passed an order to reduce the influence of money and criminals. Now, it is mandatory for every candidate who contests elections to file an affidavit giving details of his property and criminal cases pending against him. This information is now available to the public. But there is no system to check if the information given by the candidates is true. As yet we do not know if it has led to decline in the influence of the rich and to decline in the influence of the rich and the criminals.

• The Election Commission passed an order making it necessary for political parties to hold their organizational elections and file their income tax returns. The parties have started doing so but sometimes it is mere formality. It is not clear if this step has led to greater internal democracy in political parties.

Suggestions made to reform political parties

• A law should be made to regulate the internal affairs of political parties. It should be made compulsory for political parties to maintain a register of its members to follow its own constitution, to have an independent authority, to act as a judge in case of party disputes, to hold open election to the highest posts.

• It should be made mandatory for political parties to give a minimum number of tickets, about one-third, to women candidates. Similarly, there should be a quota for women in the decision-making bodies of the party.

• There should be state funding of elections. The government should give parties money to support their election expenses. This

support could be given in kind: petrol, paper, telephone etc. Or it could be given in cash on the basis of the votes secured by the party in the last election.

There are two other ways in which political parties can be reformed

- One, people can put pressure on political parties. This can be done through petitions, publicity and agitations. Ordinary citizens, pressure groups and movement and the media can play an important role in this. If political parties feel that they would lose public support by not taking up reforms, they would become more serious about reforms.

- Two, political parties can improve if those who want this join political parties are pro- reform. The quality of democracy depends on the degree of public participation. It is difficult to reform politics if ordinary citizens do not take part in it and simply criticize it from the outside. The problem of bad politics can be solved by more and better politics. But we must be very careful about legal solutions to political problems. Over-regulation of political parties can be counter-productive. This would force all parties to find ways to cheat the law. Besides, political parties will not agree to pass a law that do not like.

PRESSURE GROUPS

Pressure Group is any group that attempts to influence legislative or governing institutions on behalf of its own special interests or interests of a larger public that it represents. They influence Governments decision in their favour without participating in politics as such. It acts as a liaison between government and its members.

- Prof Finer characterized them as anonymous empires. To Lambert these are unofficial government which implies that no government can run without them into consideration. It organizes itself around a common interest, of a section of population.

- There are protective pressure groups, i.e., those protecting the interest of the group like FICCI.

- On the other hand promotional pressure groups tries to promote their interest like caste association, trade unions etc.

- Pressures group act behind the seen as they do not try to capture power. They support their candidate, parties in elections to ensure winning candidate backed by them represent their interest in related bodies. They give collective expression to the groups demand and also ensure that the demand should be met. They change their political alliance quickly as to suit their conditions.

- Pressure group's demands can be functional or dysfunctional for society. Presences of anomic pressure groups like terrorist organizations have negative impact. Thus it can be said that presence of pressure group shows pluralism in political system which can be functional as well as dysfunctional.

Role of pressure groups in democracy

- According to Anthony Giddens, pressure groups are the carriers of democracy. With the increase in industrialization division of labour also increases, thus emerged various sections with specialized interest. But modern democracy demands harmonization of interest due to which minority or sectional interest tend to get ignored. Pressure groups represent this interest.

- Its presence shows existence of pluralism making power dispersed and decentralized into the political system.

- Pressure groups also aggregate and articulate interest, thus making government aware of public opinion and interest and working for them.

- The participation of all sections in governance is indirectly achieved.

- Pressure groups can work in anonymity out of the glare of public. So they may provident public censure.

- They may use imitative, educative, non-formal methods to protect and promote their interests.

But in modern democracy they can be dysfunctional too, as by representing sectional interest at times other interests gets marginalized. It may be possible that sectional interest goes contrary to national interest. Certain economic pressure groups have also emerged using illegal methods e.g. terrorists organizations. Thus, being inevitable phenomena in democracy pressure groups have strengthened and weakened democracy side by side.

There are many pressure groups in India. But, they are not developed to the same extent as in the US or the western countries like Britain, France, and Germany and so on. The pressure groups in India can be broadly classified into the following categories.

1. Business Groups

The business groups include a large number of industrial and commercial bodies. They are then most sophisticated, the most powerful and the largest of all pressure groups in India. They include:

- Federation of Indian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (FICCI), major constituents are the Indian Merchants Chamber of Bombay, Indian Merchants Chamber of Calcutta and South Indian Chamber of Commerce of Madras. It broadly represents manor industrial and trading interest.

- Associated Chamber of Commerce and Industry of India (ASSOCHAM), major constituents are the Bengal Chamber of Commerce of Calcutta and Central Commercial Organization of Delhi.

- Federation of All India Foodgrain Dealers Association (FAIFDA). FAIFDA is the sole representative of the grain dealers.

- All India Manufacturers Organization (AIMO). AIMO raises the concerns of the medium-sized industry.

2. Trade Unions

The trade unions voice the demands of the industrial workers. They are also known as labour groups. A peculiar feature of trade union of India is that they are associated either directly or indirectly with different political parties. They include:

- All India Trade Union Congress (INTUC) – affiliated to the CPI;

- Indian National Trade Union Congress (INTUC) – affiliated to the Congress (1);

- Hind Mazdoor Sabha (HMS) – affiliated to the CPM, and

- Hind Mazdoor Parishad (HMP) – affiliated to the BJP.

3. Agrarian Groups

The agrarian groups represent the farmers and the agricultural labour class. They include:

- Bharatiya Kisan Union (under the leadership of Mahendra Singh Tikait, in the wheat belt of North India)

- All Indian Kisan Sabha (the oldest and the largest agrarian group)

- Revolutionary Peasants Convention (organized by the CPM in 1967 which gave birth to the Naxalbari Movement)

- Bharatiya Kisan Sangh (Gujarat)

- R.V. Sangham (led by CN Naidu in Tamil Nadu)

- Hind Kisan Panchayat (controlled by the Socialists)

- All India Kisan Sammelan (led by Raj Narain)

- United Kisan Sabha (controlled by the CPM)

4. Professional Associations

These are associations that raise the concerns and demands of doctors, lawyers, journalists and teachers. Despite various restrictions, these associations pressurize the government by various methods including agitations for the improvement of their service conditions. They include:

- Indian Medical Association (IMA).
- Bar Council of India (BCI)
- Indian Federation of Working Journalists (IFWJ)
- Progressive Students University and College Teachers (AIFUCT).

5. Student Organizations

Various unions have been formed to represent the student community. However, these unions, like the trade unions, are also affiliated to various political parties. These are:

- Akhil Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad (ABVP) (affiliated to BJP)
- All India Students Federation (AISE) (affiliated to CPI)
- National Students Union of India (NSUI) (affiliated to Congress (I))
- Progressive Students Union (PSU) (affiliated to CPM).

6. Religious Organizations

The organizations based on religion have come to play an important role in Indian politics. They represent the narrow communal interest. They include:

- Rashtriya Swayam Sevak Sangh (RSS)
- Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP)
- Jamaat-e-Islam
- Ittehad-ul-Mussalmeen
- Anglo-India Association
- Associations of the Roman Catholics
- All-India Conference of India Christians
- Parsi Central Associations
- Shiromani Akali Dal.

"The Shiromani Akali Dal should be regarded as more of religious pressure groups than a political party in view of the fact that it has been concerned more with the mission of saving the Sikh community from being absorbed into the ocean of Hindu society than with fighting for the cause of a Sikh homeland".

7. Caste Groups

Like religion, caste has been an important factor in Indian politics. The competitive politics in many states of the Indian Union is in fact the politics of caste rivalries: Brahmin versus Non-Brahmin in Tamil Nadu and Maharashtra, Rajputs versus Jat in Rajasthan, Kammas versus Reddy in Andhra, Ahir versus Jat in Haryana, Baniya Brahmin versus Patidars in Gujarat, Kayastha versus Rajputs in Bihar, Nair versus Ezhavas in Kerala and Lingayats versus Okkaligas in Karnataka. Some in the caste-based organizations are:

- Nadar Caste Association in Tamil Nadu
- Marwari Association
- Harijan Sevak Sangh
- Kshatriya Maha Sabha in Gujarat
- Vanniyakul Kshatriya Sangham
- Kayastha Sabha.

8. Tribal Organizations

The tribal organizations are active in MP. Chhattisgarh, Bihar, Jharkhand, West Bengal and the North Eastern States of Assam, Manipur, and Nagaland and so on. Their demands range from reforms that of secession from India and some of them are involved in insurgency activities. The tribal organizations include:

- National Socialist Council of Nagaland (NSCN)
- Tribal National Volunteers (TNU) in Tripura
- People's Liberation Army in Manipur
- All-India Jharkhand
- Tribal Sangh of Assam
- United Mizo Federal Organization.

9. Linguistic Groups

Language has been so important factor in Indian politics that it became the main basis for the reorganization of states. The language along with caste, religion and tribe has been responsible for the emergence of political parties as well as pressure groups. Some of the linguistic groups are :

- Tamil Sangh
- Anjuman Tarrak-i-Urdu
- Andhra Maha
- Hindi Sahitya Sammelan
- Nagarik Pracharani Sabha
- Dakshina Bharat Hindi Prachar Sabha.

10. Ideology Based Groups

In more recent times, the pressure groups are formed to pursue a particular ideology, i.e., a cause, a principle or a programme. These groups include:

- Environmental protection groups like Narmada Bachao Andolan and Chipko Movement.
- Democratic rights organizations
- Civil liberties associations
- Gandhi Peace Foundation
- Woman rights organizations.

11. Anomic Groups

Almond and Powell observed: "By anomic pressure groups we mean more or less a spontaneous breakthrough into the political system from the society such as riots, demonstrations, associations and bureaucratic elite, ever-whelmed by the problem of economic development and scarcity of resources available to them, inevitably acquires a technocratic and anti-political frame of mind, particularistic demands of whatever kinds are denied legitimacy. As a consequence interest groups are alienated from the political system". Some of the anomic pressure groups are:

- All India Sikh Student's Federation
- Nava Nirman Samiti of Gujarat
- Naxalite Groups
- Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front (JKLF)
- All Assam Student's Union
- United Liberation Front of Assam (ULFA)
- Dal Khalsa.

SOCIAL AND POLITICAL ELITES

Elite are the most influential and prestigious stratum in a society. The 'elite' are those persons who are recognized as outstanding leaders in given field. Thus, there are political, religious, scientific, business and artistic elite.

- Wright Mills has described them as "those who make decisions having major consequences, who are able to realize their will even if other resist, and who have the most of what there is to have-money, power and prestige".

- Parry Geraint has defined elite as "small minorities who play an exceptionally influential part in the affairs of society in specific fields".

- Nadel maintains that elite are "those who have an influence over the fate of the society because of their superiority". The members of an elite group have important influence in shaping the values and attitudes held by their segment of society.

Ram Ahuja has described elite through four features

- a dominant group which possess distinctiveness and exclusiveness,

- the term does not apply to any one person but refers to a plurality, a collectivity of persons, however small it may be,

- this identifiable collectivity has certain attributes and skills which give it not only a certain superiority but also power of decision-making and influencing others.

- elite is a relative term. A group is identified as an elite group in a particular field in which it is 'power exercise influential, or commands 'excellence', but in other groups, these elite may be considered as 'ordinary' members.

On this basis, the term 'political elite' may be defined as "a group of high stratum decision-makers in political culture or concrete political structure which monopolizes political power, influences major political policies and occupies all important posts of political command". If we

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were to operationalise this term, we could say, political elite include those who are elected/ nominated to central and state legislatures, who occupy important position in national or state-level political parties, individuals who do not hold any formal positions either in the government or in political parties but are still considered as persons of great political prestige and power because they control powers exercisers e.g., Gandhi, Jaya Prakash Narayan.

Elite in Post-Independence India

According to Ram Ahuja growth of political elite can be analyzed in different phases. Political elite can be analyzed by classifying growth of the political elite into five phases:

- Immediately after independence phase i.e., 1947 to April 1952, in which there was no longer any struggle between the people and the government and in which though the interests of the people and the power elite were one and indivisible (i.e., rebuilding the society), the latter were more preoccupied with the problems of restoration of law and order after partition, refuge resettlement, maintenance of communal peace, and the controversy over the redistribution of territories between various states.

- Consolidation phase (i.e., April 1952 to March 1962 or MPs, MLAs and party office-holders elected in April 1952 and April 1957 elections), in which the political elite worked for the economic uplift and social development through the Five Year Plans.

- Chaotic phase i.e., April 1962 to March 1971 or individuals elected in April 1962 and March 1967 elections, in which non-congress and coalition governments came into power in several states affecting its inter-state and state-centre relations.

- Authoritarian phase (i.e., March 1971 to November 1989 or individuals elected in March 1971, March 1977, January 1980, December 1984, and November 1989 elections) in which one person was catapulted

to the position of supreme national leadership, first Indira Gandhi for 16 years (excluding period from march 1977 to January 1980) and then Rajiv Gandhi for five years and the power-holders came to believe in the personality cult, and in which all plans for change and development of society were centralized.

- Multiple-party phase i.e., December 1989 till April 1999 in which except in Narsimha Rao's period hands to rule the country on a common programme basis (V.P. Singh ministry for 11months, Chandra Shekhar ministry for about eight months, Atal Bihari Vajpayee ministry for 13 days. United Front governments of Deve Gowda for 11 months and I.K. Gujral for one year and BJP led government of A.B. Vajpayee).

- In the first phase those were the elite who had a stable economic background, were highly educated, mostly belonged to the upper castes, and were committed to societal interests. Their socio-political ideology was basedon nationalism, liberalism and religio-cultural reforms. This first generation of power-wielders in free India had earned their reputation for courage, vision and action, and acquired their charisma before they stepped into office as inheritors of political power and earned it more through functioning in office.

- The elite in the second (consolidation) phase, particularly those elected in the 1952 elections, some of whom had only part-time interests in politics. They wanted rewards in the form of a political office for participating in the national struggle for independence. These elite caused a certain amount of disequilibrium in the beginning in their party structures but their pressures for active participation in politics were pitched in such a low key that they were soon integrated in their party systems.

- Then came the 1957 elections when the long established dominance of the so-called political suffers was broken and political power

was placed in the hands of a new breed of elite who were either petty landholders or traders, businessmen, professional persons, small industrialists or social workers. These elite were not as highly politicized as their older counterparts. They thought that since they could trust the integrity of old professional politicians, they need not concern themselves quite so directly with politics.

- Over the years, yet newer elite further down the social scale appeared in the 1962 elections representing the intermediate and lower castes, middle-class professions, small farmers, industrial workers, or even obscure religious and social sects, to name a few, seeking entry into the political decision-making processes. Though these elite came to seek a greater role in policy formulation, the older elite still retained their influence. There was thus toleration on the part of the new and accommodation on the part of the old elite. Both old and new elite revised their values to fit situations and establish new relationships. This type of interaction between the old and the new elite implies a dilution of the pure force theory group of elite or that the position of the old elite depended upon some sort of bargain. We can thus say that change in the elite structure up to 1967 was slow and 'peaceful', not involving any 'conflict' in Marxian terminology.

- In the 1967, 1971, 1977, 1980, 1984, 1989, 1991, 1996 and 1998 elections, emerged the elite amongst whom many were found to have politics as their major source of livelihood. According to Ram Ahuja, they believed more in using the ties of kinship, caste and language to smoothen the way through the corridors of power. They were blind to the practicalities of the plans and believed in seeking cooperation of the masses by coining attractive slogans and speaking half-truths. They posed as democrats; even their slogans were democratic but their actions belied their utterances. Democracy as a way of life was foreign to their nature and nurture.

- According to Ahuja, ideologically, there were four types of elite functioning in 1967-1971, 1971-1989, and 1989-1999 phases: traditionalists, rationalists, moderates and synthetics. The second and the third types had two sub-variations,

- those who reflected secular but vested national ideology, and

- those that professed a neo-secular and vested parochial ideology.

- Since these elite with different ideologies functioned within the party, the variation in their ideologies led to segmentation of the party which affected the functioning of both the party and its elite at various levels. The new political elite who were brought into power first in December 1989 election and then in May 1996 and March 1998 elections got public votes not because of their rationalist liberal ideologies or because their radicalism was greatly appreciated but because people wanted to throw out the government of the day dominated by one political party for about four decades and also the weak political front, United Front government which was based on factions. Even the BJP led government of A.B. Vajpayee which came in power in March 1998 proved unstable because of constant threats from 3 or 4 of its constituent parties.

- Using this description for comparing the 'new' elite with the 'old' elite and for identifying the present structure of political elite, we could say,

- the 'intellectual committed politics' of first phase were replaced by 'mediocre, uncommitted, partisan' elite in the following phases.

- The last one decade political elite are characterized not only by a plurality of structural background but ideologically also they manifest varied shades.

- Their political affiliations are guided more by their particularists' loyalty rather than by their ideology commitment.

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- The old elite wielded power independently, i.e., in their own right as intellectuals, whereas the present day elite are incapable of exercising independent political power.

- Barring a few activity elite, most of the present elite do not believe in militating against the status quo. As such, the task of social engineering becomes far more difficult for those few activist revolutionary elite who are really committed to modernization and believe in economic radicalism, political democratization and social growth.

- Referring to changing elite structure **Yogendra Singh** has stated that "Among the political elite, there existed a high degree of cultural and status homogeneity before Independence. All of them came from upper castes and had an urban, middle-class background of English education. The top group was exposed to foreign culture and was educated there; hence their self-image in terms of expected roles was also that of a generalist rather than a specialist. Following independence, this pattern of elite composition has considerably changed." According to Yogendra Singh,

- There is increasing influence of rural-based political leaders;

- There is slight decrease in the influence of leaders drawn from various professions,

- There is significant increase in the number of persons belonging to the middle class;

- There is greater articulation of regional and interest-oriented goals in political cultural ideologies, and

- There is slight breakdown in the exclusiveness or upper castes to the elite position. And what was stated by Yogendra Singh 25 years ago is true even today.

According to Ram Ahuja, in India, the 'governing' elite at a higher political culture base (say national level) are recruited not from the 'non-governing' elite at the same level but from the

governing elite functioning as a lower political cultural base (say state, district or block levels). These elite of lower political base are found holding important posts in state legislatures or state political parties, etc., before becoming office-holders at the higher political base. Once these elite rise from state or district level, they never go back to the old level but continue to function at the higher political level as long as they remain active in politics. This, however, does not mean that they cease to take interest in politics at the level from which they have moved up in the hierarchy. This means, there is no circulation but only an upward movement of the elite. However, if Pareto's theory refers to a process in which one member of the elite group is replaced by another within the group of governing elite, we may concede that his theory does explain the political phenomenon of 'movement of the elite' in the context of our society also. Bottomore maintains that both conceptions are to be found in Pareto's work, although the former predominates.

According to Ahuja there are two types of movements (not circulations):

- movement from lower to higher strata of governing elite both functioning at macro-level, and

- movement from sub-category functioning at micro-structural level to sub-category functioning at macro-structural level.

In the former, he found circulation between 'oligarchic' (dominant) and 'subjacent' (dominated) elite and between 'radical, activists and 'passive' activists. Activists functioning at micro-level ultimately joined the ranks of activists at the macro-level with the result that some of the activists already functioning at this level were deprived of their monopoly of power. This elite mobility may be explained in terms of,

- the rise of new political interests, and

- the rise of new elite with more manipulating qualities.

Therefore, both individual and structural factors (caste etc.) are important in the social ascent or

social descent of the elite. **Schumpeter** also believed that both the individual qualities and the social factor are important in the circulation of elite.

The Marxian approach, which is basically non-elitist, views the relations between the elite (privileged class which commands power and wealth) and non-elite (classes which do not possess either of these) as based on conflict, in which effort is made to overthrow the 'power elite' to occupy its position. Ram Ahuja in his study revealed that the process of overthrowing the elite in power and succeeding them is not always based on conflict, but that it involves manipulation, toleration, accommodation, compromise and bargain too. It could, therefore, be maintained that we can neither draw from Pareto's theory of 'circulation of elite', nor from Karl Marx's theory of 'class struggle' to understand the changing character of political elite in India. We have to use different approach for analyzing the recruitment and the changing structure of elite in India.

REGIONALISM AND DECENTRALIZATION OF POWER

Regionalism in India

Regionalism is a pre-independence phenome-non. It became predominant in post-independence period. The politics of regionalism started with the implementation of constitutional reform under government of India Acts of 1909, 1919 and 1935. The establishment and role of Justice Party in Madras, and to a lesser extent, of Akali Dal in Punjab in pre-independence period are examples of emerging regionalism in India.

After independence there are four major landmarks in the development of regional politics.

- After independence democratic form of government was established. Its main aim was nation-building on the principles of democracy, secularism, national unity and social justice. All parts of the country wanted a fair deal in nation-building. They started competing with each other for their

development. Anything short of expectation led to disenchantment and it resulted in the emergence of regional politics.

- There was integration of the Princely States. Small states were integrated with the big states. People continued to nurse loyalties to old territorial units. This was the most important factor for the success of Princes in elections. The Princes often received overwhelming support in their former territories in the newly created states and relatively much less in other parts of the same state.

- Reorganization of states on linguistic basis also played a very vital role in the development of regional politics. Twenty eight states were reshaped and reduced to 14 states along with centrally administered territories. Later new states were created, then for example Bombay was divided into Gujarat and Maharashtra, Punjab and Haryana. But these states were not constituted entirely on linguistic basis. Many other factors like ethnic-cum-economic considerations: (Nagaland, Meghalaya, Manipur and Tripura), (Haryana and Punjab), language-cum-culture, (Maharashtra and Gujarat); historical and political factor, (U.P. and Bihar); integration of princely states in and need for viable groupings (M. P. and Rajasthan); language and social distinctiveness (Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Mysore, Bengal and Orissa), have played a decisive role in the composition of the Indian federation.

- In spite of all these considerations, language remained the most important factor in the reorganization of states. It became such an important force in the context of regionalism that linguistic regionalism gained ground in Indian politics.

- Another factor which gave rise to regional and parochial tendencies in the country was the personal and selfish ends of politicians. Immediately, after independence the struggle for power started among some parties. For

enhancing their own authority and prestige, the regional and state leaders did not hesitate to weaken the authority of the centre or in some cases of states. The creation of more states meant more governors, chief ministers, M.L.A.'s etc. The professional politicians explored the narrow and sectarian sentiments of ignorant masses for fulfilling their personal and selfish ends. Keeping these landmarks in mind, let us now examine the bases or regional and state politics.

BASIS OF REGIONALISM

Regionalism is a multi-dimensional phenomenon. Its bases are varied. Here we well discuss the geographical, historical, cultural, economic and politico-administrative bases of regionalism.

- **Geographical Basis:** Usually people relate their regional identity of certain specific geographical boundaries. After independence integration of Princely States resulted in the merger of small states into new big states. The loyalties of citizens were torn between old territorial boundaries and new territorial structures. As pointed our earlier this was the major factor responsible for the success of princes in elections particularly when they contested from their former territories in the newly created states. However, it would be wrong to over estimate the importance of geographical boundaries. It is true that memories of old geographical boundaries of princely states still haunt the people and are exploited by political leaders but it can hardly be denied that they are yielding place to new and bigger territorial identities like Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh and Orissa.

Historical and Social Bases: Historical and social bases constitute the bedrock of the politics of regionalism. Several components in this category are not only important individually but also in conjunction with each other.

History supported regionalism with cultural heritage, folklore, myths and symbolism. The most striking example is that of Dravida Kazhagam and the Dravida Munetra Kazhagam in Tamil Nadu and Shiv Sena in Maharashtra. But history cannot be considered as the most important basis of regionalism. Economic and political factors have combined with history to generate regionalism. This can again be seen in the change in the stand of DMK from secession to one of autonomy within the federal framework of the Constitution.

Language is perhaps the most important mark of group identification. Language expresses the shared life, thought structure and value patterns of people. It has the capacity to unite the people together and make them work to improve their common destiny. In this sense linguistic homogeneity strengthens a positive movement.

Establishment of State Reorganization Commission in 1955 was the result of demand for formation of regional units based in linguistic regionalism. SRC could not completely follow the principle of one language one state. This could not be treated as the sole criteria for the demarcation of state boundaries. Bilingual states like Bombay, Punjab, etc., were created. However, splitting up of Bombay in 1960, Punjab in 1966, and Assam since mid-sixties into linguistically more homogeneous states gave further impetus to linguistic regionalism in Indian politics.

If language had been synonymous with region, the political aspiration of every linguistic group would have been satisfied or the formation of separate states. This, however, is neither a reality nor a foreseeable possibility. The first reason being that Hindi speaking people are distributed over a very large territory. Their number is over 200 million. One state cannot be created for them. They have been divided into six states U.P. Bihar, M.P. Rajasthan, Haryana and Himachal Pradesh and a couple of Union territories. There has rarely been a demand for the formation of single state of Hindi-speaking people. On the contrary there have been demands for separate states comprising languages or dialects within this wider linguistic group. This can be found in the occasional demand for a Maithili or for recognition of Rajasthani, Haryanvi, etc., as scheduled languages in the Constitution.

Thus regionalism is closely associated with language but is not synonymous with linguism. Regionalism can take place inside a linguistic state for example creation of Marathi-speaking Maharashtra. The seven states of North East India refer to themselves as seven sisters. They have tried to form common bonds on the basis of their problems of development. They have also tried to develop a regional identity. These seven states include Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland and Tripura. In other words language is not the sole generator of regionalism. It is one of the several bases of regionalism in India. In most cases of linguistic regionalism many inter-related factors are usually found to be working together.

Caste :

An important example of the caste factor providing impetus to linguistic regionalism can be seen in the case of Tamil Nadu. Tamil regionalism gained ground as a result of non-Brahmin movement. Non-Brahmin castes of Tamil speaking region had been able to provide a powerful, united thrust against Brahmins who had enjoyed unquestioned dominance in economy, society and polity.

Religion

Religion like caste does not play a significant role except when it is combined with dominance and linguistic homogeneity as in Punjab fed on a sense of religions orthodoxy and economic deprivation as in Jammu and Kashmir.

If casteism reinforced and propelled linguistic regionalism in case of Tamil Nadu, the demand for the formation of Punjabi Suba though presented in linguistic garb had religious overtones. They were mainly responsible for evoking people's political loyalties on massive scale rather than their love for their mother tongue. It is difficult to qualify the mix of communalism and linguism in this particular case. But some studies make it very clear that demand for Punjabi language state was certainly reinforced by regular invocation of Punjab-speaking masses loyalty towards Sikh religion.

Taking into account these three factors i.e. language, caste and religion one can say that the study of regionalism in Punjab and Tamil Nadu makes it very clear that political movements for regional demands were carried out formally in the name of language but in reality they had substantive non-linguistic bases too.

Economic Basis

Economic factor is the crux of regional politics. India is a developing country. The resources are limited while the demand for resources for the development of various regions is unlimited or disproportionate to resources. Economic policies have led to regional imbalances and wide economic disparities among various regions resulting in discontentment among them. It may be recalled that most of the demands for constituting new states were primarily based on allegedly unfair and unequal distribution of development benefits and expenditure in multi-lingual states. Movement for a separate Uttarakhand state in the hill districts of U.P., a Jharkhand state carved out of parts of Bihar, Orissa and a state of Bodoland comprising a part of Assam are examples of this type. The demands for separate states in these instances are mainly on the belief that these regions have been economically deprived by their respective states. Economic factors have usually assumed prime importance in regional politics.

Politico-administrative Basis

The politico-administrative basis of regionalism is also important but politics as such does not create regionalism. It only accentuates regionalism. Politicians take advantage of the situation of regional discontentment and unrest. They convert it into movements for strengthening their individual and factional support bases. It is a known fact that fighting within Congress gave rise to Telangana agitation. Shiv Sena was able to flourish in Maharashtra because of the support of Congress bosses. Regional political parties like DMK (Tamil Nadu), Akali Dal (Punjab), and Jharkhand Mukti Morcha (Jharkhand) are surviving

because of regional sentiments. Border disputes like the one between Maharashtra and Karnataka is also based on regional sentiments. Another important fact of politics of regionalism is the real or assumed charges of political discrimination among various regions by the central ruling elite.

Forms of Regionalism in India

Regional Politics has taken mainly four forms namely:

- Demand for state autonomy
- Supra-state regionalism
- Inter-state regionalism, and
- Intra-state regionalism.

Demand for State Autonomy

The First and the most challenging form of regional politics was in the demand of people in certain states or regions to Indian Union and become independent sovereign states. Such demands occurred soon after independence but they are non-existent now. The important examples in this context are that of the plebiscite by National Front (Kashmir), Akali (not the present parties) in Punjab, Mizo National Front (Lushei Hills of Assam), Nagaland socialist Conference (Naga Hills District of Assam) etc.

Supra-state Regionalism

This implies that more than one state involved in the issue of regionalism. It is an expression of group identity of some states. They take a common stand on the issues of mutual interest vis-à-vis another group of states. The group identity is usually in relation to certain specific issues. It does not in any way imply the total and permanent merger of identity of the states into the identity of group, rivalries, tensions and even conflicts to take place among a few belonging to a group. For example, the rivalry existing between south and north India on such issues as language or location of steel plants illustrates the point. The grouping of the North Eastern States for greater access to economic development is another instance.

South India is separated from North along several differentials. Geographically south is composed of peninsular uplands or Deccan, the mountain ranges of Eastern and Western Ghats and coastal plains. In terms of political history too, sough has never been incorporated into the empires of the North. This was done for the first time during the British regime.

After independence a major rift was caused over the issue of the official language for India. The Constitution envisaged the replacement of English by Hindi for official purpose of the Union as the language of communication between the centre and the states and between states. The state legislatures of Indian Union were given authority to adopt one or more languages including Hindi for use as the state language. The Constitution provides that the official language of the union should be Hindi with Devanagari script, with international numerals for a period of 15 years from the commencement of the Constitution. However, Parliament could be law extends the use of English as the link language. The attempt to introduce the provision regarding the official language has generated more intense language rivalry then unity.

The opposition to Hindi found its strongest political expression in the southern states. Most of the people in these states as well as those in the non-Hindi speaking areas of Eastern India objected to the imposition of Hindi. It was feared that their own languages would be ultimately replaced by Hindi, which they considered inferior. The adoption of Hindi as an official language and as a compulsory subject in schools was seen as imposition of a comparatively underdeveloped language upon those whose language contains a richness of thousands of years.

In the 1950s and 60s several movements to oppose the imposition of Hindi sprang up. In 1956, the Academy of Tamil culture convened in Madras the Union Language Convention which stated in a resolution that it would be greatly unjust to make any other language (meaning Hindi) take the place

of English when a population of 100 million are totally unacquainted with that language. Significantly this Convention included representatives from different political organizations i.e. Rajagopalachari (Swatantra), Ramaswami Naickar (D.K.), Rajan (Justice Party), Annadurai (DMK) and many others. At a National Conference held on 8th March 1958, Rajagopalachari declared that 'Hindi is as much foreign to non-Hindi speaking people as English to protagonists of Hindi."

Inter-state Regionalism

It is related with state boundaries and involves overlapping of one or more state identities which threaten their interests. River water disputes, in general, and other issues like the Maharashtra-Karnataka border dispute, in particular can be cited as examples.

Intra-state Regional Politics or Sub-regionalism

This refers to regionalism which exists within a state of the Indian Union? It embodies the desire of a part of a state for the identity and self-development. It may also reflect a notion of deprivation or exploitation of a part of the state at the expense of another. This type of regionalism can be found in many parts of India. The important examples of this kind of sub-regionalism are a Vidharbha in Maharashtra, a Saurashtra in Gujarat, a Telangana in Andhra Pradesh, an East U.P in Utter Pradesh and Chhattisgarh in Madhya Pradesh.

SIGNIFICANCE OF REGIONALISM FOR INDIAN POLITICS

Regionalism is not significant merely as disintegrating force. Regionalism is not opposed to national integration. Both can exist together in a creative partnership. Both are in favour of development.

- Regionalism stresses the development of a region and national integration for the development of the nation as a whole. If we want to reconcile the competing claims of regionalism and national integration the political system of the country should remain federal and democratic.

- Regionalism is not disruptive of national solidarity. The important condition for national solidarity is that nationalism should be able to hold the different types of regional sub-nationalities together. In other words, there should be healthy reconciliation between regionalism and nationalism.

- Regionalism can make federalism a greater success. In this aspect the accentuation of regional identities should not become problematic. It is quite natural that regional communities, who are conscious of their distinctive culture, should interact with federal government on the basis of more equal partnership. It will reduce the centralizing tendencies in a nation and power will shift from the centre to the states.

Conceived in any form, regionalism and sub-regionalism are unavoidable in a country as vast and diverse as India. Their existence is not only an important condition for the expression of genuine national sentiment, but it is logically generated because of the establishment of the nation state. Nothing is, therefore, more basic to the concept of federalism than regionalism and sub-regionalism.

DECENTRALIZATION IN INDIA

Decentralization means sharing of decision-making authority with the lower levels in institutions and organization. It is called democratic as this sharing is based on the basic principle of democracy and democratization. It is argued that decentralization is essential for the functioning of a democratic system at different levels.

States in India are as large as independent countries of Europe. In terms of population, Uttar Pradesh is bigger than Russia; Maharashtra is about as big as Germany. Many of these States are internally very diverse. There is thus a need for power sharing within these States. Federal power sharing in India needs another tier of government, below that of the State governments. This is the rationale for decentralisation of power. Thus, resulted a third-tier of government, called local government.

When power is taken away from Central and State governments and given to local government, it is called decentraliasation. The basic idea behind decentralization is that:

- There are a large number of problems and issues which are best settled at the local level.
- People have better knowledge of problems in their localities.
- They also have better ideas on where to spend money and how to manage things more efficiently.
- Besides, at the local level it is possible for the people to directly participate in decision-making. This helps to inculcate a habit of democratic participation.
- Local government is the best way to realize one important principle of democracy, namely local self-government.

The need for decentralization was recognized in our Constitution. Since then, there have been several attempts to decentralize power to the level of villages and towns. Panchayats in villages and municipalities in urban areas were set up in all the States. But these were directly under the control of state governments. Elections to these local governments were not held regularly. Local governments did not have any powers or resources of their own. Thus, there was very little decentraliasation in effective terms.

A major step towards decentralization was taken in 1992. The Constitution was amended to make the third-tier of democracy more powerful and effective.

- Now it is constitutionally mandatory to hold regular elections to local government bodies.
- Seats are reserved in the elected bodies and the executive heads of these institutions for the Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and Other Backward Classes.
- At least one-third of all positions are reserved for women.

- An independent institution called the State Election Commission has been created in each State to conduct Panchayat and municipal elections.
- The State government is required to share some powers and revenue with local government bodies. The nature of sharing varies from State to State.

Rural local government is popularly known by the name **Panchayati raj**. Each village, or a group of villages in some States, has a Gram Panchayat. This is a council consisting of several ward members, often called punch, and a president or sarpanch. They are directly elected by all the adult population living in that ward or village. It is the decision-making body for the entire village. The Panchayat works under the overall supervision of the gram sabha. All the voters in the village are its members. It has to meet at least twice or thrice in a year to approve the annual budget of the Gram Panchayat and to review the performance of the Gram Panchayat.

The local government structure goes right up to the district level. A few gram panchayats are grouped together to form what is usually called a Panchayat samiti or block or mandal. The members of this representative body are elected by all the Panchayat members in that area. All the Panchayat Samitis or mandals in a district together constitute the zilla (district) parishad. Most members of the zilla parishad are elected. Members of the Lok Sabha and MLAs of that district and some other officials of other district level bodies are also its members. Zilla parishad chairperson is the political head of the zilla parishad.

Similarly, local government bodies exist for urban areas as well. Municipalities are set up in towns. Big cities are constituted into municipal corporations. Both municipalities and Municipal Corporation are controlled by elected bodies consisting of people's representatives. Municipal chairperson is the political head of the municipality. In a municipal corporation such an officer is called the mayor.

Benefits of Decentralization of Power

- It helps to empower social groups which traditionally have been weak and deprived.

- Decentralization is particularly necessary for a country like ours which is large in size and complex in socio-cultural settings. Diversity exists in India in terms of religion, language, culture.

- Social complexities require decentralization for the purpose of planning and administration.

Problems in Decentralization of Power India

The basic, principle on which the Panchayati Raj system has been envisaged is that, whatever can be done best at a lower level must necessarily be done at that level and not at the upper level, and only those things which cannot be done at the lower level must go to a higher level.

But it must be stated here that the first five or ten years of the new panchayats and municipalities is a period in which lot of trial and error is bound to take place. It is a "gestation period" because; it is not easy to change the mindset that has dominated that last six decades of independence. How we can shorten this gestation period should be the major concern of all concerned. Let me identify some issues which pose problems for panchayats to become "institutions of self-government".

- In the State Panchayat and Municipal Acts after 1993, once finds that the States have accepted the letter of the Seventy-third or Seventy-fourth Amendments rather than their spirit. In many State Acts, civil servants are given powers indirectly over the elected body. Transfer of activities and functions to panchayats is taking place very slowly. Only in places where strong demands from below– the Village Assembly (Gram Sabha), Village Panchayats and District Panchayats as well as enlightened citizens' organizations come up, attempts to develop powers are taking place.

- Another problem is that although States have enacted Conformity Acts, many States have not formulated rules and bye-laws for the day-to-day functioning of Panchayats. Added to this, the necessary infrastructural facilities are lacking for panchayats in many States.

- The reluctance of State level politicians to recognize the importance of the lower levels of governance, their autonomy, their powers and their areas of functioning, is creating a serious problem. The Ministers, the MLAs and senior political leaders are worried that the power they enjoyed so far will diminish if the panchayats and municipalities become powerful. The State level leaders do not like the leadership to emerge from the lower levels, which could pose challenges of them in due course. They do not want active and functioning local bodies to be 'nurseries' of leadership. Therefore, the MLAs put hurdles in the smooth functioning of panchayats to prevent them from blossoming into full-fledged local governments. In Orissa, when the new government came to power in early 1995 it was decided to dissolve the duly elected panchayats and municipalities. The real reason for this action was that the MLAs were impatient to wrestfull control of large sums of money coming to the panchayats through the Central Government schemes for rural development. The case of the recent drought relief measures was no different. If panchayats function properly with a large number of elected representatives and under the critical eye of the Opposition at the local level, people will become aware of their rights through regular participation in the panchayat programmes and activities, resulting in the decline of the powerful position the MLAs enjoy today.

- The government officials and government employees prefer to work with a distant control mechanism that is, the State capital. They do not want to be closely supervised under Panchayati Raj. Therefore, their non-cooperative attitude towards elected panchayat members is a major issue. The

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the Constitutions. It has the effect of interfering not merely with the federal scheme, but also with the healthy constitutional principle of separation of powers.

SECULARIZATION

Secularization is a process of social change through which the influence of religion declines in public affairs. Religion is replaced by other ways of explaining facts and events. The importance of religion in regulating social life decreases and it is taken over by utilitarian consideration. The interpretation of reality is in terms of reason and rationality. When secularization advances, science replaces religion as the primary approach to understand natural and social worlds. Thus, the term secularization implies that issues which were previously regarded as religious are no longer the same.

- It has rightly been suggested that secularization in India is the result of almost a century of Westernization in the country.

- The process started with the consolidation of British rule and gradually picked-up momentum with the development of transport and communication.

- Industrialization and urbanization increased spatial mobility. The people migrated from rural areas to urban areas and form towns to cities in large number.

- The spread of education changed value preferences which in turn furthered the cause of secularization.

Both Sanskritisation and secularization are simultaneously operating in contemporary India. Explaining the reason M.N. Srinivas writes: "Of the two, secularization is the more general process, affecting all Indians, while Sanskritisation affects only Hindus and tribal groups. Broadly, it would be true to say that secularization is more marked among the urban and educated groups and Sanskritisation among the lower Hindu caste and tribes."

Historically, secularization of Indian social and cultural life became intense with the new developments in social and cultural arena.

- The struggle for freedom especially in its Gandhian phase unleashed several forces that increased secularization. The civil disobedience campaign launched by Mahatma Gandhi mobilized the masses.

- Likewise, mobilization of people against social evils in Hindu society such as untouchability also contributed to increased secularization.

- This process was further strengthened with the attaining of independence in 1947, and with the adoption in 1950 of a Republican Constitution, India emerged as a secular state.

- The Constitution adopted in free India guarantees freedom of religion. It declares that there will be no discrimination on the basis of religion in employment and education.

- The introduction of universal adult franchise and the equality of citizens before law were some other steps undertaken to ensure the secular character of the Indian State.

Secularization of Indian social and cultural life

The secularization process has affected every aspect of personal and social life. Some changes are, however, apparent whereas some others may be disguised. Its effects are not uniformly felt. For example, urban dweller is generally much more influenced by it than the rural folk, educated sections are deeply moved compared to the illiterates. Similarly, some regions of the country are more exposed to the secularization process than others.

- The secularization process has made its most effective impact on the ideas of pollution and purity. We are already aware that ideas of pollution and purity are central the lives of people, in general and among the Hindus in particular. The notion of pollution and purity determines the hierarchy of castes. It defines the social distance between various castes. Some castes are considered superior and

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others inferior because some are considered pure and others are taken as relatively impure. This idea is not only visible in the structure of caste hierarchy but also in food, occupation, styles of life and daily routine. Meat eating and consumption of liquor are considered polluting but vegetarianism and teetotalism are pure practice. A similar distinction is made in occupations. Occupations that involve manual labour are regarded lower than those which do not require such work. The most conspicuous expression of the prevailing notions of pollution and purity has been the inhuman practice of untouchability in the caste system.

- The process of secularization has considerably reduced and weakened the ideas of pollution and purity.

- People no longer try to know the caste background of fellow passengers in a bus or a train. They hardly bother about it while visiting restaurants and hotels.

- The rules of pollution are not observed at the place of work particularly in the urban settings.

- The styles of life are influenced more by the requirements of jobs and occupations than by caste and religion.

- The orthodox elements of caste and religion are gradually losing prestige in the face of growing secularization of life and culture. As a result of increased secularization and mobility caste system has ceased to sustain those values that were either considered essential.

Nonetheless, it is important to point out that while religious values attached to the caste system is disappearing; its role in secular domains like politics is increasing. Now, people are being mobilized on caste lines for political purposes. It is a fascinating sociological question, which needs to be probed, but is currently beyond our scope.

Secularization of the family system and village community

While the gradual structural transformation in family produces change in interpersonal relationships, other elements of family life are equally affected by the process of secularization.

- Ceremonies and rituals performed in family such as marriage rituals, funeral rites and worship of family deities all are assuming a different character. They are either curtailed or shortened to suit the convenience of the concerned family. Now, some of these ceremonies are used on occasions to display and advertise affluence. The ostentation associated with wedding receptions has nothing to do with religious practices, which were earlier observed at the time of marriage.

- Likewise several community festivals have acquired new meaning and observances. *Baisakhi* in Punjab is celebrated more as a cultural festival than a religious one. People from different religious groups join and enjoy its festivity.

- *Durgapuja* and *Dussehra* have assumed new character and their religious rituals have receded into the background. Hundreds of pandals are tastefully decorated displaying various contemporary social and political issues. The latest trend in organizing *Iftar* party during the holy month of *Ramzan* is also a pointer in this respect.

- The village community is also influenced by changes taking place in economic, political and cultural fields. The internal differentiation created by economic forces has altered the harmonious community feelings among villagers.

- Levels of aspirations have heightened in the wake of numerous developmental measures undertaken by the government.

- The attitude of surrender before fate and divine will, commonly found among the poor and deprived, has been replaced by the attitude of defiance. They are the products of the process of secularization.

13 SOCIAL MOVEMENTS IN MODERN INDIA

— Peasants and farmers movements.
— Women's movement.
— Backward classes and Dalit movements.
— Environmental movements.
— Ethnicity and Identity movements.

UNDERSTANDING SOCIAL MOVEMENTS

People may damage a bus and attack its driver when the bus has run over a child. This is an isolated incident of protest. Since it flares up and dies down, it is not a social movement.

- A social movement requires sustained collective action over time.

- Such action is often directed against the state and takes the form of demanding changes in state policy or practice.

- Spontaneous, disorganized protest cannot be called a social movement either. Collective action must be market by some degree of organization.

- This organization may include a leadership and a structure that defines how members relate to each other, make decisions and carry them out.

- Those participating in a social movement also have shared objectives and ideologies.

- A social movement has a general orientation or way of approaching to bring about (or to prevent) change.

- These defining features are not constant. They may change over the course of a social movement's life.

Social movements often arise with the aim or bringing about changes on a public issue, such as ensuring the right of the tribal population to use the forests or the right of displaced people to settlement and compensation. While social movements seek to bring in social change, counter movements sometimes arise in defence of status quo. There are many instances of such counter movements.

- When Raja Rammohun Roy campaigned against sati and formed the Brahmo Samaj, defenders of sati formed Dharma Sabha and petitioned the British not to legislate against sati.

- When reformers demanded education for girls, many protested that this would be disastrous for society. When reformers campaigned for widow remarriage, they were socially boycotted.

- When the so called 'lower caste' children enrolled in schools, some so called 'upper caste' children were withdrawn from the schools by their families.

- Peasant movements have often been brutally suppressed.

- More recently the social movements of erstwhile excluded groups like the Dalits have often invoked retaliatory action.

- Likewise proposals for extending reservation in educational institutions have led to counter movements.

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Social movements cannot change society easily. Since it goes against both entrenched interests and values, there is bound to be opposition and resistance. But over a period changes to take place.

Social Movement and Social Change

It is important to distinguish between social change in general and social movements. Social change is continuous and ongoing. The broad historical processes of social change are the sum total of countless individual and collective actions gathered across time and space. Social movements are directed towards some specific goals. It involves long and continuous social effort and action by people. Sanskritisation and westernization are examples of social change and the 19th century social reformers effort to change society are examples of social movements.

Social movements in India have not only been protest and dissent movements but also reform and reactionary as well as socio-religious and freedom movements. These movements defined as "collective effort to promote/resist change" came into origin only after uniformity in intellectual orientations, social structures, ideological presences, and perceptions of truth came into existence. It is a well-known fact that characteristics of society shape the styles of movements. Therefore, the elements of social structure and the future vision of society provide the focal point of analysis of social movements.

The orientation of social movements

Till the British period, the orientation of social movements in our country was religious, though national liberation movement also emerged after the 1930s which was overtly against the forces of imperialism and colonialism. But, after independence, the new situation that emerged led to divergence in the targets of attack, say political authority, economic exploitation, cultural domination, male domination and humiliation of women and so forth. This led to proliferation of diverse movements.

Classification of Social Movements

Social movements have been classified on the basis of numerous criteria. Nature of change intended, organizational mode and strategy, nature of demands, groups and collectivities involved are some of the major criteria used for the purpose, e.g., tribal movement, Harijan movement, women's movement, peasant movement, student movement, industrial workers' movement, and on the basis of the nature of collectivities against which they are led, e.g., anti-Brahminism, anti-leftist, anti-Dalits and so on. Yet other basis of classification is their territorial anchorage, e.g., locality in which they originate and operate, e.g., Vidharbha movement, Telangana movement, Chhattisgarh movement, Jharkhand or Vananchal movement, Uttaranchal movement, and so on. Such names indirectly point out the goals pursued. Movements are also named after the issues they pursue, e.g., Anti-Hindi movement. Movement are named after their initial or top leadership too, e.g., Gandhian movement, Ramakrishna movement, J.P. (Jayaprakash) movement, etc. M.S.A.Rao has talked of three types of movement–reformist, transformative, and revolutionary.

All these movements are characterized by five elements :

- collective goal
- common ideology of widely accepted programme
- collective action
- Minimal degree of organization and leadership.
- Thus, a 'social movement' with above characteristics is different from 'agitation' as the latter has no ideology and no organization.
- Ghanshyam Shah holds that some coactive actions termed by some scholars as 'agitations' are considered by others as movements; e.g., demand for the formation of linguistic states. Shah himself considers them as 'movements' or a part of a social

movement of a particular stratum of society. Thus demand for Jharkhand in Bihar, Uttaranchal in Uttar Pradesh, and Chhattisgarh in Madhya Pradesh can be described as social movements according to him.

- Desai held that some movements are caused by the inability of our Constitution to protect the civil and the democratic rights of people. Rajni Kothari is of the opinion that failure of the state in 'social transformation' of society in which repression and intimidation of large masses of people has become common compels people to assert their rights through various struggles.

- Gurr and M.S.A. Rao have explained social movements in terms of 'relative deprivation.' Rao focuses on the 'possibility of doing something by the sufferer' along with relative deprivation.

- Ghanshyam Shah and T.K. Oommen do not accept Relative Deprivation Approach in explaining social movements. Oommen's argument is that deprivation theorists do not view movements as 'ongoing process of change'. They also do not deal with the sources of deprivation. Shah holds that deprivation theorist ignore the importance of consciousness and the ideological aspects of the participants.

PEASANT AND FARMERS MOVEMENTS

The study of peasant movements has emerged as an important area in the study of social movement in India. Since India is essentially an agrarian country, it is natural that the study of agrarian problems has assumed a central place in sociological issues.

Patterns of landownership, tenancy, use and control of land, all reflect the complex nature of agrarian structure. The complexity of agrarian structure is also manifested in the agrarian class structure which has existed since long in rural areas. The diversity of land systems and agrarian relations has produced an elaborate structure of agrarian classes. The later vary from one region to another. However, based on the nature of rights in land and the type of income derived from it, Daniel Thorner has identified three major agrarian classes in India. They are Maliks, Kisans and Mazdoors. Big landlords and rich landowners are included under the category of Maliks. Kisans are inferior to Maliks comprising self-cultivating owners of land. They are small landowners and tenant Mazdoors earn their livelihood from working on others lands. This category includes poor tenants, share-croppers and landless labourers. This classification of agrarian classes broadly reflects the Indian reality.

But it needs to be recognized that the agrarian hierarchy, as indicated just now, corresponds with the caste hierarchy which we find in different parts of the country. The rich landowners and moneylenders mainly belong to the upper castes. The middle and small peasants come from the traditional peasants castes. The landless labourers belong primarily to the lower classes. Such a position merely shows a pattern. It does not refer to the exact situation in the rural areas.

The nature of agrarian class structure has been mentioned here to understand the structural background in which movements have been launched by different classes of peasantry. **D.N. Dhanagare** study of peasant movements in India helps us to know the nature of these movements. According to Dhanagare, the term 'peasant movement' refers to all kinds of collective attempts of different strata of the peasantry either to change the system which they felt was exploitative, or to seek redress for particular grievances without necessarily aiming at overthrowing the system. Peasant movements thus include all kinds of movements, violent and non-violent, organized and specific.

Issues Involved in Peasant Movements:

- Some were related to conflicts between tenants and landlords; some were because of the oppression by zamindars of majority religious community (Hindus), and

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- Some were because of the factors like communal outburst, provocation by government officials and police etc., for improving economic conditions, demands for higher wages, forced labour (beggar) and so on.

- It is held by some writers that Gandhi mobilized the peasantry for the cause of national freedom and not for fighting against zamindars and money lenders.

- There are other writers who suggest that the relationship between peasant movements and the national movements was one of reciprocity, i.e., give and take. The tasks of taking up peasants class demands as well as fighting against imperialists were dealt with simultaneously. In any case peasants specific needs and interests of security of tenure, debt relief and cheap credit etc., could not be emphasized strongly by the nationalist leaders.

After independence, however, the leaders tried to mobilize peasantry against zamindars and landlords. The exploited peasantry was not a united group as they were vertically aligned with the masters through factional ties. Initially, the poor peasants were least militant but as the anti-landlords and anti-rich peasant sentiment was built up by the middle peasant, the revolutionary energy of the poor peasant was transformed into a revolutionary force. But peasants taking up revolutionary action were not on all India basis. It was only in some regions.

Six different viewpoints of the agrarian movements in India have been studied by sociologists:

- in terms of their functioning as associations at micro levels;

- Relationship between politics and agrarian movements, i.e., mobilizing peasants by political parties like Congress, communities, etc.

- relationship between social structure (caste, class and power) and agrarian movements;

- relationship between the green revolution and agrarian movements. (The green revolution not only affected the traditional agrarian relations but it also accentuated economic disparities and accelerated social aspirations of villagers);

- relationship between agrarian legislation and movements (i.e., movements causing legislation and legislation causing movements); and

- Relationship between mobilization and organization of movements.

Some movements for the welfare of peasants were organized on Gandhian principles. Two such movements were Bhoodan movement of Vinoba Bhave and Sarvodya movement of Jayaprakash Narayan. The immediate object of the Bhoodan movement was collecting land from the rich and its distribution to the poor. However, this movement failed in achieving its goal.

India has a long history of peasant movements. The nineteenth century India is considered a treasure house of materials on peasant heroism. The movements in the period between 1858 and 1914 tended to remain localized disjointed and confined to particular grievances. The most militant peasant movement of this period was the Indigo Revolt 1859-60 in Bengal. Only a decade later, similar violent disturbance took place in Babana and Bogara in Bengal in 1872-73. These struggles were directed against Zamindars who were the symbols of exploitation and atrocities.

The landowning and money-lending classes had consolidated their position not only in zamindari areas but also in Ryotwari and Mahalwari areas. The small landholders, tenants and share-croppers were the victims of the moneylender's tyranny. Accordingly, the peasants revolted against the oppression of the powerful agrarian classes. One of such revolts in Ryotwari area is known as the Deccan Riots of 1875 that occurred in western Maharashtra. A series of

Moplah uprisings in Malabar region of southern India also took place throughout the nineteenth century. They were expressions of long-standing agrarian discontent among the poor Moplah peasantry.

It is fascinating to note that peasants' grievances also became a component of the India's freedom struggle during the early twentieth century. The Champaran Movement in 1917, the Kheda Satyagrah of 1918 and Bardoli Satyagrah of 1928 were the major non-violent anti-British struggles. Since Mahatma Gandhi was involved in these satyagrahas, they are popularly known as Gandhian agrarian movements. Most of these movements took up relatively major agrarian issues but they succeeded in arousing political awareness among the masses. Thus, the most significant aspect of these movements was their simultaneous involvement in the nation-wide struggle for freedom.

However, peasants in other parts of the country were not inactive. They were equally restive and raised their grievances. Between 1920 and 1946 several peasant organizations and movements emerged in Bihar and Bengal which protested against the deplorable condition of the middle and poor peasants. The first organization to be founded was the Bihar Provincial Kisan Sabha and in 1936 the All India Kisan Sabha. The peasants organized by the Sabha. The peasants organized by the Sabhas demanded freedom from economic exploitation for peasants, workers and all other exploited classes. The more important peasant movements in different regions were: Tebhaga, Telangana and Naxalite. The Bhoodan and Sarvodya movements also took up peasants interests but they were taken up not by the peasants themselves but by Vinoba Bhave and Jayaprakash Narayan.

Pesant Movement After Independence

We have briefly discussed above the nature and features of peasant movements to familiarize ourselves with the role of social movements in social change. True, these movements have not always been successful in achieving the immediate goals but they created the climate which produced post-Independence agrarian reforms. Certain issues which had dominated colonial times changed after independce. For land reforms, zamindari abolition, declining importance of land revenue and public credit system began to alter rural areas. The period after 1947 was characterized by two major social movements—the Naxalite struggle and the 'new farmer's movements'.

Tebhaga movement (1946-47) was caused and facilitated by a large number of factors :

- the 1943 famine,

- drive against jotedars, hoarders and black-marketeers,

- social solidarity of the tribals involved in the movement, and

- the increased bargaining capacity of share-croppers.

Since this movement was limited in its spread, it failed. The wedge between Hindus and Muslims—the participants groups i.e., communal politics, lack of harmony between caste and class and the upper class manipulation of loyalties within the peasants also contributed to its failure (Dhanagare).

The **Telangana movement** (1946-51) in south India was initially a success but ultimately a failure because of communist support to the Muslim Razakars against the Indian army, which ran counter to the nationalist sentiment and movements. Dhanagare has to this movement as broad class-base movements as it involved middle, poor and landless peasants against landlords.

The Naxalbari Movement: When the United Front government with CPI participation came into power in West Bengal in February 1967, some active and vocal groups emerged. One of them under the leadership of **Charu Majumdar and Kanu Sanyal** insisted on developing militancy on the peasant front, and preparing peasants for an armed struggle. Initially, the leaders preached

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massive participation of peasants for forcible occupation of benami land but later on they emphasized liquidation of class enemies through the use of guerrilla tactics. Thus, mass movements were replaced by underground small group squads. This guerrilla activity of Naxalbari movement struck most in West Bengal and Andhra Pradesh and later on in Bihar and presently in Chhattisgarh, Maharashtra and Madhya Pradesh.

The peasant revolt in Naxalbari started in 1972 in three areas in Darjeeling district of West Bengal. Landowners were called jotedars and tenants were called adhiari. The status of adhiari was precarious. They were so much exploited and treated like bonded labour that it led to peasant revolt in the 1950s and the 1960s.

Kanu Sanyal and others made their first entry amongst the exploited peasants in the 1960s, demanding abolition of zamindari, land to the tiller, prevention of tenant eviction, etc. In the second phase of Naxalbari peasant uprising in the late 60s and early 1970s, secret combat groups were formed and peasants were urged to seize the lands of judders and the plantation workers who had purchased land from poor peasants, cultivate the seized land and retain all the produce from lands, ask landlord for food and if he refused, take it by force, deprive jotedars of his firearms.

- The important characteristics of Naxalbari peasant uprising in West Bengal were:
- mobilization to protect the interests of the peasant and the labourer classes and covering all ethnic (including tribes) and caste groups;
- the means adopted were non-institutionalized and violence was encouraged;
- leadership was provided by communist party leaders;
- it aimed at downward mobility of jotedars and upward mobility.

Sarvodya movement and Naxalbari movement was different that the former aimed at replacing individual ownership of land with communal ownership while the latter aimed at individual ownership.

- The factors which had contributed to the failure of this movement were:
- its anti-national slant as manifested in the Chinese support for it,
- its vocal denunciation of the Indian national leadership and acceptance of Chinese leadership as source of its aspiration
- it's declared intention to capture state power its open support to violence and factionalism among the leftists.
- **R.K. Mukherjee** has analyzed this movement in terms of relationship between social structure and social change. He argues that although the declared intention of the movement was capturing state power, in reality, the revolt was not directed against the system but against its excesses. It was the exchange of goods between the peasant and the owner landlord that was sought to be properly regulated.

The so called **'new farmer's movements** began in the 1970s in Punjab and Tamil Nadu. These movements were regionally organized, were non-party, and involved farmers rather than peasants (farmers are said to be market-involved as both commodity producers and purchasers). The basic ideology of the movement was strongly anti-state and anti-urban. The focus of demand was price for agricultural inputs, taxation and non-repayment of loans. Novel methods of agitation were used: blocking of roads and railways, refusing politicians and bureaucrats entry to villages, and so on. It has been argued that the farmers' movements have broadened their agenda and ideology and include environment and women's issues. Therefore, they can be seen as a part of the worldwide 'new social movements'.

Nature of Peasant Movements

- that these movements originated only after independence and that these are purely social and cultural in nature;

- These movements existed long before independence and were against colonial rulers as well as zamindars and money-lenders, i.e., they were political and cultural.

- **Moore Junior** (quoted by Ghanshyam Shah), writing about the peasant movements in India has not accepted the revolutionary potential of the Indian peasantry. According to him, Indian peasants are traditionally docile and passive because of which cultivation remained lackadaisical and inefficient during the Mughal and the British periods. Hence, there were no widespread peasant movements.

- But Moore's contention has been challenged by A.R.Desai, Katleen Gough and D.N. Dhanagare. They argue that a number of peasant revolts have been overlooked by historians.

- Gough has talked of 77 revolts in the last two centuries, the smallest of which engaged several thousand peasants in active support.

- A.R. Desai has also observed that the Indian rural scene during the entire British period and thereafter had been bristling with protests, revolts and even large scale militant struggles involving hundreds of villages and lasting for years.

- Ranjit Guha has said that agrarian disturbances of different forms and scales were endemic until the end of the nineteenth century. There were no fewer than 110 known revolts during 117 years of the British rule.

- Dhanagare has argued that Moore's generalizations are questionable because there were various peasant resistance movements and revolts in India.

Classification of Peasant Movements

- According to A.R. Desai and Ghanshyam Shah, peasant movements in India, have been classified on the basis of time period–into pre-British and post-independence. The post-independence period is classified into pre-Naxalite and post-Naxalite periods or pre and post-green revolution periods. The latter period is further divided into pre and post-Emergency periods.

- A.R. Desai is also of the opinion that the nature of peasant movements varies according to the agrarian structures which have undergone changes during different periods. He has classified colonial India into ryotwari areas under British territory, zamindari areas under princely authority and tribal zones. The peasant struggles in these areas had different characteristics, raised different issues and involved different strata of the peasantry.

- He further divides post- independence agrarian into two categories: struggles launched by rich farmers and by poor farmers. The agrarian structure has thus not evolved a unified pattern throughout the country.

Kathleen Gough has classified peasant revolts on the basis of their goals, ideology and methods of organization into five types:

- restorative rebellions to drive out the Britishers and restore earlier rulers,

- religious movements,

- social banditry,

- terrorist for collective justice, and

- mass insurrections for the redress of particular grievances.

WOMEN'S MOVEMENTS

It is difficult to trace the origin of Women's movement in India. Most accounts of the movement start from the nineteenth century. But recently, social historians have discussed its history from the pre-colonial times. They suggest that the evidence of women's movement first appeared in the Bhakti and Sufi movements of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The important issue for us is to realize that the authority of men necessarily determined the status of women. The oppressive condition of women was reflected in the social practices such as child marriage, polygamy, and prohibition of widow remarriage, sati and the purda system. These practices continued till they were challenged by the social reformers of the nineteenth century.

The factors that provided the required incentive to women's movements were

- The status of women has been the central concern of many reform movements before and after independence. Leaders of the Brahmo Samaj and the Arya Samaj were concerned with issues like sati, remarriage, divorce, female education, purdah system, polygamy and dowry.

- Justice Ranade criticized child marriages, polygon, restrictions on remarriage of widows, and non-access to education.

- Raja Ram Mohan Roy played an important role in getting the sati system abolished. Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar and Maharishi Karve pleaded for remarriage of widows.

- Therefore, most scholars maintain that women's movement in India began as a part of social reform movements. We may say that the process of highlighting women's issues began in the nineteenth century.

- effect of western education on the male domination on women and on the concept of complementary sex roles.

- leadership provided by educated elite women, interest of male social reformers in changing social practices sanctioned by religion,

- changing socio-religious attitudes and philosophies, and decreasing social hostility and opposition of males to women's associations engaged in self-help activities.

- benevolent attitude of political national leaders towards fledgling women's movements and their enthusiastic support to women campaigns.

- The declaring of 1975-85 decade as the International Women's decade also gave impetus to women's movements for removing the notion of inferiority of women and giving them a sense of identity.

- The Central Social Welfare Board (GSWB) established by the Government of India in 1953, also promotes and strengthens voluntary efforts for the welfare of women.

- The Ministry of Welfare, Government of India, too gives grants to voluntary organizations for activities like construction/expansion of hostels for working women in cities.

In the early phase of the twentieth century, Mahatma Gandhi voiced his concern about the degrading status of women. Gandhiji took interest in collective mobilization of women to fight for political freedom as well as for their social and political rights. It was because of his efforts that a large number of women came out of their homes and joined the freedom struggle. He adopted a revolutionary approach to raise the status of women. Gandhiji argued that women should be freed from social and legal disabilities. He emphasized particularly on the issues of women's inferior position in matters of guardianship inheritance and marriage.

Women who joined the national movement recognized the importance of self-reliance, swadeshi and women's education. Such a political consciousness among women expanded the space available to women in public sphere. Some scholars have examined the role of women in political independence movements at micro level, i.e., on regional basis. For example, Aparna Basu and Pravin Seth studied it in Gujarat, Raghavendra Rao in Karnataka, and Uma Rao in Uttar Pradesh. According to Govind Kelkar, women's role in the freedom movement was that of the 'helpers' rather than that of comrades.

Ghanshyam Shah has referred to some scholars who have pointed out women's role in tribal, peasant and other movements in Bihar and Maharashtra. For example, Manoshi Mitra and Indra Munshi Saldanha have analyzed women's militant role in tribal movements when women confronted authorities, wielding traditional weapons and maintaining lines of supplies to the rebels in their hidden places. Sunil Sen, Peter Casters, etc., have analyzed their role in peasants' movements in Telangana, West Bengal and Maharashtra. Meena Velayudhan has analyzed their role in communist-led movement of coir

workers in Kerala. Sen has pointed out women's participation in struggles launched by trade unions in iron ore mines in Madhya Pradesh.

During freedom struggle several women's organizations emerged which paved the way for increasing role of women in socio-political activities. The liberal egalitarian ideology under the British Raj created conditions for a social awakening among Indian women. Banga Mahila Samaj and the ladies Theosophical Society functioned at local levels to promote modern ideals for women. Important national organizations were: Bharat Mahila Parishad, Bharat Stri Mahamandal, and Women's Indian Association, National Council of Women in India and All India Women's Conference and Kasturba Gandhi National Memorial Trust. These organizations took up issues like women's education, abolition of evil social customs i.e., purdah, child marriage, equality and with the support of the Congress party, demanded right of franchise and representation in legislatures. Prominent among these organizations were All India Women's Association and the Indian Women's Association. These organizations had branches in different parts of the country. Their activities were centered mainly on issues like women's education, improvements in health and sanitation, right to suffrage for women and the maternity benefits for women workers. In this manner, these organizations were successful in initiating a discourse on gender equality and women's rights.

The nationalist phase of women's movement ended after independence with an assurance to remove all forms of gender inequalities. The task of social reconstruction undertaken subsequently further confirmed the goal. Consequentially, the women's movements were subdued for almost two decades till 1970s. However, during this period women participated in large numbers in several local level struggles in different parts of the country. The role and participation of women in the Shahada movement in Maharashtra, the anti-price rise movements in Gujarat and Maharashtra, and the Bihar movement led by Jayaprakash Narayan are still fresh in our memory. The twin objectives of struggle and development were adopted by organizations like SEWA–Self Employed Women's Association who fought against all forms of injustice.

CONTEMPORARY WOMEN'S MOVEMENT

Contemporary Women's Movement which started in the seventies and eighties was very different from the earlier movements and is influenced by two factors :

- The WMI which emerged in the seventies was greatly influenced by powerful women movement in the USA which ignited a world-wide debate and protest by women for their emancipation and rights. This influenced the women in India, particularly the urban educated elite classes. There was abundant feminist literature available in the universities, colleges and shops. At the same time there was a lot of growth of Indian literature on socio-economic and socio-cultural issues focusing on women. But this was limited to the urban areas.

- The Indian movement had basically emerged due to the widespread disillusionment of women at the grassroots level with the process and model of development, which failed to eliminate poverty, discrimination, and injustice to the women. By the 1970s, there was widespread disillusionment among women groups with the process of development and the attitude has gradually started shifting to confrontation.

- Four movements played a crucial role in the consolidation of the WMI at the grassroots level.

Shahada Movement

Shahada is a Bhil adivasi settlement in Maharashtra. Many young Sarvodya workers started the Shramik Sangathan to help the adivasis suffering due to drought and famine. These organizations took a more militant approach, initiated land-grab, demanded minimum wages, and held women shivirs (camps).

- Women played active role in mobilizing the masses. As militancy developed in the movement, women- issues also began to be raised along with the wider issues. Women applied their consciousness to the question of their oppression on the basis of gender.

- The movement shortly led to the anti-alcohol, because many men after getting drunk beat their wives. Women shivirs were organized to discuss and help each other to eradicate this evil which is one of the main causes of their oppression.

- The Shahada movement started as a protest movement against landlords turned into a movement against the sale and consumption of alcohol and attack on wife-beaters. It was an indirect protest against violence in the family, which had so far been held as a private matter of the family. Shahada movement, in a way, challenged some aspects of patriarchy.

Self Employed Women Association

The first attempt to organize a women trade union was made in Ahmadabad by a Gandhian socialist leader, Ella Bhatt, attached to the women wing of Textile Labour Association. She formed the Self Employed Women Association in the year 1972 to organize the women working in various trades in the informal sector. They all suffered due to extremely low wages, poor working conditions lack of training, harassment by the authorities or middlemen and police.

- The aim of the SEWA was to improve their working provide technical and economic assistance, help them to sell their products at better prices by collective bargaining and improve their economic status.

- The SEVA helped the women to become economically self-sufficient to give them freedom from exploitation by assurance of regular work and access to opportunities for development.

- Thus the SEWA helped the poor working women to improve their economic status and become self–sufficient, because economic dependence is one of the major causes of their exploitation by men.

Anti-Price-Rise Front

The conditions of famine and drought affected the urban areas in Maharashtra, which led to the rising prices and black-marketing. Mrinal Gore of the Socialist Party and Ahilya Rangekar of CPI(M) formed the United Front, Anti-Price-Rise Front, to mobilize the women in the cities against inflation. It became a mass movement demanding price-control and proper distribution of essential commodities at the fair prices. The women groups also raided the premises of the black-marketeers. It was a mass movement of urban housewives against economic hardships affecting their daily life.

Nav Nirman Samiti

It was initially a student protest against rising prices and political disorder but became a massive movement when middle-class women joined it. Women participated in these movements because rise in expenditure of essential commodities had adversely affected them and hoarding and black-marketing had caused a lot of hardships to them. The Anti-Price-Rise Front and Nav Nirman Samiti indirectly helped in crystallizing women's identity as a group.

- In Andhra the first feminist group formed the **Progressive Organization of Women (POW)**. This group stressed the existence of gender-based oppression and organized women against it. The manifesto of this group emphasized on the concept of equality between men and women in every walk of life. According to them the two primary structures of exploitation are sexual division of labour on the biological basis and the culture which provides justification to such division.

- The year 1975 saw a sudden development of the feminist movement. It was also declared as the International Women's Year by the United Nations. The declaration also provided

some focus on the various activates. Influenced by the POW, the progressive women in Pune formed the Purogami Stree Sangathan and in Bombay founded Stree Mukti Sangathan.

- Lal Nishan Party, a splinter group of the CPI, brought out a special issue on women. Socialists organized a conference on devdasis and Muslim women. In Hyderabad radical women students of the POW organized campaign against sexual harassment, dowry and bride-burning. Issues such as dowry, bride-burning, violence, and sexual harassment of the women were debated all over India.

- The proclamation of Emergency in 1975 and the suspension of civil liberties led to the suspension of the WMI. But with the coming of Janata Party to power in 1977, the movement was again revived. In the later seventies and early eighties the WMI was mainly dominated by urban groups.

- By 1980s women groups were active all over India. They organized poster-exhibitions; meetings, study circles and activists' meetings to debate issues related with women and started campaigns against them. A Forum Against Rape was formed against the Supreme Court's judgement in the Mathura rape case.

- The WMI is also concerned with woman's control over her body. It debated issues such as women's health, violence, rape, wife-battering, divorce, right to maintenance, child custody, etc.

- They are also concerned not only with the enactment of legislation in favour of women but also with amendments to exist laws a anti-women. The WMI is equally concerned about the proper implementation of existing laws concerning women and their rights.

- WMI in its current phase is not only concerned with education of the women but is also equally concerned acute the right kind of education, textbooks having women content in the proper perspective. Many universities have opened women and development centres, introduced women-oriented courses. Women Development Centres are conducting academic researches on women issues.

- The WMI in is now concerned with equality which is genuine. They do not want reservations alone but want proper share in all material resources, means of production, education and in decision-making process. The progressive WMI is the outcome of changing social, economic, and political reality.

The WMI is an ongoing process. It started as a protest against negative attitude towards women and their problems. It moved on to its second phase where they denied biological explanation of existing disparities between the two sexes, then to the third where men and women are equal. In the early nineteenth century it started with humanitarian concerns for the suffering of the women, and need for reform. By twentieth century the emphasis has shifted to stressing women's right to be treated as useful members of society. By the late twentieth century it has moved to women's right to self-determination.

Forms of women's participation in movements

- for social, economic and political rights of specific categories of people like tribals, peasants and industrial workers,

- for improvements in conditions of work and autonomy to women,

- for equal remuneration for work,

- In renewal social movements on issues affecting men and children like abortions, adoption of children, sexual exploitation, etc.

It could be said that Indian women's movements worked for two goals:

- liberation or uplift of women, i.e., reforming social practices so as to enable women to

play more important and constructive role in society, and

- Equal right for men and women, i.e., extension of civil right enjoyed by men in the political, economic and familial spheres to women also.

Jana Everett calls the former as 'corporate feminism' and the latter as 'liberal feminism'. The strategies used by women's bodies were: making demands by organizing public meetings, presenting views to government officials, forming committees to investigate conditions and holding conferences to mobilize women.

It is important to note that in course of the autonomous women's movements in India, a serious debate cropped up about the idea of feminism. Feminism is a complex set of political ideologies used by the women's movement to advance the cause of women's equality. Feminism is also defined as a variety of inter-related frameworks used to observe and analyze the ways in which the social reality of gender inequality is constructed and enforced. Given this perspective of feminism, some activists questioned the applicability of the western notion of feminism to the Indian reality. They argued that the nature of male dominance in India is different from that in western society. Therefore, the demands and resistance of women against males are also different.

Madhu Kishwar, activist and the editor of Manushi, has emphasized the need to look into our traditions in this respect. She argues that we should try to separate the debate within the cultural traditions, and start using the strengths to transform the traditions. Our cultural tradition have tremendous potential within them to combat reactionary and anti-women ideas, if we can identify their points of strength and use them creatively. Thus, feminism in the Indian context is not merely taken as an issue of theoretical debate for analysis but an approach to bring about social change. We may affirm that women's movements in India have played an important role in bringing and driving the women's issue to the national agenda.

BACKWARD CLASSES AND DALIT MOVEMENTS:

The emergence of backward castes/classes as political entities has occurred both in the colonial and post-colonial contexts. The colonial state often distributed patronage on the basis of caste. It made sense, therefore, for people to stay within their caste for social and political identity in institutional life. It also influenced similarly placed caste groups to unite themselves and to form what has been termed a 'horizontal stretch'. Caste thus began to lose its ritual content and become more and more secularized for political mobilization.

Historical Background

The term 'Backward Classes' has been in use in different parts of the country since the late 19th Century. It began to be used more widely in Madras presidency since 1872, in the princely state of Mysore since 1918, and in Bombay presidency since 1925. From the 1920s a number of organizations united around the issue of caste sprang up in different parts of the country. These included the United Provinces Hindu Backward Classes League, All India Backward Classes Federation, and All India Backward Classes League. In 1954, 88 organizations were counted working for the Backward Classes.

The increasing visibility of both Dalits and other backward classes has led to a feeling among sections of the upper caste that they are being given special treatment. The government, they feel, does not pay any heed to them because they are numerically not significant enough. As sociologists we need to recognize that such a 'feeling' does exist and then we need to scrutinize to what extent such an impression is grounded on empirical facts. We also need to ask why earlier generations from the so called 'upper castes" did not think of "caste" as a living reality of modern India.

By and large, when compared to the situation prevailing before independence, the condition of all social groups, including the lowest caste and tribes, has improved today. But by how much has it improved? It is true that in the early part of the

21st century, the variety of occupations and professions among all caste groups is much wider than it was in the past. However, this does not change the massive social reality that the overwhelming majority of those in the 'highest' or most preferred occupations are from the upper castes, while the vast majority of those in the menial and despised occupations belong to the lowest castes.

Backward class movements emerged among depressed castes and deprived sections of society in different parts of India with the spread of the national movement. The difference between the religious and the caste movement is that while the former attacked evils of Hinduism, the latter exhorted its followers to seek solutions to their problems within the framework of Hinduism, i.e., without rejecting their religion.

Nature of Backward Class Movement

- protests against discrimination of various kinds,
- to gain self-respect, honour and status,
- status mobility movements,
- caste unity movements, and
- caste welfare movements.

The status mobility movements can be further sub-classified as :

- adaptive movements,
- movements oriented to cultural revolts; and
- counter-cultural movements.

The backward castes suffered from relative deprivation in the fields of religion, education, economics and politics. They accepted their lot till certain external influences provided favourable conditions to create an awakening among them.

Factors which Awaken Backward Class for Movements

- Organizing of programme by Christian Missionaries for the SCs who then referred to as the 'depressed classes'.

- Other condition was the national movement which provided an ideology of egalitarianism and supported social movements which revolved against discrimination of any kind.

- Third condition was that of reform movements organized by the upper castes which initiated programmes of education and welfare for the backward or the depressed classes. These movements were against many orthodox Brahminical practices.

- Finally, the egalitarian system of law introduced by the British also provided an opportunity to the backward castes to protest against discrimination.

According to M.S.A. Rao the backward caste movements for higher status were based on three ideologies.

- First, many Gopas in West Bengal, the Gaulis in Maharashtra, the Gollas in Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka and the Konars in Tamil Nadu claimed descent from the Kshatriya dynasty. This also included adopting the lifestyle of higher castes in their regions, what **M.N.Srinivas** has described the process of sanskritisation. **Imtiaz Ahmad** has stated that this process of mobility should be viewed as an initiative process or as protest-oriented movement or as counter-mobilization. The upper class invariably opposed such attempts. Besides, the desire to claim high status prompted groups, they could collectively impress upon the census officers to describe them as castes with higher ritual status. This mechanism of mobilizing caste collectivities became significant by 1931.Other method was reinterpreting Hindu religion in search of self-determination, e.g., Sri Narayan Dharma Paripalana Movement among the Ezhavas (toddy tapers) of Kerala. Ezhavas of Kerala took an overt anti-Brahmin slant and resorted to mass mobilization and protest to acquire their right.

- Second variety of protest ideology was the rejection of Brahminical Aryan religion and

culture, e.g., Dravida Kazhagam Movements in Tamil Nadu.

- Third ideology was abandoning Hinduism and embracing another religion, e.g., Mahars in Maharashtra. Nadirs of Tamil Nadu used political process of influence to achieve high status, while Malis of Maharashtra used cultural revolt process.

According to Oommen, factors which helped classes/castes in their mobility movements

- ritually castes were not at the rock bottom,
- economically they were well-off by local standards,
- their numerical strength was substantial, and they had the support of rulers in their regions, like Maharaja of Kolhapur in Maharashtra,
- occupational diversifications,
- exposure to education, urbanization,
- outstanding and charismatic leadership.

Of course, many castes did not succeed in achieving higher status within the Hindu fold which prompted them to embrace Buddhism. Few castes achieved this remaining within Hindu fold through counter-cultural movements. The counter-cultural movements referred to

- developing a counter-culture against caste Hindus, particularly Brahminical supremacy, but remaining within the Hindu fold. This process was adopted by Dravidian movements of Tamil Nadu, and
- building a new parallel culture of their own rather than getting themselves adsorbed in the 'mainstream' culture, or merely protesting against it. The Dalit Panther movement of Maharashtra exemplified this trend.

The Dravidian movement in the South developed in two phases: anti-Brahmin (caste) phase and anti-north (region) phase. In the first phase, the Dravidians identified Brahmins as aliens (Aryans) and intruders into Dravidian. They also ridiculed the Brahmin-created piranhas and varnashram dharma irrational. They created a counter-culture which was Dravidian in nature, by denouncing Brahmanicial practices of idol worship, child marriage and enforced widowhood. Gradually, this movement shifted its goal from anti-Brahminism to North Indian domination with the goal of establishing a sovereign Dravidian State.

While the Dravidian movement was confined to Tamil Nadu, Dalit Panthers movement spread from urban Maharashtra to other states. Its main emphasis was on intellectual awakening and creating consciousness among the oppressed. The movement of Mahars in Maharashtra is also worth-mentioning here. First, they used counter-cultural strategy of abandoning Hinduism altogether, but, later on; they adopted new political strategy for their uplift.

Though the movements of backward castes succeeded in achieving their goals only partially, yet they provided a mobilization a model to higher castes of forming associations for their mobilization activities. But the associations of forward castes were mainly reform-oriented, opposing child marriage, and encouraging widow remarriage, women's education, occupational diversification, education and breaking social barriers between numerous castes.

Present Situation: Government's policy of protective discrimination for the Backward castes prompted them to fight for their interests and welfare by organizing themselves politically instead of issuing of census appeals, sanskritisation, cultural revolts or the building of counter-cultures. This political strategy aimed at getting them enlisted as SCs and OBCs getting the time-period of reservation extended and insisting on faithful implementation of government policies and programmes. After the implementation of Mandal Commission's recommendations in August 1990 and the establishment of the Minority Commissions in various states, large number of castes are trying for recognition as OBCs and getting the reserved quota (15% for SCs and 27% for OBCs) seats.

DALIT MOVEMENT

Broadly speaking, the untouchables of the Hindu caste system are officially known as the Scheduled Castes. The same category of castes is also called Harijan, the children of God, a term coined by Mahatma Gandhi in 1933. However, the word harijan has now acquired a negative meaning. The members of these castes prefer to be called dalit, the oppressed.

We use the term **dalit movements and social movements against untouchability** led by Mahatma Gandhi. Other nationalist movements like peasant and reform movements, dalit movements also emerged during the pre-independence period. These movements have been examined keeping them under two broader categories, non-Brahman movements and dalit movements.

While the anti-caste non-Brahman movements were strong in Maharashtra and Tamil Nadu, dalit movements were spread all over the country. The Adi Dharma movements in Punjab, the Satnami movement in Uttar Pradesh, Narayan Guru movements in Kerala and Adi-Dravida movements in Tamil Nadu have been some of the major Dalit movements. The larger anti-caste movements were led by prominent figures like Jyotiba Phule, Babasaheb Ambedkar and E.V. Ramaswami Periyar. They all attacked the system of exploitation at all levels.

According to Ghanshyam Shah there has not been a single, unified Dalit movement in the country now or in the past. Different movements have highlighted different issues related to Dalits, around different ideologies. However, all of them assert a Dalit identity though the meaning may not be identical or precise for everyone. Notwithstanding differences in the nature of Dalit movements and the meaning of identity, there has been a common quest for equality, self-dignity and eradication of untrouchability. This can be seen in the Satnami Movement of the Chamars in the Chhattisgarh plains in eastern MP, Adi Dharma Movement in Punjab, 'the Mahar Movement in Maharashtra, the socio-political mobilization among the Jatavas of Agra and the Anti Brahman Movement in south India.

Nevertheless, the dalit movement is necessarily linked with the name of Dr. Ambedkar. He was the historical leader and the founder of its ideology. Initially, the movement was confined to Maharashtra, but during 1930s and 1940s it spread to different parts of the country. Although the organizations, such as the Scheduled Caste Federation and its successor, the Republican Party, formed by Dr. Ambedkar, never attained all India status, but their ideas had an impact on various local level dalit movements in different parts of the country. The growth of these movements reflects the increasing self-consciousness of the group. Thus, dalits have emerged as a distinct political group. They are no longer politically dependent upon the upper castes. Eventually, they have made an impact on the structure of power in India.

Another important trend in the dalit movement is manifested in the emergence of the Dalit Panther Movement which was launched by dalits of Maharashtra in the early 1970s. It was initially confined to the urban areas of Maharashtra but has subsequently spread to several other states. The Dalit Panthers denounce the dominant culture and attempt to articulate an alternative, cultural identity of the oppressed classes. To propagate their ideas they have been publishing poems, stories and plays, which are now popularly known as dalit literature and are used to challenge the intellectual tradition of the upper caste Hindus.

The most vital consequence of these movements has been the consolidation of dalit identity. The pressure created by the mobilization of the dalits has led to amelioration of their social conditions. Compared to their conditions a decade ago, their social and economic position has relatively improved. The emancipation of dalits is essentially linked with their freedom from the bondage to the existing economic systems. As the economic system is still monopolized by the upper castes, their position in the caste as well as class system continues to be at the lower end.

Social movements of Dalits show a particular character. The movements cannot be explained satisfactorily by reference to economic exploitations alone or political oppression, although these dimensions are important.

- This is a struggle for recognition as fellow human beings.

- It is a struggle for self-confidence and a space for self-determination.

- It is a struggle for abolishment of stigmatization, that unsociability implied.

- It has been called a struggle to be touched.

The word Dalit is commonly used in Marathi, Hindi, Gujrarati and many other Indian languages, meaning the poor and oppressed persons. It was first used in the new context in Marathi by neo-Buddhist activists, the followers of Babasaheb Ambedkar in the early 1970s. It refers to those who have been broken, ground down by those above them in a deliberate way. There is, in the word itself, inherent denial of pollution, karma and justified caste hierarchy.

In the contemporary period the Dalit movement has unquestionably acquired a place in the public sphere that cannot be ignored. This has been accompanied by a growing body of Dalit literature. Dalit literature is squarely opposed to the Chaturvarna system and caste hierarchy which it considers as responsible for crushing the creativity and very existence of lower castes. Dalit writers are insistent on using their own imageries and expressions rooted in their own experiences and perceptions. Many felt that the high-flown social imageries of mainstream society would hide the truth rather than reveal it. Dalit literature gives a call for social and cultural revolt. While some emphasise the cultural struggle for dignity and identity, others also bring in the structural features of society including the economic dimensions.

ENVIRONMENTAL MOVEMENTS

For much of the modern period, the greatest emphasis has been laid on development. Over the decades there has been a great deal of concern about the unchecked use of natural resources and a model of development that creates new needs that further demands greater exploitation of the already depleted natural resources. This model of developments has also been critiqued for assuming that all sections of people will be beneficiaries of development. Thus big dams displace people from their homes and sources of livelihood. Industries displace agriculturalists from their homes and livelihood. The impact of industrial pollution is yet another story. Here we take just one example of an ecological movement to examine the many issues that are interlinked in an ecological movement.

The Chipko movement, an example of the ecological movement, in the Himalayan foothills is a good example of such intermingled interests and ideologies. According to Ramachandra Guha in his book Unquiet Woods, villagers rallied together to save the oak and rhododendron forests near their villages. When government forest contractors came to cut down the trees, villagers, including large numbers of women, stepped forward to hug the trees to prevent their being felled. At stake was the question of villagers subsistence. All of them relied on the forest to get firewood, fodder and other daily necessities. This conflict placed the livelihood needs of poor villagers against the government's desire to generate revenues from selling timber. The economy of subsistence was pitted against the economy of profit.

Along with this issue of social inequality (villagers versus a government that represented commercial, capitalist interests), the Chipko movement also raised the issue of ecological sustainability. Cutting down natural forests was a form of environmental destruction that had resulted in devastating floods and landslides in the region. For the villagers, these 'red' and 'green' issues were inter-linked. While their survival depended on the survival of the forest, they also valued the forest for its own sake as a form of ecological wealth that benefits all.

In addition, the Chipko movement also expressed the resentment of hill villagers against

a distant government headquartered in the plains that seemed indifferent and hostile to their concerns. So concerns about economy, ecology and political representation underlay the Chipko movement.

We may now conclude our discussion on social movements by stating that social movements in India mainly focused either

- on achieving system stability by arresting the onslaught of rapid social change and reinforcing the existing values and norms and

- attempting system change through the destruction and replacement of old and induction of new structures.

ETHNICITY AND IDENTITY MOVEMENTS

For a proper understanding of ethnic movement it is necessary to understand what we mean by ethnicity as such movements are associated with it. Ethnicity is denotes towards identification of a group of people on the basis of certain criteria or markers which they are supposed to share with each other. These markers include culture, race, language, religion, customs, history, economic experiences, etc. For a group of people to share such attributes another requirement is that they get mobilized into some collective action for attainment of certain demands. The number of markers or attributes which form the basis of an ethnic group depends on the choice of these factors by the ethnic group or its leadership. But there are differences among the scholars regarding the number of attributes which constitute an ethnic group.

Scholars in India generally consider that mobilization as ethnic which is based on the multiple attributes – language, religion, culture, history, economy, etc. For example, the language based mobilization is considered as linguistic mobilization and the groups as such are considered the linguistic groups. Similarly caste based mobilization is considered as dalit, backward or any other caste mobilization. In India there is religion-based mobilization. But the scholars who follow American and European

traditions categories even the mobilization based on the single attribute – language, religion, caste, etc., as ethnic mobilization. They also do not distinguish between the movement and ethnic mobilization. For example, Paul R. Brass uses ethnic and communal mobilization interchangeably.

On the other hand, **Dipankar Gupta** in his book *The Context of Ethnicity: The Sikh Identity in a Comparative Perspective differentiates* between communalism and ethnicity. He argues that the ethnic mobilization is related to the nation-state – the territory and the sovereignty. And the communal mobilization does not involve the nation-state. It is confined to the government and two or more communities in the conflict, one of which alleges that the government discriminates against it in preference to the other. The point in dispute could be job, specific rights of the communities, etc. According to him in the ethnic mobilization the loyalty of one ethnic group to the referent of nation-state is questioned. It is not so in the case of communal mobilization. Also, the group identities are not permanent. In the changing context of time and space an ethnic identity can become communal and vice versa. However, the general tendency among the scholars is to consider the multi-attributes mobilization of the communities as ethnic.

Ethnicity is also a relative term. An ethnic group differentiates itself from another groups which also share certain attributes which are different from it. It feels that it has to preserve its identity and interests from the perceived or real threats of other ethnic groups and institutions, and processes associated of the cultural identities of the ethnic groups and their other interests. Another concept which is related to the ethnicity, nationalities or even nations they are used interchangeably. If one section of scholars considers a multiple-marker based mobilization as ethnic, there are others which call these as the mobilization of the nations or the nationalities. Therefore, in the light of the literature terms ethnicity and nationalities/nations are used interchangeably in this used how can ethnic group

gets mobilized into the collective action, the "instrumentalist" approach does not explain as to why an ethnic group responds to the call of the elite, leaders or politicians. They advocate a combination of both the primordial and instrumentalist approaches instead of 'bi-polar' approach.

Ethnic Movements During Post Independence Period in India

Almost all the major regions of the country have witnessed ethnic movements. They take the forms of movements for regional autonomy, for creation of separate states, demand for secession or insurgency. These manifestations of ethnic movements are also called self-determination movements. In several cases ethnic movements give rise to conflicts or riots on the lines of ethnic divide based on all or some the makers – tribe, caste, language, religion, etc., the self-determination movements actually question the nation-state building model which was introduced by the Independent India.

Known as Nehruvian or the Mahalanobis model this model presumed that in the course of development or modernization the identities formed on the basis of inscriptive factors – language, caste, tribe and religion will disappear and the development will take place on the secular lines. But much before the effect of this model could be felt, it was questioned on the all major consideration – language, region and nationality. Although the movements started with the demand based on single marker like language or culture, they drew support of people who shared more than one attribute in a particular region. Movements Started with:

- the rejection of the Indian Constitution by the Nagas in the North-East, it spread in the form of
- Dravidian ethnic movement and demand for the formation of linguistic states,
- movement of for creation of separate state of Andhra Pradesh in South,

- movements in Jammu and Kashmir and Punjab, and
- Shiv Sana's against South Indians in Mumbai

In Tamil Nadu following the legacy of E.V Ramaswami Naicker three issues formed the basis of ethnic movement in the first two decades following independence --

- language,
- Dravidian culture, and
- Religion.

The leadership of the movement argued that imposition of the North Indian Hindi language Brahminical Hindu religion and Aryan culture were detrimental to the development of the Dravidian identity. Therefore, the Tamil ethnic movement had demanded, stopping of the imposition of Hindu language secession from India. However, towards the end of the 1960s the demand for secession was given up by the Tamil nationality ethnic group. It then shifts its demand to get autonomy to the states. Though the Dravidian assertion in India has become milder since the late 1960s, sentiments against the imposition of Hindi language still are important factors of mobilization there. In the light of the movements and violence generated by them prompted S. Harrison to describe the decades of the 1950s-1960s as the "most dangerous decades"?

The state of Andhra was initially reluctant to reconsider the demand for the linguistic reorganization of the state. But it had to consider this demand following the death of a Gandhian P. Srinivasulu who died of hunger strike demanding a linguistic state of Andhra Pradesh. Government's acceptance of demand to create Andhra Pradesh led to the reorganization of the states on the linguistic basis in 1953. But reorganization of the state did not halt the demand for the separate states.

The ethnic movement in Punjab was based on three types of issues – regional, religious and economic. Spearheaded by the Akali Dal, the leadership in Punjab argued that since Sikhs follow

a separate religion and speak different language, they should get a separate state. On some occasions, it got reflected in the communal divide between the Hindus and Sikhs in the state, resulting in the ethnic conflict. They launched a Punjabi Suba movement during the 1950s and 1960s demanding a separate state of Punjab for them. **Baldev Raj Nayar** observes that Akali Dal's strategy during the Punjabi Suba movement included constitutional means like memoranda, rallies and marches, penetration into the Congress organization in order to influence the party in favour of a separate state, and, agitational means which included marches to shrines, intimidation and force. As a result of the Punjabi Suba movement, Punjab was created as separate state on November 1, 1966.

According to **Paul R. Brass**, the attitude of the central government towards the ethnic conflicts or mobilization in the 1950s and 1960s was marked by an unwritten code – aversion to the demands for creation of the states on the religious grounds, no concession to the demands of the linguistic, regional or other culturally defined groups, no concession to groups involved in ethnic dispute unless there was support to the demand from both groups involved in the conflict. In his opinion, demand for creation of a separate state of Punjab was accepted only when there was also a demand for creation of the separate state of Haryana for Hindi-speaking population of the same state.

The ethnic movement in Punjab again arose in the 1980s. It challenged the sovereignty of the Indian state the notion of India as a nation-state. It sought to establish a sovereign state of Khalistan, to be based on the tenets of Sikhism. The Khalistan movement and the issues related to were generally referred to as "Punjab Crisis". The movement became violent and came to be identified with terrorism in the popular, academic and political discourse. The advocates of the Khalistan movement argued that Sikhs, as followers of the minority religion have been discriminated in India despite their contribution to

Indian economy and army. The rise of Khalistan movement, terrorism or the rioting in the 1980s has been a sequence to the political developments in the country which preceded it.

The 1970s were marked by the challenge of the Akali Dal to the dominance of the Congress in Punjab. In order to meet this challenge the Congress took the help of Sikh religious leader Sant Jarnail Singh Bhinderanwale in the 1980 Legislative assembly elections in Punjab. The use of services of Bhinderanwale had its cultural and political implication for the country and the state. It encouraged Bhinderanwale to assert his authority independently and assume the leadership of the Khalistan movement. Not only a large number of Sikh youths were attracted to the movement, the movement also received support of the foreign forces. The state responded with the Operation Blue Star sending of the armed forces to nab terrorists who were hiding in the Golden Temple at Amritsar including Sant Bhinderanwale. This ultimately led to the assassination of Indira Gandhi. The Khalistan movement also resulted in the ethnic divide between the Hindus and Sikhs in Punjab.

The scholars have explained the ethnic movement of the 1970s and 1980s in Punjab in terms of socio-economic and political factors.

- Those who explain it in terms of the socio-economic factors follow the Marxian perspective. They argue that the 'Punjab Crisis" occurred in the wake of green revolution; inability of the Sikh farmers to meet the rising cost of investment in agriculture, rising unemployment among the youth and growth of the consumerist culture which gave rise to the feeling of losing Sikh identity, etc., contributed to the rise of militancy in Punjab.

- The scholars who give the political explanation find the socio-economic explanation inadequate. They argue that the Punjab crisis was the result of a manipulation of the religion and problems of the people by the politicians.

The basis of ethnic movement in Jammu and Kashmir is language, religion and geographical location. A section of people of the state have argued since the ethnic composition of state in terms of language, religion and geography is different from the dominant ethnic groups in the country, region should be treated differently. Some of them have not considered themselves as members of the Union of India. As a result, they have demanded cessation from India, some have advocated merger with Pakistan, some have demanded a separate state for the region and some have advocated merger of two Kashmirs – one occupied by Pakistan and other of India, to become a single state. Supporters of this perspective have launched insurgency involving violence and loss human beings and material. They are supported by the foreign forces, especially Pakistan. The popular leadership in the state has also been divided on the issue of relationship of the state with the nation-state. Hari Singh, the ruler of the Jammu and Kashmir initially opposed the accession of the state into the union of India. But he had to agree to it in the face of attack of the Pakistan forces Sheikh Abdullah had supported the merger of the state with Union of India. But in the course of time he wavered on the issue. He formed Plebiscite Front, which led to his incarceration by the central government from 1953 till 1964.

According to Balraj Puri the reasons for the insurgency in Jammu and Kashmir include: attitude of the central government, the lack of opposition unemployment and other problems of people, cold war and Pakistan. Even within Jammu and Kashmir there are ethnic movements by the smaller groups in Laddakh and Jammu and Kashmir, demanding autonomy within the state of Jammu and Kashmir. These regions alleged that they are discriminated against by the dominant religious communities and prosperous regions – Muslims of Kashmir.

TRIBAL ETHNIC AND IDENTITY MOVEMENTS:

The tribals provide the most appropriate examples of the ethnic movements in the country.

In their case, almost all factors, both real and imagined, which the tribal communities share among themselves – culture, customs, language, race, religion (indigenous or otherwise), economic issues, contribute to their mobilization. Even if the their mobilization starts with a single marker, it is the multiple markers which come to play their roles in the due course. Tribal ethnic movements find their expression in all forms, – insurgency, protection of the culture and economy of the "sons of the soil" from the outside exploiters, secession from the Union of India, autonomy movements demand for the separate state, and, ethnic conflicts and riots.

The most common issues which account for the tribals ethnic mobilization are perceived or real threat to their indigenous culture and economy including the natural resources like mineral, forest and modern market opportunities by the outsiders

Numerous uprising of tribals have taken place beginning with one in Bihar, followed by many revolts in Andhra Pradesh, Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Mizoram and Nagaland. The important tribes involved in revolt in the nineteenth century were Mizos, Kols. Mundas, Daflas, Khasi and Garo, Kacharis and Kondhas.

Some scholars like Desai, Gough and Guha have treated tribal movements after independence as peasant movements, but K.S. Singh has criticized such approach because of the nature of tribals' social and political organization, their relative social isolation from the mainstream, their leadership pattern and the modus operandi of their political mobilization. Tribals' community consciousness is strong. Tribal movements were not only agrarian but also forest-based. Some revolts were ethnic in nature as these were directed against zamindars, money land and petty government officials who were not only exploiters but too.

When tribals were unable to pay their loan or the interest thereon, money-lenders and landlords usurped their lands. The tribals thus became

tenants on their own land and sometimes even bonded labourers. The police and the revenue officers never helped them. On the contrary, they also used the tribals for personal and government work without any payment. The courts were not only ignorant of the tribal agrarian system and customs but also were unaware of the plight of the tribals. All these factors of land alienation, usurpation, forced labour, minimum wages and land grabbing compelled many tribes like Munda, Santhals, kol, Bhils, Warli, etc., in many regions like Assam, Orissa, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh, Bihar and Maharashtra to revolt.

The management of forests also led some tribes to revolt, as forests in some regions are the main sources of their livelihood. The British government had introduced certain legislations permitting merchants and contractors to cut the forests. These rules not only deprived the tribals of several forest officials. This led tribes in Andhra Pradesh and some other areas to launch movements.

Raghavaiah in his analysis in 1971 of revolts from 1778 to 1970 listed 70 revolts and gave their chronology. The Anthropological Survey of India in their survey in 1976 of tribal movements identified 36 on-going tribal movements in India. It was said that through these revolts were neither numerous nor gravely frequent, yet there was scarcely any major tribe in middle or eastern India which at some time in the last 150 years had not resorted to launching movements to register their protest and despair. Some studies on tribal movements have been conducted and reported in North-East and Central India. However, there were a significant number of movements or none at all among the tribals of the southern states. This is so because the tribes down south are too primitive, too small in number, and too isolated in their habitat to organize movements, in spite of their exploitation and the resultant discontent. L.K. Mahapatra also has observed that we do not find any significant social, religious, status-mobility, or political movement among the numerically small and migratory tribes.

After independence, the tribal movements may be classified into three groups:

- movements due to exploitation by outsiders (like those of the Santhals and Mundas),

- movements due to economic deprivation (like those of the Gonads in Madhya Pradesh and the Mahars in Andhra Pradesh), and

- movements due to separatist tendencies (like those of the Nagas and Mizos).

  The tribal movements may also be classified on the basis of their orientation into four types:

- movements seeking political autonomy and formation of a state (Nagas, Mizos, Jharkhand),

- agrarian movements,

- forest- based movements, and

- socio-religious or socio-cultural movements (the Bhagat movement among Bhils of Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh, movements among tribals of south Gujarat or Raghunath Murmu's movement among the Santhals).

Mahapatra has classified tribal movements in three groups: reactionary, conservative and revolutionary.

- The reactionary movements tries to bring back 'the good old days',

- the conservative movement tries to maintain the status quo.

- The revolutionary or the reversionary movements are those which are organized for 'improvement' or 'purification' of the cultural or social by eliminating evil customs, beliefs or institutions.

Surajit Sinha has classified movements into five groups:

- ethnic rebellion,

- reform movements,

- political autonomy movements within the India Union,

- Secessionist movements, and

- agrarian unrest.

S.M. Dube has classified them in four categories:

- religious and social reform movements,
- movements for separate statehood,
- insurgent movements, and
- cultural rights movements.

Ghanshyam Shah has classified them in three groups: ethic, agrarian and political. If we take into consideration all the tribal movements, including the Naga revolution (which started in 1948 and continued up to 1972), the Mizo movement (guerrilla warfare which ended with the formation of Meghalaya state in April 1970, created out of Assam and Mizoram in 1972), the Gond Raj movement (of Gonds of Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra, started in 1941 for a separate state and reaching its peak in 1962-63), the Naxalite movements (of the tribals in Bihar, West Bengal, Andhra Pradesh and Assam), the agrarian movements (of the Gonds and the Bhils in Madhya Pradesh), and the forest-based movements (of the Gonds for getting customary rights in forests), it could be said that the tribal unrest and resultant movements were mainly movements launched for liberation from

- oppression and discrimination,
- neglect and backwardness, and
- a government which was callous to the tribals' plight of poverty, hunger, unemployment and exploitation.

Tribal movements after independence have been classified by **K.S. Singh** in four categories: agrarian, sanskritisation, cultural and political. In the first phases before independence, K.S. Singh holds that in their effort to introduce British Administration in the tribal areas, the British came in conflict with the tribal chiefs. The rebellious tribal leaders revolted against the British and exhorted their followers to drive out the outsiders. Such movements were launched by Oraon, Mundas, etc., in Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat and North-East India. After independence, tribal movements were launched either for maintaining cultural identity or for demanding a separate state or for asserting their statues as caste Hindus through sanskritisation process or on economic issues.

Stephen Fuchs has dealt with a large number of first types of tribal movements. He has called them messianic movements led by rebellious persons gifted with abilities for assuming the role of a Messiah, or these gifted people (Messiahs) are this messianic role by the community when it faces economic distress, social or political oppression. Fuchs has suggested that success of such a movement would depend upon the individual ability of charismatic leaders, thereby ignoring the relevance of system characteristics. Fuchs' analysis of movements is mostly descriptive which lists host of factors for the success or failure of these movements. None of them propose a theoretical framework.

Not many studies have been conducted on the political-separatist dimension in Nagaland, Mizoram, Chhotanagpur and Madhya Pradesh. The Jharkhand movement in Bihar is a movement of tribal communities consisting of settled agriculturalists which are sensitized to vaishnavism. Further, Chhotanagpur was the most advanced of the tribal regions in terms of literacy, political consciousness and industrial progress. Christian Missions influenced the lives of tribals here substantially. These Missions promoted education, planted the notion of private rights in land, and emphasized a since of separateness from the rest. The Jharkhand movement after 1950 developed in phases–from ethnicity to regionalism (Singh). Of these, the phase (1963-1975) after the fourth general elations is characterized by fragmentation of the Jharkhand party and fictionalization of tribal political. The BJP-led government at the Centre announced in 1998 the creation of two tribal states–one in Bihar and another in Madhya Pradesh.

B. K. Roy Burman has distinguished between prevocational and substantial movements among tribes. Proto-national movements emerge when tribes experience a transformation from tribal level

of interaction. In contrast, sub-national movements are a product of social disorganization pioneered by acculturated elite engaged in contraction of relationship and not exclusion of it with the outside world. While proto-nationalism results from exclusion expansion of the orbit of development, sub-nationalism is the result of disparities of developments. Sub-nationalism is based on the coercive power of the community.

L.K.Mahapatra in his study of tribal movements based on a time-sequence and the nature of stimulus in their existence noted certain general tendencies.

- Most reformist tribal movements, although initiated by charismatic leaders, gradually led to rationalization and institutionalization, affecting structure but not always affecting basic changes.

- Tribal movements, irrespective of their goal orientation, invariably appeared among the numerically strong, usually settled agriculturalists and economically well-off tribals.

- Primitive and small tribals directly took to large-scale conversion and separatist tendencies are marked amongst them.

- Given the geographical distribution, a pan-Indian tribes movement is unlikely to emerge.

- Democratic politics among tribes is fragmentary which in turn blocks the emergence of civil collectivism.

Concludingly it can be said that when the law does not help tribals, when the government remains callous, and the police fails to protect them even harasses them, they take to arms against their exploiters. These movements indicate that tribals adopted two paths: non-violent path of bargaining and negotiating with the government and using a variety of pressure tactics without resorting to violence/revolts, and militant path of revolts or mass struggles based on developing the fighting power of the exploited/oppressed tribal strata. The consequences of both these paths are different. One indicates struggle oriented to reforms, while the other indicates structural transformation of the community. The fact that tribals continue to be faced with problems and also continue to feel discontented and deprived, brings to the fore the conclusion that both paths have not helped them to achieve their goals.

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14 POPULATION DYNAMICS

- Population size, growth, composition and distribution.
- Components of population growth: birth, death, migration.
- Population policy and family planning.
- Emerging issue: ageing, sex ratios, reproductive health.

POPULATION SIZE, GROWTH, COMPOSITION AND DISTRIBUTION

India is the second most populous country in the world after China, with a total population of 103 crores or 1.03 billion according to the Census of 2001. The growth rate of India's population has not always been very high.

- Between 1901-1951 the average annual growth rate did not exceed 1.33%, a modest rate of growth.

- In fact between 1911 and 1921 there was a negative rate of growth of -0.03%. This was because of the influenza epidemic during 1918-19 which killed about 12.5 million persons or 5% of the total population of the country (Visaria and Visaria).

- The growth rate of population substantially increased after independence from British rule going up to 2.2% during 1961-1981.

- Since then although the annual growth rate has decreased it remains one of the highest in the developing world the comparative movement of the crude birth and death rates. The impact of demographic transition phase is found in the decade of 1921 to 1931.

Out of every 100 persons in the world 15 are Indians, that is, every seventh person is an Indian. A total of 16.7 per cent of the world's population lives in India, inhabiting only 2.4 per cent of the total land area of the world. The growth of India's population has been phenomenal compared to that of other countries and particularly in relation to the growth of necessary resources and infrastructure required to meet the pressure of the growing population. From 1971 to 2001, it increased from 548 million to 1029 million. It is two and a half times the population of the whole of Africa. During the decade the growth was equivalent to the half of the population of Canada and the United States. Every year, a whole Malaysia or Australia is added to India's population. Thus, the problem of population growth is really a serious one as the increases in employment opportunities and other resources cannot keep up with increase in population.

Table 1

Growth of Population in India, 1891-2001			
Year	Total population (in millions)	Decennial increase During the decade (in million)	Decennial growth rate during the decade (per cent)
1891	235.9	.	.
1901	238.4	2.4	1.0
1911	252.0	13.7	5.7
1921	251.3	-0.7	-0.3
1931	279.0	27.7	11.0
1941	318.7	39.7	14.2
1951	361.1	42.4	13.3
1961	439.2	78.1	21.6
1971	548.2	108.9	24.8
1981	683.3	135.6	24.7
1991	846.3	162.9	23.5
2001	1028.7	182.4	21.5

The Table 1 shows that growth rate was not so high up to 1921. However, from 1921 there was a steady increase till 1951. From 1951 onwards the growth rate has been increasing at an alarming rate. The pre 1921 period had death rate due to plague, malaria, influenza and famine. In post-independence India, health hazards have been considerably curbed, which has resulted in increased population growth. Since 1951, the population of India has nearly tripled. The growth has been higher in the northern zone compared to other areas, particularly the southern states.

The density of population has increased from 72 persons per square kilometer in 1901 to 267 persons in 1991 and 325 persons in 2001. The density of populations is 13 persons per square kilometer in Arunachal Pradesh, followed by Mizoram. West Bengal had the maximum density, followed by Bihar.

Table 2

Percentage and Growing Rate of Urban and Rural Population				
Year	Percentage of distribution		Decadal growth rate	
	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban
1901	89.2	10.8	-	-
1911	89.7	10.3	6.4	0.3
1921	88.8	11.2	-1.3	8.3
1931	88.0	12.0	9.9	19.1
1941	96.1	13.9	11.8	31.9
1951	82.7	17.3	8.8	41.4
1961	82.0	18.0	20.6	26.4
1971	80.1	19.9	21.8	37.8
1981	76.3	23.7	19.0	46.0
1991	74.3	25.7	20.0	36.5
2001	72.2	27.8	18.1	31.5

It is true that India is predominantly a country of villages. Out of India's total population, 72.2 per cent lived in villages and 27.8 per cent were in urban areas as per 2001 census. This increased to 25.7 per cent in 1991 and further it went up to 27.7 per cent in 2001. However, it is significant to note that the increase in the urban population has been far more than that of rural population. Over 60 per cent of the urban population lived in 216 agglomerations and cities with population of one lakh and above. The increase in urban population is migration from rural areas, as the cities and towns offer more job opportunities, better amenities and higher standards of living.

Hindus account for 80.5 per cent of the total population and **Muslims** of 13.4 per cent. **Christians** are the third major group. **Sikhs** are mainly concentrated in Punjab. **Jains and Buddhists** as social groups are more like Hindus. The census provides details based on age, sex, martial status, literacy, occupation, etc.

The sex composition of India's population shows that there are fewer females than males.

Table 3

Sex Ratio (females per thousand males)			
Census year	Population (in millions)		Sex Ratio
	Male	Female	
1901	120.9	117.4	972
1911	128.4	123.7	964
1911	129.5	122.8	955
1931	142.9	135.8	950
1941	163.7	154.7	945
1951	185.5	175.6	946
1961	226.3	212.9	941
1971	284.0	264.1	930
1981	353.3	330.5	935
1991	439.2	407.6	927
2001	532.2	496.5	933

Like the male-female ratio, the age structure of India's population has remained almost stable during the last six decades. The reason is that

natural calamities and man-made problem like wars have not affected India's populations on any large scale. Nearly 40 per cent of India's population consists of those below 15 years of age and about 5 to 6 per cent of 60 years and above. This shows that nearly half of India's population is dependent upon those who are earners. The dependency of such a large part of the population adversely affects economic and social development. Saving and investment become almost negligible because almost entire income is spent on consumption. Problems of unemployment, migration and mobility are also related to the age composition of India's population.

COMPONENTS OF POPULATION GROWTH: BIRTH, DEATH, MIGRATION

Before 1931, both **death rates and birth rates** are high, whereas, after this transitional moment the death rates fall sharply but the birth rate only falls slightly. The principal reasons for the decline in the death rate after 1921 were

- increased levels of control over famines and epidemic diseases. The later cause was perhaps the most important. The major epidemic diseases in the past were fevers of various sorts, plague, smallpox and cholera. But the single biggest epidemic was the influenza epidemic of 1918-19, which killed as many as 125 lakh people, or about 5% of the total population of India at that time.

- Improvements in medical cures for these diseases, programmes for mass vaccination, and efforts to improve sanitation helped to control epidemics. However, diseases like malaria, tuberculosis, diarrhoea and dysentery continue to kill people even today, although the numbers are nowhere as high as they used to be in the epidemics of the past. Surat witnessed a small epidemic of plague in September 1994, while dengue and chikungunya epidemics have been reported in various parts of the country in 2006.

- Famines were also a major and recurring source of increased mortality. Famines were cause by high levels of continuing poverty and malnutrition in an agro climatic environment that was very vulnerable to variations in rainfall. Lack of adequate means of transportation and communication as well as inadequate efforts on the part of the state were some of the factors responsible for famines.

- However, as scholars like Amartya Sen and others have shown, famines were not necessarily due to fall in food grains production; they were also caused by a 'failure of entitlements', or the inability of people to buy or otherwise obtain food.

- Substantial improvements in productivity in Indian agriculture (specially through the expansion of irrigation); improved means of communication; and more vigorous relief and preventive measures by the state have helped to drastically reduce deaths from famine.

- Nevertheless, starvation deaths are still reported from some backward region of the country. The National Rural Employment Guarantee Act is the latest state initiative to tackle the problem of hunger and starvation in rural areas. Unlike the death rate, **the birth rate** has not registered a sharp fall. This is because

- The birth rate is a socio-cultural phenomenon that is relatively slow to change.

- By and large, increased level of prosperity exerts a strong downward pull on the birth rate. Once infant mortality rates decline, and there is an overall increase in levels of education and awareness, family size begins to fall.

- There are very wide variations in the fertility rates across the states of India. Some states like Kerala and Tamil Nadu have managed to bring down their fertility rates (TFR) to 2 and 1.8 respectively. This means that the average woman in Tamil Nadu produces on

2.1 children, which is the replacement level (required to replace herself and her spouse). Kerala's TFR is actually below the replacement level, which means that the population is going to decline in the future. Many others states like Himachal Pradesh, West Bengal, Karnataka and Maharashtra have fairly low TFRs.

- But there are some states, notably Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh which still have very high TFRs of 4 or more. These few states already accounted for almost 45% of the total population as of 2001, and they will also account for about half (50%) of the additions to the Indian population up to the year 2026. Uttar Pradesh alone is expected to account for a little less than one quarter (22%) of this increase.

CAUSES OF HIGH BIRTH RATE

Customs of Early Marriage

The high birth rate in our country is due to several factors. One of the factors is the customs of early marriage in our country, particularly in rural areas. It has been observed that persons who are married at an early age have more children. Laws have been made from time to time to stop the practice of child marriage. According to the latest law, it is illegal for a girl to marry before she attains the age of 18 years and for a boy to marry before he attains the age of 21 year.

Illiteracy and Poverty

Illiteracy in our country is another factor for the high birth rate. In this context, education of women is very important. It has been found that the families of illiterate women have more children. Poverty is also an important factor. For the poor people more children mean additional hands to earn. In the poor families the child starts earning at an early age. Therefore, the poor people tend to have more children to increase their income. But in reality having more children does not help. The poor people are often unable to feed and educate their children. These children remain illiterates and unskilled labour throughout their life.

Preference for Male Child

In our country, there is a preference for the male child. This kind of wrong attitude is found not only in the illiterate families but also among the literates. In many families, the desire for a male child results in having more children.

The unmanageable growth in population creates many problems. The country cannot provide notorious food to its people. There is a shortage of space and housing. Unemployment grows and the standard of living decline. Therefore urgent measures are needed to tackle the problems of population growth.

The problem is more acute in the rural areas where the majority of our people live. These people have to be made aware of the problem of population growth. They have to be told that it is now possible to plan the size of the family. People have to realize that it is our own decision which makes our family small or big. It is in our own individual interest as well as in the interest of the country that we should have a small family.

Age structure of the Indian Population

The age structure of the population refers to the proportion of persons in different age groups relative to the total population. The age structure changes in response to changes in levels of development and the average life expectancy.

- Initially, poor medical facilities, prevalence of disease and other factors make for a relatively short life span. Moreover, high infant and maternal mortality rates also have an impact on the age structure.

- With development, quality of life improves and with it the life expectancy also improves. This changes the age structure.

- Relatively smaller proportions of the population are found in the younger age groups and larger proportions in the older age groups. This is also referred to as the ageing of the population.

- The dependency ratio is a measure comparing the portion of a population which is composed of dependents (i.e., elderly people who are

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too old to work, and children who are too young to work) with the portion that is in the working age group, generally defined as 15 to 64 years.

- A rising dependency ratio is a cause for worry in countries that are facing an ageing population, since it becomes difficult for a relatively smaller proportion of working-age people to carry the burden of providing for a relatively larger proportion of dependents.

- On the other hand, a falling dependency ratio can be a source of economic growth and prosperity due to the larger proportion of workers relative to the non-workers. This is sometimes referred to as the 'demographic dividend', or benefit flowing from the changing age structure. However, this benefit is temporary because the larger pool of working age people will eventually turn into non-working old people.

India has a very young population, that is, the majority of Indians tend to be young, and the average age is also less than that for most other countries.

- The share of the under 15 age group in the total population has come down from its highest level of 42% in 1971 to 35% in 2001.

- The share of the 15-60 age group has increased slightly from 53% to 59%, while the share of the 60+ age group is very small but it has begun to increase (form 5% to 7%) over the same period.

- But the age composition of the Indian population is expected to change significantly in the next two decades. Most of this change will be at the two ends of the age spectrum— as 0-14 age group will reduce its share by about 11% (from 34% in 2001 to 23% in 2026) while the 60 plus age group will increase its share by about 5% (from 7% in 2001 to about 12% in 2026).

As with fertility rates, there are wide regional variations in the age structure as well. While a

state like Kerala is beginning to acquire an age structures like that of the developed countries.

- Uttar Pradesh presents a very different picture with high proportions in the younger age groups and relatively low proportions among the aged.

- India as a whole is somewhere in the middle, because it includes states like Uttar Pradesh as well as states that are more like Kerala.

The bias towards younger age groups in the age structure is believed to be an advantage for India. Like the East Asian economies in the past decades and like Ireland today, India is supposed to be benefiting from a 'demographic dividend'. This divided arises from the fact that the current generation of working-age people is a relatively large one and it has only a relatively small preceding generation of old people to support. But there is nothing automatic about this advantage- it needs to be consciously exploited through appropriate policies.

Does the changing age structure offer a 'demographic dividend' for India?

The demographic advantage or 'dividend' to be derived form the age structure of the population is due to the fact that India is one of the youngest countries in the world. A third of India's population was below 15 years of age in 2000. In 2020, the average Indian will be only 29 years old, compared with an average age of 37 in China and the Untied States, 45 in Western Europe and 48 in Japan. This implies a large and growing labour force, which can deliver unexpected benefits in terms of growth and prosperity.

The 'demographic dividend' results from an increase in the proportion of workers relative to non-workers in the population. In terms of age, the working population is roughly that between 15 and 64 years of age. This working age group must support itself as well as those outside this age group (i.e., children and elderly people) who are unable to work and are therefore dependents. Changes in the age structure due to the demographic transition lower the 'dependency

ratio', or the ratio of non-working age to working-age population, thus creating the potential for generation growth.

But this potential can be converted into actual growth only if the rise in the working age group is accompanied by increasing levels of education and employment. If the new entrants to the labour force are not educated then their productivity remains low. If they remain unemployed, then they are unable to earn at all and become dependents rather than earners. Thus, changing age structure by itself cannot guarantee any benefits unless it is properly utilized through planned development. The real problem is in defining the dependency ratio of non-workers to workers. The difference between the two is determined by the extent of unemployment and underemployment, which keep a part of the labour force out of productive work. This difference explains why some countries are able to exploit the demographic advantage while others are not.

India is indeed facing a window of opportunity created by the demographic dividend. The effect of demographic trends on the dependency ratio defined in terms of age groups is quite visible. The total dependency ratio fell from 79 in 1970 to 64 in 2005. But the process is likely to extend well into this century with the age-based dependency ratio projected to fall to 48 in 2025 because of continued fall in the proportion of children and then rise to 50 by 2050 because of an increase in the proportion of the aged.

The problem, however, is employment. Data from the National Sample Survey studies of 1999-2000 and from the 200 Census of India reveal a sharp fall in the rate of employment generation creation of new jobs across both rural and urban areas. This is true for the young as well. The rate of growth of employment in the 15-30 age groups, which stood at around 2.4 per cent a year between 1987 and 1994 of both rural and urban men, fell to 0.7 for rural men and 0.3 per cent for urban men during 1994 to 2004. This suggests that the advantage offered by a young labour force is not being exploited.

Strategies exist to exploit the demographic window of opportunity that India has today. But India's recent experience suggests that market forces by themselves do not ensure that such strategies would be implemented. Unless a way forward is found, we may miss out on the potential benefits that the country's changing age structure temporarily offers.

MIGRATION

The vast majority of the population of India has always lived in the rural areas, and that continues to be true. The 2001 Census found that 72% of our population still lives in villages, while 28% is living in cities and towns. However the urban population has been increasing its share steadily, from about 11% at the beginning of the twenty-first century, an increase of about two-and-half times.

- It is not a question of numbers alone; processes of modern development ensure that the economic and social significance of the agrarian – rural way of life declines relative to the significance of the industrial–urban way of life. This has been broadly true all over the world, and it is true in India as well.

- Agriculture used to be by far the largest contributor to the country's total economic production, but today it only contributes about one-fourth of the gross domestic product. While the majorities of our people live in the rural areas and make their living out of agriculture, the relative economic value of what they produce has fallen drastically. Moreover, more and more people who live in villages may no longer work in agriculture or even in the village. Rural people are increasingly migrating to cities.

- Mass media and communication channels are now bringing images of urban lifestyles and patterns of consumptions into the rural areas. Consequently, urban norms and standards are becoming well known even in the remote villages, creating new desires and aspirations for consumptions. Mass transit and mass

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communication are bridging the gap between the rural and urban areas. Migration is no more a taboo now.

Considered from an urban point of view, the rapid growth in migration shows that the town or city has been acting as a magnet for the rural population. Those who cannot find work (or sufficient work) in the rural areas go to the city in search of work.

- This flow of rural-to-urban migration has also been accelerated by the continuous decline of common property resources like ponds, forests and grazing lands.

- These common resources enabled poor people to survive in the villages although they owned little or no land. Now, these resources have been turned into private property, or they are exhausted. (Ponds may run dry or no longer provide enough fish; forests may have been cut down and have vanished...).

- If people no longer have access to these resources, but on the other hand have to buy many things in the market that they used to get free (like fuel, fodder or supplementary food items), then their hardship increases. This hardship is worsened by the fact that opportunities for earning cash income are limited in the villages.

- Sometimes the city may also be preferred for social reasons specially the relative anonymity it offers. The fact that urban life involves interaction with strangers can be an advantage for different reasons. For the socially oppressed groups like the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, this may offer some partial protection from the daily humiliation they may suffer in the village where everyone knows their caste identity.

- The anonymity of the city also allows the poorer sections of the socially dominant rural groups to engage in low status work that they would not be able to do in the village. All these reasons make the city an attractive

destination for the villagers. The swelling cities bear testimony to this flow of population. This is evident from the rapid rate of urbanization in the post-independence period.

While urbanization has been occurring at a rapid pace, it is the biggest cities– the metropolises– that have been growing the fastest. These metros attract migrants from the rural areas as well as from small towns. There are now 5,161 towns and cities in India, where 286 million people live. What is striking, however, is that more than two – thirds of the urban population lives in 27 big cities with million-plus populations. Clearly the larger cities in India are growing at such a rapid rate that the urban infrastructure can hardly keep pace. With the mass media's primary focus on these cities, the public face of India is becoming more and more urban rather than rural. Yet in terms of the political power dynamics in the country, the rural areas remain a decisive force.

POPULATION POLICY AND FAMILY PLANNING

'Population Policy' in its narrower sense, according to the UNEP is "an effort to affect the size structure and distribution or characteristics of population". In its broader range, it includes "efforts to regulate economic and social conditions which are likely to have demographic consequences".

Population Policy Aims at :

- decreasing birth rate,
- limiting the number of children in family or two
- decreasing mortality,
- creating awareness among the masses regarding the consequences of galloping population,
- procuring necessary contraceptives,
- enacting laws like legalizing abortion, and
- giving incentives as well as disincentives.
- checking concentration of people in congested areas,

- providing necessary public services for effective settlement in new areas, and
- relocation of offices to less populated areas.

Since India's population policy needs to aim at 'enhancing the quality of life', and 'increasing individual happiness', it has to act as a means to attaining a broader objective of achieving individual fulfilment and social progress. Initially, the policy was adhoc in nature, flexible, and based on a trial and error approach. Gradually, it was replaced by more scientific planning.

- The sub-committee on population appointed in 1940 under the chairmanship of Radha Kamal Mukherjee by the National Planning Committee (appointed by Indian National Congress in 1938) laid emphasis on self-control, spreading knowledge of cheap and safe methods of birth- control and establishing birth control clinics. It also recommended raising the marriage age, discouragement of polygamy, and a eugenic programme of sterilizing persons suffering from transmissible diseases.

- The Bhore Committee of 1943 appointed by the government criticized self-control approach and advocated 'deliberate limitation of families'.

After independence, a Population Policy Committee was created in 1952 and a Family Planning Research and Programmes Committee in 1953. A Central Family Planning Board was created in 1956 which emphasized sterilization. During the 1960s, a more vigorous family planning programme was advocated for stabilizing the growth of population over a reasonable period. While earlier, it was assumed by the government that the family planning programme had created enough motivation among the people and the government was only to provide facilities for contraception, it was later realized that people needed motivation and masses had to be educated.

In April 1976, the Minister of Health and Family Planning, Karan Singh, presented before the Parliament the National Population Policy:

- raising the statutory age of marriage,
- introducing fiscal incentives to states which perform well in the field of family planning,
- paying special attention to improving female literacy,
- public education through all available media (radio, television, press, films),
- introducing direct monetary incentives for adoption of vasectomy and tubectomy operations, and a new thrust towards research in reproductive health.

It was planned at a time when the Emergency was in operation. There were so many excesses in the sterilization campaign under the leadership of Sanjay Gandhi, that it came to be regarded with hostility by people. The programme was so overzealously implemented in some of the North Indian states that during the election in 1977 after the Emergency, these excesses became an important election issue and the Congress lost the elections at the Centre. When in 1980, Indira Gandhi returned to power, she became extremely cautious and unenthusiastic about reviving her commitment to the family planning programme. Since then the policy of almost all governments in the states and at the centre has been so lopsided that the growth rate of population which was expected to have fallen below the 2 per cent mark, is till around 2.35 per cent.

Population Policy 2000: National Socio-Demographic Goals for 2010

- Address the unmet needs for basic reproductive and child health services, supplies and infrastructure.

- Make school education up to age 14 free and compulsory, and reduce dropouts at primary and secondary school levels to below 20 per cent for both boys and girls.

- Reduce infant mortality rate to below 30 per 1000 live births.

Reduce maternal mortality ratio to below 100 per 100,000 live births.

- Achieve universal immunization of children against all vaccine preventable diseases.

- Promote delayed marriage of girls, not earlier than age 18 and preferably after 20 years of age.

- Achieve 80 per cent institutional deliveries and 100 per cent deliveries by trained persons.

- Achieve universal access information/counseling, and services for fertility regulation and contraception with a wide basket of choices.

- Achieve 100 per cent registration of births, deaths, marriage and pregnancy.

- Contain the spread of Acquired Immuno Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS), and promote greater integration between the management of Reproductive Tract Infections (RTI) and Sexually Transmitted Infections (STI) and the National Aids Control Organization.

- Prevent and control communicable diseases.

- Integrate Indian System of Medicine (ISM) in the provision of reproductive and child health services, and in reaching out to households.

- Promote vigorously the small family norm to achieve replacement levels of TFR.

- Bring about convergence in implementation of related social sector programmes so that family welfare becomes a people centered programme.

But National Population Policy-2000 has been criticized on many counts. Some major concerns regarding NPP-2000 are:

- NPP-2000 provides cash-based incentives for small family norm. Some scholars are concerned that this does not help as monetary incentives do not change habits and behaviours based on social norms. That children are gifts of God and one should never stop children from coming to this world is widespread social value in our society. Monetary incentives can not change this basic social value, alternative strategies need to be devised. There is need for social transformation, and no innovative strategy in line with this thought has been included in NPP-2000.

- Highlighting the bottom up approach in implementing small family norm NPP-2000 has emphasized on role of Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs). However, it is not mentioned what their role is going to be Similarly, Population Research Institutes have not been given any clear responsibilities

- NPP-2000 unequivocally rejects all forms of coercion. Yet, many state governments have announced population policies that violate this commitment of NPP. Coercion is used by states in the form of disincentives. For example, Rajasthan and Maharashtra make adherence to two child norm, a service condition for state government employment Many states provide funds for rural development schemes subject to adherence of population largest by panchayats.

- Disincentives imposed by state governments are often anti-poor and anti-women. The poor (tribals, dalits etc.) have more fertility rate than the rich.

FAMILY PLANNING

India was the first country to evolve a government-backed family planning programme in the 1950s when the rest of the world was not aware of the problem. But, India is still trailing behind in population control. During the Emergency regime the political leaders, the government officials and policemen shouted themselves hoarse advocating sterilization. The devised ambitious programmes and carried them out against popular wishes, and even used such harsh and coercive methods of sterilization that today one is reluctant to talk of family planning to the populace. The concerned officials in family welfare/planning departments have been scared away from it. The experts have jettisoned hopes of reaching targets. In fact, for all practical purposes, the country is without an effective

programme or an effective target. Political parties studiously skirt the subject, and election campaigns are conducted without a word about it. What was once a highly dramatic political issue has suddenly become taboo.

In 1977, 'family planning' was rechristened 'family welfare', and tasks beyond its competence embracing all aspects of family welfare, including improvement of women's educational level. Government of India also adopted the UNEP guideline of delaying the first child and spacing the subsequent births.

The methods in family planning

Sterilization, loop, pill, withdrawal, rhythm, sheath and diaphragm. The condom and the pill seem most popular among the high socio-economic groups; so are withdrawal method and the condom among the middle socio-economic groups and sterilization is preferred by people belonging to the low social strata. Operations for family planning are not very popular among the socially well-placed, as this group is exposed to other methods of birth control. A good number of women use more than one method, depending on circumstances, availability and mood of the moment.

Measures Adopted

- Officially mobilized in 1951, about 150 family planning clinics were established. Since then, a network of Community Health Centres, Primary Health Centres, and Sub Centres have been created for implementing family planning programme. A large number of centres and sub-centres are created in rural areas in each Five Year Plan.

- Of the various methods of family planning, the government till recently depended more on the 'camp approach' which relied implicitly on the district authorities applying pressure on their officials to intensify the sterilization campaign. These government set targets for different states and district and adopted persuasive, monetary, as well as coercive measures to achieve targets. The highest rate of target achievement (200%) was in 1776-77.

- The Primary Health Centres in villages, engaged in family planning programmes, perform two specific functions: providing services to people and disseminating information about these services in an effective manner in order to motivate people to accept family planning. Nearly half a million medical and para-medical persons are engaged in the programme, besides half a million part-time village health guides.

What We Achieved

- Since 1968-69 the decline in the birth rate became noticeable. The birth rate which stood at 41.7 per thousand in 1961 came down to 28.7 in 1994 and 25.2 in 1995. Between 1956 and 1996, about 13 crores births—equal to the current population of Japan—were averted (The Hindustan Times, February).

- The achievement of the targets has not been disastrous in all fields though the number of sterilization has fallen, According to the National Health and Family Welfare, only 6 per cent of Indian women between the ages of 13 and 49 years use any modern contraceptive. Yet another report says that half of the couples do not practice family planning though over 90 per cent are aware of it.(The Hindustan times).

- The use of condom in India is as insignificant as a more six per couple per year. The data dished out by the survey about sterilization rate (30%) -- the mainstay of the sterilizations are undertaken only after having had three or more children. The total fertility even begun in India (Sahay, 1997).

- Today, the effort has altogether slackened to the extent that Ashish Bose, a noted demographer of our country, in his talk on 'Indian Population' said that "family planning programme has completely failed in the country and entirely a new approach is needed for its success".

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- The progress in containing population growth has been extremely slow as is evident when we compare it with China which has avoided the birth of 200 million children since 1970 through a vigorous family planning programme and brought the fertility rate down to 2.5 from 5.82 among eligible mothers (the Hindustan Times,). China adopted the norm of one child per couple in the urban centres and a ceiling of two children per couple in the rural areas, with several incentives for the planned child as also the parents. Those who violated these norms were penalized. The planned child was given special allowances till the age of 14 for education and upbringing; and the couple was provided with land for building house or for farm machinery. A major component of the programme in China is encouraging late marriage and late child birth.

Attitude Towards Family Planning

The idea of family planning has been successfully brought to the notice of an average Indian woman. The attitude of a woman towards family planning is influenced by her education, age, income background, husband's occupation, and her (working) status among other factor. In terms of age, it has been found that the percentage of women approving family planning decreases as the age group increases. But the acceptance is about two-third even among the older age groups. This clearly shows that the great majority of Indian women approve of family planning, irrespective of age.

Kothari and Gulati conducted a survey in Rajasthan. It was found that out of total persons studied, 88.1 per cent were in favour of family planning and 11.9 per cent were against it. Kothari also noted that according to the findings of the National Family Welfare Survey, conducted in Rajasthan in 1993, of the women married in the 13-49 years age group, 90 per cent knew some method of family planning, and 76.2 per cent were aware of some sources of getting the required contraceptives, though only 31.8 per cent were actually using the contraceptives.

Rao and Inbaraj conducted a survey on attitude towards family planning in Vellore city of Tamil Nadu and its surrounding villages. In all, 2,426 persons were interviewed with the intention of finding out whether they considered it within the power of the couple to control the number of children. Around 37 per cent replied in the affirmative and 41 per cent replied in the negative (The Journal of Family Welfare). When they were asked whether they themselves were in favour of family planning, 64.6 per cent said 'Yes' and 25.4 per cent said 'No'. The reasons given for hostility to family planning measures were: it was harmful to women, it went against God's will, and it constituted unnatural behaviour. However, since seven out of every ten persons were in favour of family planning, it points to the fact that people today have ceased to be very traditional in their beliefs and values.

A study made by the National Institute of Community Development covering 365 villages in 16 states and 43 districts and 7,224 respondents also revealed that 51.6 per cent were in favour of family planning and 23.7 percent were against it.

Since illiteracy is found more among the poorer section of our society, it is seen that women with low education in the lower strata are more reluctant to accept family planning methods. Their contention is that since they have no money to fall back upon, their only hope of survival is their children's income. An average poor Indian couple is not satisfied with fewer than two or three children. Time and again studies in various parts of the country have revealed this fact. About a decade ago, a large scale survey covering some 32,000 respondents sponsored by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare came to the conclusion that most couples wanted not only three or more children but they also wanted that two of them should be sons (The Hindustan Times).

A survey was conducted in 1991 on 'Socialization of Indian Youth About Population' by the Family Planning Foundation, Delhi in collaboration with Operation Research Group,

Delhi. This survey studies the attitudes of 17,185 male and female children selected from 251 schools from urban and rural areas of 22 districts of Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan, Haryana and Delhi. A large number of the respondents were in favour of two-child family. While about 90 per cent subjects preferred one son and one daughter, 73 per cent were not keen about giving undue importance to the sex of the children. A majority of the respondents did not consider the age of marriage of both boys and girls below 22 years as the correct marriage age. A good number of them had slight knowledge of contraceptives but they were not very well informed about the subject. A large number has acquired this knowledge from watching the TV (The Hindustan Times).

A survey was conducted by Population Research Centre of Udaipur University in Rajsthan in 1992 in which 5,211 women (1,019 from urban areas and 4,192 fro rural areas) from 27 districts in 13-49 years age group were interviewed. The survey revealed that among the currently married women (i.e. 5058), 99 per cent in urban areas and 84 percent in rural areas had knowledge of at least one modern method of family planning i.e., sterilization, condom, pill, and injection) as different from the traditional method of periodic abstinence, withdrawal, etc. As regards their husbands, amongst 2,433 rural husbands, 57.1% approve family planning, 16.8 per cent disapproved it, and 26.1 per cent were unsure. Amongst urban husbands, 74.9 per cent approved it, 9.4 per cent disapproved it, and 15.7 per cent were unsure.

Reality Check of Family Planning

Family planning in India has come to a standstill. In fact, the programme is moving backward as today we are producing 52 children every minute in comparison to 21 children per minute in 1971 and eight children per minute in 1941. This stagnation is bound to wipe out all the effort that has been made since 1952. While it is true that the couple protection percentage has gone up steadily from 10.4 in 1971 to 43.96 in 1995, it should be asked : who are these couples

who are supposed to have obtained protection? It is none other than those who have had three or more children and who have already done their part of the damage to the two children family norm.

The propaganda for two child and no child after 35 year of age should be linked with improving the standard of living, provision of better education, and health guarantee of (two) children and improved services for the health of women/mother. This will put the couples in a frame of mind where they would themselves be anxious to work for this objective. Money incentives cannot be a motivating factor. The money may be incentive for the campaigner to motivate the couple but not for the person undergoing sterilization.

Some scholars present optimistic blueprints for checking population explosion in the coming years. One point usually made is that our country has many untapped resources which, if properly developed, will sustain even three times the present population. The second point urged is that industrial growth, economic development and increase in exports will take care of poverty, unemployment and the increasing population.

Both these views are rather naive and unsound. What is useful and important for any country is the goods and services actually available and not likely to be available to meet the needs of the population. With the present political situation in the country both at the centre and in the states, with the political parties laying focus on achieving and retaining power rather than or 'community development' and with increasing casteism, parochialism, regionalism, and linguism, how can we expect our power elite to take interest in development and modernization and/ or tapping the untapped resources?

EMERGING ISSUES : AGEING, SEX RATIOS, CHILD AND INFANT MORTALITY, REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH

Ageing : Problems and Solutions

Thanks to development in medical science for the decline in the death rate in India and cure

easily available for most of the ailments which has increased human longability. The number of aged persons in India is increasing. Because of the disintegration of joint-family system and change in the lifestyle of the youth under the influence of modernization and urbanization aged persons are facing many problems. Here, we will consider the nature of problems faced by this section of population in relation to his relations with younger members of the family.

The word 'Ageing' has been defined variedly by researchers in different contexts.

- **Becker** defines ageing in the broadest sense, "as those changes occurring in an individual, as a result of the passage of time".

- **According to Stieglitz,** "ageing is a part of living. It begins with conception and terminates with death".

- **Tibbitts** says "ageing may best be defined as the survival of a growing number of people who have completed the traditional adult roles of making a living and childrearing".

Similarly, the optimum minimum age fixed for treating a person as aged also varies from country to country. In India the attainment of the age 60 has been mostly accepted for the purpose of classifying aged persons.

Recently a few studies have been conducted to focus on the problems of aged in varied dimensions. The change of role and status is a part of the ageing process.

The ancient scriptures divide family life into 4 stages. Out of which the last stage is termed as 'Vanaprastha' which means withdrawal from active life. Studies by **De Souza, Desai and Naik** show that religion plays an important role in the life of the aged. These studies still hold good.

- There is a broad distinction between **physical and social ageing**. The social ageing need not necessarily coincide with physical ageing. Physical ageing may be conditioned by the health status whereas social ageing may coincide with retirement from the production process. Social ageing in the Indian context may be interpreted in a different way. This is so because social and cultural aspects are included besides the economic aspects. In rural areas where still the past-oriented societies prevail, the aged are meaningful links to tradition and ensure historical continuity. In Industrialized societies and urban areas the roles get shifted from authoritarian-patriarchal type to an equalitarian partnership. Here, there are more non-traditional roles and discontinuity of status among the aged in terms of family and kinship patterns.

- **In the case of the retired persons,** family comes to their rescue for their economic, emotional protection. The aged living without any family members are taken care of by the State Governments either through social assistance scheme or old age pension scheme or through the destitute homes, home for the aged, ashrams conducted by religious institutions, etc.

On the contrary, in the rural settings the old people may retire gradually owing to ill health or susceptibility of diseases instead. Hence, the old age, for people without children becomes a hardship.

- Rapid urbanization, change over to the nuclear family system, change over to the flat system and the need for the women to take up jobs to add to the family kitty have also contributed to the changing roles of aged in and outside the family.

- It is often observed that aged in cities become anti-social and limit themselves to the four walls (owing to heavy traffic and noise outside). Mostly spend their time in looking after grand children. Further, social assistance rendered by the schemes for the aged, do not strengthen the capacity of the family but rather have the effect of replacing the family.

- The family development cycle brings about changes in the status and roles of both men

and women because there is a transition from the role of the provider to that of the dependant. This may result in loss of role or to limited participation in decision-making process in the social-cultural and economic spheres of family.

- Process of migration also has a vital role to play in the case of ageing. The impact may be of two kinds. One, when the aged are forced to migrate to the urban areas leaving behind their older members and other relatives in the family, or it may be to join the members of the family who have already migrated. The situation in both cases may be varied but may have impact either in the form of adjustment or isolation from the family circle.

- Inter and Intra-generation gaps may be created due to the process of modernization taking place in the society which may have repercussions on the aged as well as the younger ones. The advent of Socio-Psychological and Cultural changes may result in the inter-generational conflict which may add to the problems of the aged.

- The urban studies (Delhi and Mumbai) show that though old age leads to enhanced status, it is conditioned by their economic situation. Both from the point of view of economic and emotional support, the role in the family become essential for the aged. The transition from the role of bread winner to a dependent causes problems among the aged. The degree of dependency varies according to the economic situations and also characterized by a loss or role and limited role in decision making process.

- The problem faced by aged retired from organized sector, informal sector or agricultural sector varies. The persons retired from organized sector have less economic insecurity. People from the informal sector lack even the minimum economic security. Thus the aged peasants may become the worst sufferers, under the shelter of bread winners, who may be sons or daughters. This may lead to the prolonged work participation by aged even after their attainment of age specific. In the agricultural sector, the aged may retire only due to illness or problems connected with physical strength. Otherwise their participations still continues which is needed for their survival.

- The situation may be different when one is unemployed and has no economic support. They may or may not get the same respect either from his family members or from society. They have to cope up with a lowered status.

- Getting along with younger generation may pose problems of adjustment. The value system of the younger generations may be different from that of the aged which may result in generational conflict or generation gap.

India has been and continues to a great extent to be an elder directed society. Parents and grand parents in a joint family make many decisions related to work and marriage. They exercise authority and influence over the affairs of the family and the community. People often maintain some distance from the elderly and they never call them by their first names.

- Although elders do influence decisions about youth much of the time they are mature decisions. There is also a lot of warmth and affection in the relationships between the old and the young in India. The aged are usually taken care of by their children, traditionally the sons. There is a great deal of economic and emotional interdependence between the generations. There is closeness, concern and lone, forbearance and patience as well as problems, conflicts, hurts and burdens. There is no social security. Some people get pensions, which are often meager.

- All these general observations are variable in their applications to different groups and communities and must be understood against the following facts :

- In India the socio-economic structure is roughly 15 per cent rich, 25 per cent middle class and 60 per cent poor.
- 72 per cent of the people live in villages and are traditional in their lifestyles.
- There is a gradual growth in urbanization, industrialization and education and consequently some crisis of authority, some rebellion by the youth against the authority of the elders.
- There is an increase in the longevity of people from 40-50 years some decades ago to the 60 and 80s.

- As compared between the rural and urban setting, the problems of adjustments of the elderly and those who care for them in India, particularly in urban areas are much more obvious than in the rural areas. India is well known for its rich socio-cultural traditions for the respect to elders. Yet, practically we find some aged persons not happy with the attitude of their children, because these children are self-righteous, they take away everything from their parents and do not treat them with respect of which they rightly deserve. Hence, governmental and some non-governmental agencies must rescue such old persons to enable them to live in peace till they are alive.

Needs and Services

The needs of the aged can roughly fall into the following categories:

- Environmental.
- Occupational.
- Economic.
- Health.
- Leisure.
- Social.

Therefore, there are four types of programmes which are needed in the country for the older persons:

- Day-care Centers or Older Persons Club for those who live their families,
- Institutions for unattached, dependent and friendless persons,
- Counselling for incurable and chronically ill, and
- Financial assistance to those who can live in their families but do not have sufficient means to maintain themselves.

Though the problems of the aged can be looked in different ways, basically they can be grouped into four major areas.

- Psychological or emotional problems and social problems are the derivatives of familial problems. The familial problems are mainly concerned with neglect and poor upkeep and in its wake give rise to emotional and psychological problems associated with sickness. The feeling of dependency on others during sickness causes emotional disturbance, besides adverse emotional reaction while ill. Another type of emotional disturbance is rooted in loneliness and physical isolation mostly among those who have outlived their relations or are estranged from them and live alone.

- Health and medical care is a major problem for the aged. Even when one is not suffering from any disease, one experiences a gradual decline in physical strength with growing age. But in most cases the advanced ages brings with it some chronic ailment and the aged get bed ridden and depend on others for their mobility and need medical care for their treatment.

- The housing conditions of most of the aged and the infirm are generally far from satisfactory. The problem is particularly acute among those who live alone. They are obliged to share accommodation with others. As a matter of fact, this problem is also associated with the economic problems.

- The majority of the elderly people have financial problems. Even those who are the recipients of retirement benefits after superannuation find it difficult to meet their basic requirements with decrease in their income and increase in the cost of living.

United Nations has suggested following principles and recommendations for the aged:

- National machinery should be established or strengthened to ensure that the humanitarian needs and development potential of the aged are appropriately addressed;

- the expansion of research focusing on the demographic, epidemiological, biological, social and economic aspects of ageing, particularly in developing countries, should be supported;

- The establishment or expansion of community based or institutional care systems that provide the necessary health and social services for the frail elderly who have limited or no family support should be encouraged;

- Organizations and associations of the elderly, which ensure their active involvement in policy and programme development, should be encouraged and promoted. Training in Gerontology and Geriatrics should be promoted to ensure that policy makers, researchers and practitioners have an adequate knowledge of issue related to ageing.

The Ministry of Social Justice and Employment has been implementing has Central Scheme of assistance for establishing and maintaining the day- care centers, old age homes, mobile Medicare units as well as for supporting and strengthening non-institutional services for the aged. This revised scheme is called as 'An Integrated Programme for older persons'.

There is obviously enough scope for improvement in the quality and coverage of the scheme of the old age pension. Considering the needs of the aged, it is imperative to take supportive action for mitigation of their suffering, particularly by increasing the scope of old age pension, which is required to be given not only to those who have no income and who have no relatives having direct responsibility for their care, but also to those as well who have relatives whose financial resources are limited. What is needed more than institutional facilities today are measures which would help in strengthening the family so that most of the aged are taken care in the family itself.

Welfare activities in respect of aged in India are actually confined to the old age pension scheme and homes for the aged. There is, however, scope for organizing a number of other welfare services, such as medical care services, recreation and leisure activities, assistance in carrying the household chores, and marketing and counselling service for families caring for old persons.

Concluding Analysis of Ageing in India

Traditionally, the aged were accorded a place of honour and importance in the family and community. Ancient literature is replete with reverent reference to the aged. Long life was cherished, old age was viewed with deference, and the aged had a substantial role to perform in society. In the joint family setting, their opinion on religious, economic and social matters was valued; and in the clan and community their counsel carried weight. Also, in the socialization of children they had a positive role; they showered affection and enforced social norms and mores. On the other hand, the family and community looked after them irrespective of their productive capacity.

In contemporary times, the social situation has undergone a perceptible change. The forces of industrialization, commercialization and modernization have influenced and altered many social values and institutions. There has come about a substantial dilution of economic and social values. Likewise traditional institutions have to a great deal, lost their hold and relevance. The joint family system is fast giving way to nuclear family.

All this has seriously affected the situation of senior citizens in society. Neither they have the earlier position of importance in the family and the community, nor are they looked after the way it was done earlier.

As a result, the process of ageing sets in early in our country notwithstanding some improvements in health standards during recent years. This has created a rather paradoxical situation. Though the introduction of modern health technology and medicine has increased the span of life, it has also contributed to a higher proportion of aged or retired persons in the composition of population having little income of their own, who have to depend on others for their livelihood.

The Hindu joint family, which was the unit of social organization, itself provided an element of social security as well as status to the aged. The reciprocal obligations of the parents to support the child in infancy and of the son to support the parents in old age resulted in 'social insurance' through the cohesion of the traditional family comprising two or more generations. One other rationale for the regard for elders was their wisdom and experience which was supposed to pass to the next generation. However, recent changes in the social values, social structure and economy, coupled with the demographic transition, have created problems for the aged who are new under a severe strain.

The changes in kinship and family organization in conjunction with urbanization and industrialization have been more to the disadvantages of the aged. It would seem that industrialization and urbanization have impinged upon the inbuilt mechanism of the Indian Joint family system to provide social security to its members. In urban areas, the general economic inadequacy of the nuclear family have made it difficult to discharge its obligations in matters of providing social security to its members, especially the aged. Even Indian villages which are somewhat remote from the cities the family life and social values have been undergoing significant changes which are not favourable to the aged.

SEX RATIO IN INDIA

The sex ratio is an important indicator of gender balance in the population. As mentioned in the section on concepts earlier, historically, the sex ratio has been slightly in favour of females, that is, the number of females per 1000 males has generally been somewhat higher than 1000. However, India has had a declining sex-ratio for more than a century. From 972 females per 1000 males at the turn of the twentieth century, the sex ratio has declined to 933 at the turn of the twenty-first century. The trends of the last four decades have been particularly worrying– from 941 in 1961 the sex ratio had fallen to an all time low of 927 in 1991 before posting a modest increase in 2001.

But that has really alarmed demographers, policy makers, social activists and concerned citizens are the drastic fall in the child sex ratio. Age specific sex ratio began to be computed in 1961. The sex ratio for the 0-6 years age group (known as the juvenile or child sex ratio) has generally been substantially higher than the overall sex ratio for all age groups, but it has been falling very sharply. In fact the decade 1991-2001 represents an anomaly in that the overall sex ratio has posted its highest ever increase of 6 points from the all time low of 927 to 933, but the child sex ratio has dropped from 945 to 927, a plunge of 18 points taking it below the overall sex ratio for the first time.

The state-level child sex ratios offer even greater cause for worry. As many as six states and union territories have a child sex ratio of under 900 females per 1000 males. Punjab is the worst off with an incredibly low child sex ratio of 793 (the only state below 800), followed by Haryana, Chandigarh, Delhi, Gujarat and Himachal Pradesh. Uttaranchal, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh and Maharashtra are all under 925, while Madhya Pradesh, Goa, Jammu and Kashmir, Bihar, Tamil

Nadu, Karnataka and Orissa are above the national average of 927 but below the 950 mark. Even Kerala, the state with the best overall sex ratio does not do too well at 963, while the highest child sex ratio of 986 is found in Sikkim.

Demographers and sociologists have offered several reasons for the decline in the sex ratio:

- The main health factor that affects women differently from men is childbearing. It is relevant to ask if the fall in the sex ratio may be partly due to the increased risk of death in child birth that only women face.

- However, maternal mortality is supposed to decline with development, as levels of nutrition, general education and awareness as well as the availability of medical and communication facilities improves. Indeed, maternal mortality rates have been coming down in India even though they remain high by international standards. So it is difficult to see how maternal mortality could have been responsible for the worsening of the sex ratio over time.

- Combined with the fact that the decline in the child sex ratios has been much steeper than the overall figure, social scientists believe that the cause has to be sought in the differential treatment of girl babies.

Several other factors may be held responsible for the decline in the child sex ratio including.

- Severe neglect of girl babies in infancy leading to higher death rates,

- Sex specific abortions that prevent girl babies from being born, and

- Female infanticide (or the killing of girl babies due to religious or cultural beliefs).

Each of these reasons point to a serious social problem, and there is some evidence that all of these have been at work in India. Practices of female infanticide have been known to exist in many regions, while increasing importance is being attached to modern medical techniques by which the sex of the baby can be determined in the very early stages of pregnancy. The availability of the sonogram, originally developed to identify genetic or other disorders in the foetus, may be used to identify selectively abort female fetuses.

The regional pattern of low child sex ratios seems to support this argument. It is striking that the lowest child sex ratios are found in the most prosperous regions of India. Punjab, Haryana, Chandigarh, Delhi, Gujarat and Maharashtra are among the richest states of India in terms of per capital incomes, and they are also the states with the lowest child sex ratios. So the problem of selective abortions is not due to poverty or ignorance of lack of resources. For example, if practices like dowry payments to marry off their daughters, then prosperous parents would be the ones most able to afford this. However, we find that sex ratios are lowest in the most prosperous regions.

It is also possible (though this issue is still being researched) that as economically prosperous families decide to have fewer children-often only one or two now–they may also wish to choose the sex of their child. This becomes possible with the availability of ultrasound technology, although the government has passed strict laws banning this practice and imposing heavy fines and imprisonment as punishment. Known as the Pre-Natal Diagnostic Techniques (Regulation and Prevention of Misuse) Act, this law has been in force since 1996, and has been further strengthened in 2003. However, in the long run the solution to problems like the bias against girl children depends more on how social attitudes evolve even though laws and rules can also help.

Reproductive Health

The available facts pertaining to reproductive health in India point out that:

- Of the total conceptions that take place annually, about 78 per cent are unplanned and about 25 per cent are definitely unwanted. About 30 million women in India desire better family planning services since they are not satisfied with the available facilities/programmes.

- Out of about 11 million abortions every year, 69 per cent are induced and 31 per cent are spontaneous.
- Over one lakh women die every year during pregnancy and child birth.
- About three-fourth babies are delivered at home and only one-third deliveries are assisted by a doctor, nurse or a midwife.
- One in every 13 children dies within the first year of life and one in every nine dies before reaching the age of five. Infant mortality is as high as 52 per cent in rural areas.

In recent years government has started many programmes to improve reproductive health of women. Janani Suraksha Yojana, National Rural Health Mission, ASHA volunteers etc., are all dedicated to this cause. Reproductive health of the women has become prime concern of policy makers. High infant mortality rate, maternal mortality rate are contributed to weak reproductive health.

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15 CHALLENGES OF SOCIAL TRANSFORMATION

- Crisis of development: displacement environmental problems and sustainability.
- Poverty, deprivation and inequalities.
- Violence against women.
- Caste conflicts.
- Ethnic conflicts, communalism, religious revivalism.
- Illiteracy and disparities in education.

SOCIAL TRANSFORMATION

Neither society nor social problems are static. Social Problems are mainly linked with Social structure.

- Ideologies
- Values
- Attitudes
- Institutions
- Power
- Authority
- Interests of Society

The process of Social Transformations brings about change in the above mentioned different

aspect of social life and side by side generates new social problems.

It is a broad concept used to indicate social dynamics. The ideas, conveying the meaning of 'evolution', 'progress' and 'change' on the one hand, and the meaning of 'development', 'modernization' and 'revolution' on the other, are incorporated within the concept of the process of social transformation. If the process of social transformation is suppressed, it generates new social problems i.e., farmers unrest, Naxalism, unemployment, youth unrest etc. If the process of transformation taking a natural course, the society faces the problems of adjustment i.e., generation gap, caste conflict etc, poverty, inequality, and deprivation, displacement, during the transitional phase of the decline of the old system and emergence of the new system.

CRISIS OF DEVELOPMENT: DISPLACEMENT, ENVIRONMENTAL PROBLEMS AND SUSTAINABILITY

What is Development?

Development is a stage in which with the help of his knowledge and skill man is able to relieve himself from the natural environment and molds it for his own advantage. It involves extraction of natural mineral from the land and sea water and controlling the flow of natural surface water for generation or power and transforming land for the development of transport facilities and industrial establishment. Naturally such development activities provide economic benefits and it is the only way for the progress of human civilization.

Main characteristics of development are as follows:

- Development modifies natural environment for human advantage.
- Development is a change on account of best use of technological and economic capabilities.

- Development increases physical and economic capability, hence, it can be measured in terms of its social benefits.
- Development brings about economic and technological change; therefore, socio-cultural change is its secondary aspect.
- Development leads human life from simplicity to complexity.
- Development leads to division of labour and specialization in job.
- Development provides various options to man to fulfil his needs.
- Development is an upward trend in the production of various goods and instrument for our use.
- Proper planning is essential for proper development.
- Some types of development if not controlled properly, such as weaponry, may lead to human devastation.

Development is necessary for the progress but it cannot be done without changing the land use and erecting some form of new structure and for this the original user of the land has to be **displaced** which if not done with the free will and convenience for the original user, it is bound to create problems to him. Such problems are termed as development induced displacement problems. In short, this is **crisis of development**.

Meaning of Displacement

We find that since early days of human civilization human settlements are along rivers and have agricultural landmass around their settlements. When government plans some types of development, such as construction of dam, power generation plant, construction of road or railway and development of industrial area etc., it acquires land for the purpose. After paying some compensation asks the original owners of the land acquired to vacate it. If they do not do so willingly they are removed from the acquired land by force. This process is termed as **development induced displacement**.

Types of Displacement

Displacement is not migration, because migration is on account of individual's free will for his own good while displacement is forced by the state. Sometimes the government provides some facilities to the displaced person and families and sometime they are asked to make their own arrangements. Here, we will discuss various types of displacements.

- **Natural Displacement :** It is on account of natural calamities such as flood, droughts, earthquakes, sea tides etc. Tsunami of 2004, which was most devastating, had displaced millions of persons, who are yet to be rehabilitated.
- **Industrial Displacement :** This has a great economic impact. When industries closed on any account, the employees are forced to go elsewhere. It is not migration because the labour force migrates from rural areas to industrial urban areas on their own but closer of industry forces them to go elsewhere.
- **Political Displacement :** Due to the creation of Pakistan millions of people migrated from India to Pakistan and from Pakistan to India. It was forced on them therefore it was displacement. Similarly, East-Pakistanis felt forced to leave East-Pakistan by Pakistan government. They had to live as displaced persons in India. In 1974 large number of Hindus came in India from Bangladesh.
- **Terroristic Displacement :** This type of displacement started in 1980 from Jammu & Kashmir, 75% Hindu population of the state under stress of terrorism is living as displaced population in other parts of India.
- **Development Induced Displacement :** When government acquires some land for any type of development activity as discussed earlier it is termed as development induced displacement.

Problems of Displacement

- **Displacement from Dams and Reservoirs:** Various dams and reservoirs such as Bhakhra Nangal Dam, Sardar Sarovar Dam, Tihari Dam, Rani Avantibai, Bargi Dam and many others of this nature have been constructed, which have rendered nearly 50 lakh homeless and they are facing the problems of displacement, though government took to rehabilitation work, but displaced people are not satisfied. Narmada Bachao Andolan is still on for the rehabilitation of the displaced people.

- **Industrial Development and Displacement:** Large size industrial plants to boost the national economy were erected and land acquired for the purpose had displaced nearly 50 lakh people so far. These people are not satisfied with the compensation paid to them and efforts are made for their rehabilitation. It may be stressed that some industries produce goods of domestic use in large quantities which has rendered large number of workers, engaged in small and cottage industries, jobless. Number of such displaced persons cannot be counted.

- **New Forest Policy and Displacement:** This policy has banned traditional tribal population from taking herbs and earn their bread, thus crores of people feel displaced without proper rehabilitation plans for the good of the people.

- **Displacement caused by Urban Facilities:** Government is developing Mandi Samiti, transport facilities, educational institutions, sports facilities, etc., in urban areas for which land around urban areas have been acquired by the government and small farmers of those areas have been displaced.

Measures to Check Displacement

Since the problem of development induced displacement is a question of life and death for a very large population, therefore, we suggest following measures to check the problems:

- Before undertaking any development project it must be evaluated by experts so that only minimum numbers of people are displaced.

- The execution of such big projects be handled by honest and efficient persons so that they are completed in due time and proper rehabilitation of displaced is ensured.

- Plans must be made for the employment of the displaced people.

- Cash compensation to displaced persons does not serve the purpose. Therefore, they should be provided with living space, educational and medical facilities for their children and family members as well as employment to the displaced.

- Dispersal of industries instead of their concentration in some selected areas will benefit large number of people and reduce the large scale displacement.

Environmental Problems

Environmental problems means overall lowering of environmental qualities because of adverse changes brought in by human activities in the basic structure of the components of the environment to such an extent that these adverse changes affect all biological communities in particular. Environmental pollution and environmental degradation terms are used interchangeably but these are different concepts. Pollution is the cause for the degradation of environment. The degradation of environment is caused by pollution and hazard/disasters. The hazards or disasters are sudden by natural processes or by human activities which require the immediate relief.

Environmental pollution is taking place due to slow and gradual human activities, e.g., increase of human population, establishing factories and industries, development of transportation facilities, etc. The pollution degrades the quality of the environment which can be protected by proper environmental management and assessment.

Environmental and ecological changes are the result of processes of the 'economic and technological' growth. With the socio-economic, scientific and technological development has emerged the serious problem of environmental degradation. Environmental degradation leaves direct impact on the ecology and thus is caused ecological imbalance because of marked reduction in the ecosystem and ecological diversity. The ecological imbalance is the sign of environmental degradation. It can be easily observable in living organisms.

The interaction between the environment and society depends largely on the social and political systems within which arise the environmental and ecological problems. The capitalistic and socialistic system, perception and reactions to the environment are quite different. **Socialistic system** lays emphasis on the social importance of nature resources and environmental problems. **The capitalistic system** has selfish international motive, regarding the exploitation of natural resources.

Capitalism runs on the logic of maximizing profits. To maximize profits, capitalists try to grow continually. No amount of profit is enough. Hence, more and more should be produced and sold. For more production, more resources are needed. As we consume excessive natural resources, environmental degradation takes place.

School of social ecology points out that, different social groups have different norms and values in relation to the idea of environment. Hence the capitalists see environment as an aluminum mine to be extracted to maximize profits; the tribals, on the other hand, view environment as a beneficiate. Hence they preserve trees and animals and extract only that much of resources as can be sustainable extracted.

In modern societies, the lifestyle of affluent people is dominated by consumerism. In consumerism, consumption becomes an end in itself. This happens when members of society generally believe that greater your consumption, happier you are. Greater consumption does not make us happy. But consumerism becomes an integral part of social values hence needs become unlimited and even the government promotes spending to stimulate economic growth.

According to Beck (1992) in every stage of history, technology has developed to harness environment. Technology is a primary tool of social change. However, today's complex technology leads to pollution and degrades environment. Such complex technology is also prone to error. More the complexity of a technology more is the risk of error. In spite of this our society uses it with the hope that in future, better technologies will be developed to compensate and overcome the effects of present technologies. Basically, our society 'risks' using these technologies. Beck calls modern societies as risk societies.

Causes of Environmental Problems

- The development of modern technologies.
- The increase in the human population.
- There is pressure on natural resources.
- The high rate of exploitation of natural resources.
- Growing industries and factories.
- Increasing human settlements and urbanization.
- The development of economic functions of man.
- **Deforestation:** Conversion of forest land into agricultural land and pastures.
- **Agricultural Development:** High concentration of chemicals and fertilizers pollute the soils or degrade the soils.
- **Population Growth:** Ever increasing human population places greater demands on the finite resources of earth.
- Industrial development.
- **Urbanization:** The formation and growth of big slum areas, air pollution, smoke, dust.
- **Modern Productive Technology:** Construction of huge dams and reservoirs upset the equilibrium of rocks.

Some Suggestions to Prevent Environmental Problems and Sustainability

Pollution of our environment is increasingly posing problems for man's survival on earth. This has not happened in a day or two. Continuously we have been contaminating and damaging our environment. Man has been continuously ignoring 'the laws of nature' and disturbing the ecological balance. Scientists and environmentalists have already warned the impending tragedy if the environment is continuously contaminated. Dr. Einstein said, "All our technological process—our very civilization— is like the axe in the hand of the pathological criminal. So like pathological criminals we have mercilessly destroyed the forest and converted fertile land into desert." There should be final stop for this creeping paralysis. We must think in terms of protecting our environment which protects us in turn. Some suggestions could be given in this regard.

- It is necessary to undertake an appropriate **National Industrial Policy** so as to protect our national interest including the environmental interests. It is known fact that unregulated industrialization has been causing environmental pollution. Hence it is necessary to implement very strictly the National Industrial Policy.

- **Uncontrolled urbanization** should be stopped. Urbanization has been taking place in an unprecedented manner. Existing cities are growing and new cities are coming up. There is neither regulation nor any control over the growth of cities. These cities are spoiling the nearby environment. Only through proper regulations and control the unwanted effects of urbanization could be stopped.

- Owners of motor vehicles are to be instructed strictly to use pollution control gadgets. The use of these instruments can help to reduce pollution caused by vehicles.

- The sewage system of the cities is to be revised. Sewage wastes let into streams, rivers, lakes and coastal waters are causing several problems. Hence sewage water is to be purified before it is allowed to join rivers, lakes or coastal waters.

- A separate arrangement is to be made to collect and transport the inorganic and non-degradable garbage wastes to a distant place. The unwanted inorganic substances like tins, plastic bags, boxes, bottles, etc., are to be deposited separately in the dustbins so as to help the municipal administration to collect and take it to a distant place. People should also ban the use of plastic bags at least in some specified fields and areas.

- Recycling non-degradable materials. It is necessary to minimize the use of non-degradable materials. We must also make necessary arrangements to recycle and reuse discarded materials. People must help organizations which recycle such materials.

- Regular removal of the garbage. The municipal and city administrations must take steps to remove the garbage, dust and other thrown away articles deposited in the dustbins. People also should learn the art of depositing the garbage only in the dustbins and not throwing it everywhere.

- Launching of save environment campaigns and movements. Since sizeable number of Indians are still illiterate. It is necessary to educate them to keep the environment neat and clean. They must also be educated regarding the adverse consequences of pollution. A national level campaigns or movement to 'save environment' could be launched with the active participation of political leaders, labour leaders, peasant leaders, student leaders and leaders of various religious and cultural organizations.

- Encouragement to conservation of forest. It is necessary to awaken the people about the importance of forests in preserving the purity of our environment. Appropriate steps should be taken to conserve the existing forests. Special efforts should also be made to develop gardens, parks, within the premises of

hospitals, educational institutions, industries, government offices, etc. ' Vanamahotsava' should not become a governmental ritual. There should be active participation of the people in it. 'Plant a tree before cutting one' should become a meaningful and a practical slogan.

- Special financial assistance for protecting the environment. In our national budget there should be a provision for a special fund to give financial assistance to the local bodies to safeguard the environmental interests.

- Creating Environmental Awareness among the Children. Special arrangements must be made to create environmental awareness among the children and the young people. Training given to the children in this direction at an early age especially in schools and colleges go a long way in creating awareness to protect the environment.

- Launching of Environmental Education Programmes. It is necessary to educate the people to take proper precaution to save our environment. A specialized body of the U.N.O. namely UNEP has stressed the importance of such a kind of education long back in 1977

The environmental education programmes should include the following :

- Environmental education and training at school, college and university level.

- Environmental sciences, which deal with advanced science and its effect on air, water and soil degradation.

- Environmental engineering, which includes the study to assess the impact of engineering science on environment.

Mrs. Indira Gandhi, the late prime minister of India had told: "Modern man must re-establish his unbroken link with nature and with life. He must again learn to invoke the energy and to recognize, as did the ancients in India centuries ago, that we can take from the earth and atmosphere only so much as one put back into them."

The most important thing is to bring about a change in the present attitude towards the industrialized countries model of development. We should recognize the inherent flaws in the present model and develop alternate growth models that give due weightage to ecological aspects as well. Above all we should realize that natural systems have a threshold point beyond which it is impossible to replenish them. This change in attitude can be brought about by mass media campaigns, structured education, political leaders etc. For instance the award-winning film an inconvenient Truth by Al Gore seemed to have a huge impact on the way many of us look at environmental issues.

Preservation and the sustainable use of natural resources have to be given due importance. Overexploitation of any form of forest resources marine wealth, fossil-energy sources, so resources etc., should be avoided. Extra efforts should be taken to conserve and replenish nature. For instance, whenever a hydroelectric project is planned, due care should be taken to develop forests in the surrounding areas to compensate for the vegetation lost due to the project.

The political class and the bureaucrats have a major role in bringing about sustainability. This is mainly by designing policies and regulations that would promote green technologies, while discouraging those initiatives that adversely affect the ecosystems. For example, the Clean Development Mechanism under the Kyoto Protocol is one such initiative. At the country level the subsidies given to solar water heaters are also done with the same purpose.

Sustainability cannot be achieved at isolated pockets as the issues of ecology are global. For example, the loss of tropical rain forests in South America would adversely affect the biodiversity of the whole world. So, the initiatives for sustainability should be carried on across the country borders as well. This can be mainly achieved with the help of the UN bodies such as UNEP, multilateral bodies like G8, environmentalist organizations like Green Peace etc.

In addition to global collaborations, indigenous and micro-level solutions have to be developed and tapped. This can be in terms of traditional knowledge, like the use of Neem, products as pesticides or small-scale projects like the construction of small check dams to recharge ground water. Such local solutions are very effective in preserving nature and taking us in the path of sustainability. The initiatives for sustainability should not be Top-Down i.e., the programes should not be passed on as prescriptions to the concerned stakeholders by someone higher up. Instead, once the overall policies and guidelines are framed by the higher ups, the micro aspects of implementation should be left to the ground level stakeholders. In simple terms, unless a large public takes up the cause of sustainability, the path of sustainable development is never going to be an easy one.

Green Technology is one of the most important pillars for sustainability. We will be directly contributing to the conservations of natural systems by developing and promoting the usage of eco-friendly methods. This can be in the area of energy, recyclable goods, transportation etc. For example, the CNG powered buses in New Delhi lead to sustainability in the areas of public transportation system.

In this era of globalization and multinational corporate, the agenda of sustainability should also be vigorously pursued by the private sector. Companies should not only take the path of development in their present ventures but also work towards developing new eco-friendly solutions. The green agenda should be adhered to.

We should recognize that Environment, Economy and Community are integrated and interdependent, and we cannot focus on only one aspect totally ignoring the others. This should be kept in mind when devising any developmental project. For instance, a project aimed at exploiting the coal reserves in an area should also talk adequate measures to preserve the ecosystems

in that area in the best possible manner. This needs to be addressed at the planning stage of the project itself and for this purpose various tools of Environment Impact Assessment (EIA) can be utilized.

POVERTY, INEQUALITY AND DEPRIVATION

Poverty is a level of living that is so low that inhibits the physical, mental, social, cultural, economic development of the individuals or the groups. The problem of poverty in India after Independence can be described in terms of the social classes, castes or groups affected with poverty in rural and urban areas. It can also be discussed in terms of magnitude of the problem and the linkage between rural and urban poverty.

Rural and Urban Poor

In India, large sections of the population live in abject poverty. The poor live in rural and urban areas.

In the rural areas, they consist of small landholders, agricultural labourers, artisans and craftsmen. They mainly belong to the scheduled castes, scheduled tribes and other backward castes.

In urban areas, the poor people are usually engaged in the informal sector and some low paid jobs in the organized sector. They are employed in unskilled, semi-skilled and also some low-income jobs. They work as wage earners in industries, trade, commerce, transport and construction industry. A large number of them are also engaged in self-employed activities as rickshaw-puller, shoe-repairers, and vendors, owners of a tea shop and pan-bidi shop and even beggars. The urban poor living as slum dwellers and pavement dwellers are found in abundance in Indian towns and cities.

The condition of both the urban and the rural poor is miserable. They own very small assets or negligible assets. Their income and expenditure are very low. Their wages are meager. Many of them are unemployed and underemployed which enhances their pangs of poverty. The rate of literacy

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is lowest among them. They do not enjoy much of the benefits of available health facilities. They do not get even enough food to eat. Their housing condition is sub-human or inhuman. They are severely exploited and oppressed by the privileged class both in the rural and urban areas.

Magnitude of Rural and Urban Poverty

The magnitude of poverty in India has been estimated in terms of the nutritional criterion which takes into account only the minimum food intake of a person to maintain working capacity. But some non-food items such as clothing, housing, education and health-care are also equally essential for a minimum standard of human living and hence must be considered while analyzing poverty. Moreover, in a developing country like India, we find that the privileged class enjoys all available modern amenities and also indulges in conspicuous consumption. This means that they buy goods and services which enhance socio-economic status and which are not affordable to the poor. The majority of the people are, on the other hand, not able to fulfil their minimum needs. There is a situation of wide socio-economic inequalities. Therefore, a proper approach to the problem of poverty has to take into consideration the prevailing inequalities with regard to distribution of assets, income and consumption expenditure both in the rural and urban areas.

The proportion of people below the poverty line is also very high. It is about 40 per cent of the population after 64 years of Independence even if we take the official figure. Moreover, the number of the rural poor is more than four times the number of the urban poor. According to **Dutt and Sundharam** rural poverty directly affects urban poverty because most of the urban poor are migrants from the villages. These people have been driven out of their villages due to poverty there.

Now let us look at those factors which explain the nature and extent of rural and urban poverty. **The factors considered here are:**

- unequal distribution of wealth,
- the pattern of per capita expenditure on consumption,
- the pattern of possession of assets,
- illiteracy and health, and
- regional difference in the patterns of poverty.

Poverty and Unequal Distribution of Wealth:

Estimates of distribution of personal income made by various reputed organizations and noted scholars reveal the existence of concentration of economic power in both the urban and rural areas in the country. This is reflected in the prevalence of a wide range of variation between the income of the top and the bottom levels of the population. According to the estimate of the Reserve Bank of India, in the rural area, the top 5 per cent of the population had 17 per cent of the aggregate income while the bottom 20 per cent had only about 9 per cent of the income. **Dutt and Sundharam** states that, the fruits of economic development have been appropriated over the years by the rural and the urban rich. Similar trend has been observed in other studies.

The Pattern of Per Capita Expenditure on Consumption

It is another indicator of the magnitude of economic inequality, poverty and the gap in the standard of living. There has been an increase in average per capital real consumer expenditure both in the urban and rural areas. Despite this increase the condition of the bottom 40 per cent people in the urban areas and 5 per cent in the rural areas worsened in the absolute sense. This is reflected in decline in their real consumption expenditure over the years. **Bose** has observed that the disparity in the level of expenditure between the top 5 per cent and the bottom 5 per cent of the population has been gradually increasing and in the urban areas it is becoming more acute than in the rural areas. It is clear that the gains of economic progress have been cornered by the rich people. On the other hand, the standard of living of the lower income groups has either remained stationary or has positively deteriorated over the years.

The Patterns of Possession of Assets

The pattern of possession of assets in rural and urban areas also gives an idea about the extent of poverty in India. The people living below the poverty line have very small or almost negligible assets. The structure of landownership would reveal the highly inegalitarian nature of asset distribution in rural areas. Various land reform measures have been adopted by the government. However, the heavy concentration of land has remained practically unaltered.

Moreover, it has also been observed in recent studies that in the last few decades the proportion of cultivators came down from while the percentage of agricultural labourers increased. This reflects an increasing incidence of pauperization of the rural poor (Chattopadhyay). In the urban areas there are a large section of pavement dwellers who possess very small or almost no assets. The decaying tenement of the slum dwellers and the hutmens of squatter are the burning examples of urban poverty. On the other side we witness a large increase in the assets of the privileged section of the urban population. According to **Dutt and Sundharam**, for example, the total assets of top 20 large industrial houses increased from rupees 1,346 cores in 1963-64 to 20.138 crores in 1985.

Illiteracy and Health

Mainly the poor people who are illiterates both in the rural and urban areas, the rate of illiteracy was 70 per cent in rural areas and 43 per cent in the urban areas. Further, in case of health facilities, it was found that 55 per cent of the rural population was not served even by primary health centres. The urban poor also could hardly afford expensive medical treatment in towns and cities. Both illiteracy and poor health status generate living conditions which reflect poverty.

The Regional Pattern of Poverty

An important aspect of poverty in India is its differential distribution in different regions, towns and cities. The largest number of the urban poor is found in the state of Uttar Pradesh where about 40 per cent of the state's total urban poor lives below the poverty line. The least number of them are in Haryana. On the whole, one-fifth of the total urban population lives in slums or squatter settlements. The slum population of most of the cities in India during the seventies was estimated at 20 to 30 per cent of the total urban population.

Rural-Urban Linkages of Poverty

It has been observed that the problem of poverty in India is mainly a problem of rural poverty.

- **Dandekar and Rath** has observed that, the urban poor of India are only an overflow of the rural poor into the cities and that essentially they belong to the same class as the rural poor. A large number of rural poor migrate to urban centres due to lack of work in villages and growing opportunities of employment in towns and cities. The largest cities have attracted the largest number of rural migrant workers because, unlike the small towns, they offer a wide range of employment opportunities.

- **According to D. Souza** the primary reason for rural-urban migration is economic, and the rural poor migrate to the cities in search of employment rather than better employment opportunities. The rural poverty is carried over to the urban areas by the channel of rural-urban migration. This is very evident in slums and squatter settlements, environmental deterioration, sub-standard housing and low levels of health and nutrition of the urban poor.

- Social and cultural factors also play an important role in facilitating the migration of the rural poor to the urban centres. The rural migrant depend upon kinship, caste the regional network not only for decisions with regard to the choice of destination but also for their early and easy adjustment to the difficult conditions of urban living. These people help them in getting employment and give financial assistance in the beginning.

- **According to De Souza** the spontaneous settlements of the urban poor are not merely collections of sacks and huts but communities of fellow migrants. Each is based on a network of primary ties based on language, region, village, caste or kin. It has enabled the rural migrants coming from small village communities to become familiar with and acculturated in the complex and diversified environment of a metropolitan city.

- Moreover, the urban poor maintain their linkages with their families in rural areas by visits and remittances. They go to their villages during harvesting, festivals and other ceremonies like marriage and death. In time of difficulty or unemployment they fall back on the traditional but scanty, sources of income available in their village.

The rural poor join the mass of urban poor after reaching the towns and cities. In this way, rural poverty is carried over to urban areas. But the natural increase in the population of the urban poor has also become significant in recent years because of the number of the urban poor who are permanently settled in towns and cities.

Approaches Towards Poverty

The Constitution of India aimed at securing justice, liberty and equality to all the citizens and constitutes the country into a socialist, secular and democratic republic. According to the Directive Principles of the State Policy enshrined in the Constitution, the State assumed the responsibility of securing adequate means of livelihood to citizens of the country. It assumed the responsibility of preventing concentration of wealth to the common detriment. The aim was to build up a social order which stands for the welfare of the people. The resonance of these Constitutional commitments implying removal of poverty has permeated in all the Five Year Plan in a tacit or categorical term. For example, the Second Five Year Plan stated that the benefits of economic development must accrue more and more to the relatively less privileged classes of society.

Moreover, the Plans have sought to lay special emphasis on the common man, the weaker sections in the official circles on the objective of removal of poverty in India. But the efficacy of the approach and strategy adopted for resolving the problem is very doubtful.

Two approaches that have been adopted so far

Growth Oriented Approach

In the beginning, India's Five Year Plans laid emphasis on the growth of economy of the country as a whole through raising production and the per capita income. It was postulated that the benefits of rapid economic growth would automatically trickle down to the poor people and raise their living standard through provident them more employment opportunities, higher income and more wages. Moreover, no distinction was made between rural and urban poverty and the latter was considered to simultaneously vanish with the former.

- The Government began with the Community Development Project (CDP) in 1952. Under this project the whole community in a particular area was taken as a homogeneous unit. The emphasis was given on economic growth. The project covered the programmes like improvement in agriculture, animal husbandry, village and small industries, health and sanitation, social education etc.

- An effort was made to effect changes in the pattern of landownership through various land reform measures such as the abolition of the zamindari system, tenancy reforms, and ceilings on landholding and distribution of surplus land to the small landholders and landless people.

- In the sixties, anti-poverty programmes concentrated in places and in crops where these could significantly raise production. The important programmes comprised the Intensive Agricultural District Programme (IADP) and the Intensive Agricultural Area Programme (IAAP) launched in 1960 and

1964, respectively. Since the mid-sixties, the Government has mainly helped the better of farmers and big landowners to raise agricultural production through adopting modern technology in the form of use of High Yielding Varieties (HYV) of seeds, chemical fertilizers, tractors, water pumps etc.

In course of time it was realized that the benefits of these development programmes have been largely cornered by the privileged section of the rural population. The impact of land reform measures was also very limited. The conditions of the poor did not improve. In fact, their number increased both in rural and urban areas.

Growth with Social Justice

When it was observed that the growth oriented approach was a failure in effecting the trickling down of benefits of development to the poor, the five year plans started giving special emphasis on the cause of social justice. The motto of development since the early seventies became growth with social justice. Special pogrammes were launched to benefit the backward areas and backward section of the population e.g. small and marginal farmers and landless labourers and especially those belonging to the scheduled castes and the scheduled tribes.

Programmes in Rural Areas

- In rural areas, various programmes came into operation such as Small Farmers Development Agency (SEDA), Marginal Farmers and Agricultural Labourers (MFAL) and Drought Prone Area Programmes (DPAP).

- The concept of Antyodaya (all-round development of all poorest section in each village) came in 1977. Food for work programme was started in the same year to provide employment to the rural poor particularly in slack season. This programme was rechristened National Rural Employment Programme (NREP) in 1980.

- Special sub-plans were introduced to remove regional disparities and development especially of the hill and tribal areas.

- Minimum Needs Programme was launched to secure to the rural areas certain basic amenities in the field of education, health, drinking water, electrification, roads and home sites for the poor.

- The national scheme of Training Rural Youth for Self-Employment (TRYSEM) was started in 1979 with a view to removing unemployment among the rural youth.

- The Rural Landless Employment Guarantee Programme (RLEGP) was initiated in 1983 to offer more employment opportunities for the rural landless. The Integrated Rural Development Programme (IRDP) aimed at providing assistance to families below the poverty line to raise their income and assets over the poverty line. The Jawahar Rozgar Yojana (JRY) has been launched in April 1989 for removal of unemployment.

- More recently Government has launched **National Rural Employment Guarantee Programme** to ensure hundred days of guaranteed employment to rural poor.

  However, it can be said that the impact of these programmes has been very marginal on the problem of poverty in the country.

Programmes in Urban Areas

Further, in case of urban poverty we find a gradual change in the perception of the planners. Urban poverty was not seen as a distinct problem in the early Five-Year Plan. It was treated only as off-shoot of rural poverty. But this problem has been addressed directly with the Seventh Five Year Plan. This plan envisaged a multi-pronged strategy to resolve the problem.

- It aimed at a providing gainful employment to the unemployed, particularly women and youth;

- raising the earnings of those already employed in low paid jobs;

- increasing the productivity and earnings of those who are self-employed workers; and

- Improving the access of the urban poor to basic amenities like education, health-care, sanitation and safe drinking water.

The various programmes meant for removing urban poverty are grouped under three categories:

- **Shelter and services :** Shelter and services related programmes include provision of housing, environmental improvement of slums, programmes concerned with the welfare of children, women and youth.

- **Employment :** employment related programmes concern with helping the urban poor in self-employment through providing credit and loans on concessional rates and upgradation of their skills.

- **Public distribution and nutrition:** The urban poor get benefit from the Public Distribution System which supplies certain essential gods like cereals, edible oils, kerosene oil etc.; at retail prices. The general programmes of mid-day meal, special nutrition programme and integrated child development services are also expected to help urban poor.

However, we must note that most of these programmes expected to benefit the urban poor are general in nature. There exist only a few programmes specifically meant for the urban poor most of which are in the shelter sector. Further, most of these programmes are at their experimental stage. They do not cover even a small fraction of the urban poor. Many programmes are floundering and some are already showing signs of malfunctions.

On the whole the measure undertaken to deal with the problem of poverty in rural and urban areas seems to be inadequate. No amount of efforts seems adequate. Let us examine the causes of poverty.

Causes and Persistence of Poverty

In India, we find co-existence of abject poverty of the masses and affluence of the privileged class both in the rural and urban areas since ages. The failure of the government in resolving the problem of poverty has been generally attributed to rising population, havoc of natural calamities such as drought and flood and character deficiency of individuals. It is true that the country is still at a low level of economic development. But it is also certain that the major benefits of development have been cornered by the richer sections of the population.

- In reality, poverty in India is a social product and not a natural phenomenon, been socially generated, reinforced and perpetuated. It is consequence of extreme socio-economic inequalities.

- It results from differential position of different social classes, castes and groups in economic, political, social and religious domains of society. Roots of poverty lies in the economic, political and social set up of society.

- Demographic, natural and psychological factors are off-shoots of the highly inegalitarian structure of society though they play an important role in perpetuating poverty.

Economic and Political Factors

- The basic economic factor responsible for the problem of poverty in India is the highly unequal distribution of the economic resource of the country among various social classes and castes. We find wide inequalities in distribution of assets and income between the rich and the poor both in rural and urban areas.

- The productivity of labour remains low in agriculture due to highly unequal distribution of landholdings.

- Big landowners generally do not care much for raising agricultural production because their needs are fulfilled even at low level of production. The small and marginal farmers do not possess enough resources to make adequate use of modern input raising productivity.

- The agricultural labourers do not feel much motivated to work hard due to their low wages

The limited spread of the Green Revolution in agriculture has not helped much in removing the problem of mass poverty. The benefits of limited agricultural growth in agriculture have been grabbed by the rural rich.

- The urban poor have to lead to miserable life due to their employment in low paid jobs in the unorganized sector, low income activities of self-employment and the problems of unemployment.

- Further, **the political factor** as also contributed to the prevalence of mass poverty in India since ages. The state power has been controlled by the privileged ruling class both in the urban and rural areas. The ruling class controls the machinery. It directly or indirectly protects and promotes its class interests. But the mass of the poor people have always remained powerless.

Socio-Cultural Factors

- The caste system has been an important factor in perpetuating poverty of the masses. The rigid stratification of the caste system imposed severe restrictions on occupation mobility. Generally speaking, a person born in poor lower caste living and die in the same social position.

- The caste system imposed social distance between castes with regard to marriage, food habitation and general social interaction. The upper castes were considered socially and ritually superior and the lower castes were declined inferior. The upper castes practiced discrimination against the lower castes in social and religious matters.

- Moreover, the belief in 'Karma' justified the inegalitarian and unjust social order. It held that poverty is the consequence of one's papa karma (bad deeds) in earlier births. Performance of Varna dharma was considered essential, was made to ward off any challenge to the existing social system in which the majority of the people suffered from abject poverty while the ruling class lived a happy and ostentatious life.

- Further, nowadays priority is given to values which emphasize the fulfilment of one's self-interests. Materialism has got an upper hand over humanitarian values.

- We witness a mad rush among the rich people for raising their social status through indulging in conspicuous consumption, i.e., consuming those goods and services which reflect one's financial strength and prestige like buying jewellery, cars, latest electronic gadgets, etc. This emphasis on materialism and pursuit of self-interest has helped to widen the gap between the rich and the poor.

The problem of poverty continues as ever with an added momentum. The poor has strong feelings of marginality, of helplessness, of dependence, of inferiority, sense resignation, fatalism and low level of aspiration. These tendencies are transmitted from one generation to the next. Therefore, the children of the poor are very often not psychologically geared to take full advantage of the changing conditions or increased opportunities that occur in their life. Thus the problem of poverty gets perpetuated.

Povery Analyzed

Having noted the root causes of poverty, we can say that the real constraints to growth with equity are located primarily in the institutional or in the politico-economic sphere. In an underdeveloped country like India where great mass of the people live in abject poverty, a social welfare solution is not suitable. Eradication of the problem of massive poverty is not possible within the four-walls of the prevailing social, political and economic order. In fact, this gigantic problem cannot be resolved without a fundamental transformation of society itself which would involve redistribution of wealth and equitable sharing of the growing prosperity and changes in the power structure in favour of the poor.

- Adoption of an essentially capitalist path of development has accentuated the problem of poverty and the chasm between the rich and the poor. This trend has to be reversed in favour of a truly socialist path of development.

- The country would have to give first priority to ending the system which has generated inequality and mass poverty. In fact, we have to wage struggle against socio-economic and political inequalities in order to alleviate the problem of poverty.
- Land should go to the tiller.
- The pubic sector should be expanded rapidly and progressively to encompass the whole economy with increasing participation of workers in management.
- Labour intensive programmes of development such as housing, irrigation and communication should be given emphasis to remove the problem of unemployment and underemployment. Wages of workers also have to be raised to improve their living conditions.
- Equal access to essential social services like education and health should be provided.
- Moreover, we have to put an end to the raising consumerist culture which has a very damaging impact on the society as a whole.

Both the rural and urban poor have to organize themselves and fight for effecting such structural changes in society.

SOCIAL INEQUALITY

In every society some people have a greater share of valued resources – money, property, education, health and power – than others. According to Bourdieu, these social resources can be divided into three forms of capital –

- **economic capital** in the form the material assets and income,
- **cultural capital** such as educational qualifications and status, and
- **social capital** in the form of networks of contacts and social associations.

Often, these three forms of capital overlap and one can be converted into the other. For example, a person from a well off family (economic capital) can afford expensive higher education, and so can acquire cultural and educational capital. Someone with influential relatives and friends (social capital) may through access to good advice, recommendations or information manage to get a well-paid job.

Patterns of unequal access to social resources are commonly called social inequality. Some social inequality reflects innate differences between individuals for example, their varying abilities and efforts. Someone may be endowed with exceptional intelligence or talent, or may have worked very hard to achieve their wealth and status. However, by and large, social inequality is not the outcome of innate or 'natural' differences between people, but is produced by the society in which they live.

- Social inequality is a characteristic of society, not simply a function of individual differences. Social inequality is a society wide system that unequally distributes social resources among categories of people. In the most technologically primitive societies – hunting and gathering societies, for instance – little was produced so only rudimentary social inequality. In more technologically advanced societies where people produce a surplus over and above their basic needs, however, social resources are unequally distributed to various social categories regardless of people's innate individual abilities.

- Social inequality is closely linked to the family and to the inheritance and social resources from one generation to the next. A person's status is ascribed. That is, children assume the social positions of their parents. Within the caste system, birth dictates occupational opportunities. A Dalit is likely to be confined to traditional occupations such as agricultural labour, scavenging, or leather work, with little chance of being able to get high-paying white collar or professional work. The ascribed aspect of social inequality is reinforced by the practice of endogamy. That is, marriage is usually restricted to members of the same caste, ruling out the potential for blurring caste lines through inter-caste marriage.

- Social inequality is supported by patterns of belief, or ideology. The caste system, for

example, is justified in terms of the opposition of purity and pollution, with the Brahmins designated as the most superior and Dalits as the most inferior by virtue of their birth and occupation. Not everyone, though, thinks of a system of inequality as legitimate. Typically, people with the greatest social privileges express the strongest support for systems of inequality such as caste and race. Those who have experienced the exploitation and humiliation of being at the bottom of the hierarchy are most likely to challenge it.

Side Effects of Social Inequality: Exclusion and Discrimination, Prejudices, Stereotype

Often we discuss social exclusion and discrimination as though they pertain to differential economic resources alone. This however is only partially true. People often face discrimination and exclusion because of their gender, religion, ethnicity, language, caste and disability. Thus women from a privileged background may face sexual harassment in public places. A middle class professional from a minority religious or ethnic group may find it difficult to get accommodation in a middle class colony even in a metropolitan city. People often harbour prejudices about other social groups. Each of us grows up as a member of a community from which we acquire ideas not just about our 'community', our 'caste' or 'class', our 'gender' but also about others. Often these ideas reflect prejudices.

Prejudices refer to pre-conceived opinions or attitudes held by members of one group towards another. The word literally means 'pre-judgment', that is, an opinion formed in advance of any familiarity with the subject, before considering any available evidence. A prejudiced person's pre-conceived views are often based an hearsay rather than on direct evidence, and are resistant to change even in the face of new information. Although the word is generally used for negative pre-judgements, it can also apply to favourable pre-judgments. For example, a person may be prejudiced in favour of members of his/her own caste or group and – without any evidence –

believe them to be superior to members of other castes or groups.

Stereotype: Prejudices are often grouped in stereotypes, fixed and inflexible characterizations of a group of people. Stereotypes are often applied to ethnic and racial groups and to women. In a country such as India, which was colonized for a long time, many of these stereotypes are partly colonial creations. Some communities were characterized as 'martial races', some others as 'effeminate or cowardly', yet others as 'untrustworthy'. In both English and Indian fictional writings we often encounter an entire group of people classified as 'lazy' or 'cunning, it may indeed be true that some individuals are sometimes lazy or cunning, brave or cowardly. But such a general statement is true of individuals in every group. Even for such individual it is not true all the time – the same individual may be both lazy and hardworking at different times. Stereotypes fix whole groups into single, homogenous categories; they refuse to recognize the variation across individuals and across contexts or across time. They treat an entire community as though it were a single person with a single all encompassing trait or characteristics.

Discrimination: If prejudice describes attitudes and opinions, **discrimination** refers to actual behaviour towards another group or individual. Discrimination can be seen in practices that disqualify members of one group from opportunities open to others, as when a person is refused a job because of their gender or religion. Discrimination can be very hard to prove because it may not be open or explicitly stated. Discriminatory behaviour or practices may be presented as motivated by other, more justifiable, reasons rather than prejudice. For example, the person who is refused a job because of their caste, may be told that they were less qualified than others, and that the selection was done purely on merit.

Social exclusion: It refers to ways in which individuals may become cut off from full involvement in the wider society. It focuses attention on a broad range of factors that prevent

individuals or groups from having opportunities open to the majority of the population. In order to live a full and active life, individuals must not only be able to feed, clothe and house themselves, but should also have access to essential goods and services such as education, health, transportation, insurance, social security, banking and even access to the police or judiciary. Social exclusion is not accidental but systematic. It is the result of structural features of society–social inequality.

It is important to note that social exclusion is involuntary, that is, exclusion is practiced regardless of the wishes of those who are excluded. For example, rich people are never found sleeping on the pavements or under bridges like thousand of homeless poor people in cities and towns. This does not mean that the rich are being excluded from access to pavements and park benches, because they could certainly gain access if they wanted to, but they choose not to. Social exclusion is sometimes wrongly justified by the same logic – it is said that the excluded group itself does not wish to participate. The truth of such an argument is not obvious when exclusion is preventing access to something desirable (as different from something clearly undesirable, like sleeping on the pavement).

Prolonged experience of discriminatory or insulting behaviour often produces a reaction on the part of the excluded who then stop trying for inclusion. For e.g. example, 'upper' caste Hindu communities have often denied entry into temples for the 'lower' castes and specially the Dalits. After decades of such treatment the Dalits may build their own temple, or convert to another religion like Buddhism, Christianity or Islam. After they do this, they may no longer desire to be included in the Hindu temple or religious events. But this does not mean that social exclusion is not being practiced. The point is that the exclusion occurs regardless of the wishes of the excluded.

India like most societies has been marked by acute practices of social discrimination and exclusion. At different periods of history protest movements arose against caste, gender and

religious discrimination. Yet prejudices remain and often new ones emerge. Thus legislation alone is unable to transform society or produce lasting social change. A constant social campaign to, awareness and sensitivity is required to break them.

Deprivation

Deprivation is the result of prolonged social inequality and poverty. Deprivation means 'felt loss'. It refers to certain deficiencies or deficits in the individual's environment which are felt and experienced by individual or groups to such an extent that it hampers the individuals effective functioning.

- **Relative deprivation:** It is a subjective concept. It implies that an individual or a group perceives themselves relatively deprived in relation to other individual. Poverty is seen in terms of relative to a class or section of population against privileged ones. Poverty is perceived in terms of exclusion of a class or section of population from average living patterns, activities, and participation in social life, because of lack of resources, i.e., education or political power.
- **Absolute deprivation :** It is an objective construct. As a result of disadvantage in society if an individual or a group is bereft of basic necessities for healthy living– food housing, health facilities, education etc.– the resultant deprivation is absolute deprivation.

Consequences of Deprivation

- Social: Poverty, development of slum in cities, culture of poverty, low social mobility, social inequality, discrimination, exclusion, etc.
- Cultural: Low level of education, illiteracy, cultural lag, Crime and delinquency, etc.
- Economic: Poverty, unemployment, etc.
- Physical: Malnutrition, diseases, hunger-death etc.

VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

Violence against women has been clearly defined as a form of discrimination in numerous

documents. The World Human Rights Conference in Vienna, first recognized gender-based violence as a human rights violation in 1993. In the same year, United Nations declaration defined violence against women as "any act of gender-based violence that result in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to a woman, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivations of liberty, whether occurring in public or private life".

It refers to 'force' whether overt or covert used to wrest from a women something that she does not want to give of her own free will, which causes her either physical injury or emotional trauma or both. **Liz Kelly** has defined violence as "any physical, visual, verbal or sexual act that is experienced by the woman or girl at the time or later as a threat, invasion or assault, that has the effect of hurting or disregarding or removing the ability to control one's own behaviour or an interaction, whether this be within the workplace, the home, on the streets or in any other area of the community".

According to **Gelles and Strauss**, violence is an act carried out with the intention or perceived intention of physically hurting another person. According to **Schuler**, gender violence is defined as "any act involving use of force or coercion with intent of perpetuating and promoting hierarchical gender relations". Adding gender dimension to that definition amplifies it to include violent acts perpetrated on women because they are women. With this addition, the definition is no longer simple or obvious. Understanding the phenomenon of gender violence requires an analysis of the patterns of violence directed towards women and the underlying mechanisms that permit the emergence and perpetuation of these patterns.

Three categories of Violence Against Woman

Criminal violence	Domestic violence	Social violence
Rape Abduction	Dowry death Wife- battering	Forcing wife daughter-in-law to to go for
Molestation	Sexual abuse by	

Murder	kins Mal treatment of widows and elderly women. Torture of daughter-in-law.	female foeticide. Eve-teasing Forcing a young widow to commit sati, Refusing to give share to women in property

Radhika Coomaraswamy identifies different kinds of violence against women, in the United Nation's special report, on Violence against Women:

- Physical, sexual and psychological violence occurring in the family, including battering, sexual abuse of female children in the household, dowry related violence, marital rape, female genital mutilation and other traditional practices harmful to women, non spousal violence and violence related to exploitation.

- Physical sexual and psychological violence occurring within the general community, including rape, sexual abuse, sexual harassment and intimidation at work, in educational institutions and elsewhere, trafficking in women and forced prostitution.

- Physical, sexual and psychological violence perpetrated or condoned by the state, wherever it occurs. This definition added 'violence perpetrated or condoned by the state', to the definition by United Nations in 1993.

Margaret Schuler has divided gender violence into four major categories:

- Overt physical abuse (battering sexual assault, at home and in the workplace)

- Psychological abuse (confinement, forced marriage)

- Deprivation of resources for physical and psychological well being (health/nutrition, education, means of livelihood)

- Commodification of women (trafficking, prostitution).

Who are victims ?

On the basis of empirical study conducted on crime against women, Ram Ahuja identifies four types of women.

- Who suffer from devaluation, altruistic powerlessness, and feel helpless depressed and poor self image.

- Who live in stressful family situation-structurally incomplete, economically insecure, morally deviant and functionally inadequate.

- Who lack social-interpersonal relation and suffer from behavioral problems.

- Whose husbands are either pathological personalities or are alcoholics.

Causal factors :

- Social values.
- Patriarchy.
- Contradictions of change.
- Role of Mass Media.
- Political violence.
- Situational Urge sometimes provoke a man to use violence e.g.-wife battering
  - rape case
  - a male employer
  - girls run away.
- Sometimes the victim provokes a person to use violence against her own behaviour-which is often unconscious.
- Intoxication too leads to violence i.e., some cases of violence occur when the aggressors are wildly excited and belligerent state of mind—scarcely comprehending of the likely fallout of their actions. For example, alcoholics rape. According to Ram Ahuja in his study of relationship between alcoholism and violence, found that wife battering was accompanied

by the use of alcohol in 32% of cases. Hiberman had found in 93% of cases, Wolfgang in 67% of cases. However we can not proud any proof. It may be 'cooperative' factor rather them the 'chief factor'.

- Violence is also motivated by person's altered view towards women, values, patriarchy, and mass media, role conflict etc.

- Personality traits also compel a person to indulge in violence. Violence prone personalities are extremely suspicious, passionate, dominant, irrational, immoral. jealous, possessive and unjust. Experiences in early life affect behaviour in adulthood. According to **Stewart**, good number of aggressors and victims of child abuse and familial violence, and exposure to violence as a child strongly influence the probability of one being violent adult.

Violence against women is partly a result of gender relations that assumes men to be superior to women. Given the subordinate status of women, much of gender violence is considered normal and enjoys social sanction.

- **According to Adriana** manifestations of violence include physical aggression, such as blows of varying intensity, burns, attempted hanging, sexual abuse and rape, psychological violence through insults, humiliation, coercion, blackmail, economic or emotional threats, and control over speech and action. In extreme, but not unknown cases, death is the result. These expressions of violence take place in a man-woman relationship within the family state and society. Usually, domestic aggression towards women and girls, due to various reasons remain hidden.

- Cultural and social factors are interlinked with the propagation of violent behaviour. With different processes of socialization that men and women undergo, men take up stereotyped gender role of domination and control, whereas women take up that of submission, dependent and respect for authority.

- A female child grows up with a constant sense of being weak and in need of protection, whether physical-social or economic. This helplessness has led to her exploitation at almost every stage of life.

- The family socializes its members to accept hierarchical relations expressed in unequal division of labour between the sexes and power over the allocation of resources. The family and its operational unit is where the child is exposed to gender differences since birth, and in recent times even before birth, in the form of sex-determination tests leading to foeticide and female infanticide. The home, which is supposed to be the most secure place, is where women are most exposed to violence.

Radhika Coomaraswamy points out that woman are vulnerable to various forms of violent treatment for several reasons, all based on gender:

- Because of being female, a woman is subject to rape, female circumcision/genital mutilation, female infanticide and sex related crimes. This reason relates to society's construction of female sexuality and its role in social hierarchy.

- Because of her relationship to man, a woman is vulnerable to domestic violence, dowry murder, sati. This reason relates to society's concept of a woman as a property and dependent of the male protector, father, husband, son, etc.

- Because of the social group to which she belongs, in times of war, riots, or ethnic, caste, or class violence, a woman may be raped and brutalized as a means of humiliating the community to which she belongs. This also relates to male perception of female sexuality and women as the property of men. Fore example reports of group rape from Somalia.

Combining these types of abuse with the concept of hierarchical gender relations, a useful way to view gender violence is by identifying where the violence towards women occurs. Essentially, violence happens in three contexts–the family, the community and the state and at each point key special institutions fulfils critical and interactive functions in defining legitimating and maintaining the violence:

- The family socializes its members to accept hierarchical relations expressed in unequal division of labour between the sexes and power over the allocation of resources.

- The community (i.e., social, economic, religious and cultural institutions) provides the mechanisms for perpetuating male control over women's sexuality, mobility and labour.

- The state legitimizes the proprietary rights of men over women, providing a legal basis to the family and the community to perpetuate these relations. The state does this through the enactment of discriminatory application of the law.

Curative Measures

- First, to meet the needs of protection, support and advice to the victims.
  - Voluntary organization schemes.
  - Financial support.
  - Short term accommodation to victims.

- Assistance in finding employment and child care facilities and immediate financial support.

- Establishment of cheaper and less formal courts–courts to handle only female cases. The scope of existing family courts should be enlarged to include all types of domestic and non-domestic problems of women. Judges, magistrates and lawyers with knowledge and interests in female matters should be appointed.

- Strengthening and increasing voluntary organization which could take up individual women's problems with their in laws, police, or the courts or the concerned individuals. Voice of individual woman has less effect. Voices of women organized for a cause are more effective.

- Publicity has to be given to those organizations which provide free legal aid to women. So needy women can approach them.

- Change in parent's attitude–helping attitude towards daughters being victimized.

CASTE CONFLICTS

Caste conflict refers to conflict between two castes or group of castes on specific issues. In general it is side effect of the problem of casteism. Apart from casteism caste conflict arises when,

- one caste attempts to dominate over others,

- when higher castes exploit the lower castes,

- when castes perceive other castes as barriers in there mobility and in achieving political power, and

- when caste find that they are not able to share in the new economic opportunities or acquire symbols of high status.

Sociologists like A. Beteille, M.N.Srinivas, A.R.Desai, Edmund Leach look into caste conflict as lower caste attempt for social mobility. Conflict is the foundation to social change. The reason for conflict is desire for space in social life by a group of people which is challenged by another group. Though caste conflicts found more in the rural areas but they take place in urban areas as well. A number of caste violence cases were recently reported in the urban localities in Gujarat and Maharashtra. Caste violence occurred mostly in the rural areas of Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Orissa, and Bengal. Some politically motivated caste conflicts have been reported from Tamil Nadu, Rajsthan, Karnataka and Madhya Pradesh.

Causes of Caste conflicts (Few Case Studies)

- Dominance of one caste over others

- Exploitation of lower castes by upper castes

- Barriers in mobility and achieving political power

- Competition for economic opportunities and acquiring symbols of high status.

Dominance of one caste over others : The analysis of the exploitation of castes by the locally dominant caste is crucial to the understanding of caste conflicts in rural areas in India. Occasionally,

a caste is dominant in a group of neighbouring villages, if not in the district or the region. According to M.N. Srinivas a caste is 'dominant' when it preponderates numerically over the other castes, when it also wields preponderant economic and political power, and when it enjoys a high ritual status in the local caste hierarchy. The number of educated persons and the nature of high occupations people in the caste are also two important elements of dominance. When a caste enjoys all the elements of dominance, it may be said to be dominant in a decisive way. But decisive dominance is not common. The different elements of dominance are distributed among the castes in a village. Thus, a caste which is ritually high may be poor and lacking strength in numbers, while a numerically populous caste may be poor and ritually low. When a caste enjoys one form of dominance, it is frequently able to acquire the other forms as well in course of time.

However, this does not apply to untouchable castes. The castes whose members are landless labourers, tenants, or very small landowners are many a time exploited by the dominant castes. Sometimes the untouchables also decide to give up performing services such as removing the dead animals from the houses of the higher castes, beating drums at the festivals of village deities, and removing the leaf-plates on which the high castes had dined during festivals and weddings. The upper caste people become annoyed and beat up the untouchables and set fire to their huts. The attempt to dominate and resistance to dominance, thus, lead to caste conflicts.

Exploitation of lower castes by higher castes
The attitude of the upper castes has always been to consolidate and maintain their high social status. The intermediate and lower castes feel deprived and exploited. It is thus this attempt of 'assertion' of high caste people which creates caste conflicts. The best examples of these caste conflicts due to exploitation, economic grievances and deprivation are found in Bihar. Brahmins, Bhumihars, Rajputs and Kayashthas have always

been in conflict with upper backwards like Yadavs, Kurmis and Koeries, and lower backwards like Dhanuk, Kumbhar, Lohar, Teili, Kahar, etc. Many caste carnages had taken place in Bihar out of rivalry. The most brutal massacres in the last fifteen years were; February 1992 massacre in Bara village, 40 kilometres from Gaya in which forty-four upper caste Bhumihars persons of Savarna Liberation Front were killed by 1,500 backward caste MCC raiders. December 23, 1991 carnage in which ten low caste members and supporters of Maoist Communist Centre were killed by the upper caste SLF. Eight Harijans were burnt alive by the Kurmis (rich landlords) in Belchi in May 1977; and in 1978 several landless agricultural labourers were burnt alive by the Kurmis in Bishrampur. There is long list of such massacres. The growing escalation of caste-class tensions in Bihar's countryside is the result of emergence of private senas on caste-class basis.

Some people describe these killings in Bihar in terms of agrarian unrest rather than caste conflicts. But the evidence does not prove so since the upper caste persons killed mostly the middle class peasants who on an average have only five bighas of land. The upper castes are least interested in land reforms. They even sabotage schemes like the Jawahar Rozgar Yojana which aims at helping the poorer sections. They also try to grab the funds meant for distribution among the poor low caste people. There are upper caste landlords who own up to 1,000 acres of land. The Minimum Wages Act has also been reduced to a farce. Serfdom continues as a well-established practice in most regions of Bihar. Thousands of bonded labours continue to be exploited and are forced to lead miserable lives. The efforts of some voluntary organizations are sabotaged by the upper caste lords in collusion with the administrative officers.

The above description shows, that the exploitation of the backward castes by the upper castes, the refusal of the backward castes to render any unpaid labour and sell their products at reduced rates to landlords and moneylenders,

the demands of the lower castes for occupancy rights over their land. stoppage of menial services and payment of nazrana, etc., lead to violent reactions on the part of landlords and moneylenders mostly belonging to upper castes and result in caste riots. The reprisals taken by the landlords against the lower and backward castes are: to deprive them of their lands and to turn them out of their houses on the ground that the houses belonged to the landlords; refused to allow their cattle to use the ordinary grazing ground and to take water at the ordinary drinking tanks; and complete social boycott (Jha). In these caste conflicts, the backward casts and Harijans have moved towards the MCC and the forward castes towards the SLF.

Barriers in mobility and achieving political power : According to M.N. Srinivas mobility of individual castes in local caste hierarchy has always been possible. The potent sources of mobility are: the process of sanskritisation, gaining access to some source of wealth, appealing to census officers to change the status of assets in the decennial census, and mobilizing caste groups by forming caste associations. Not only the members of the higher castes achieved political power as the Marathas, Reddis, Nairs, Coorgs in South India claimed, Kshatriyas status through ownership of land but even tribes and intermediate and low caste people too, became politically powerful and clamed Kshatriya status. For example, Yadavs Kurmis and Koeries in Bihar, Patidars in Gujarat, Pala in West Bengal, and Bhumij and Munda tribes in east India established their claims to be Kshatriyas.

According to Srinivas, many low and backward castes concentrated on acquiring the symbols of high status that is, possession of political power, education, and a share in the new economic opportunities. The high castes resented the appropriation of the symbols of high rank by the low castes. They could no longer rely on the political authority to punish those who dared to appropriate those symbols. They thought they had the 'moral authority' of physically punishing and

ostracizing the low caste people attempting such appropriation. The newly established institution of decennial census in 1901 came to the aid of ambitious low castes. They thought that by claiming the high caste status in the records of census reports, no one would dispute their rank.

There was a widespread move among castes to assume new and high sounding Sanskritic names. Mythology, traditions and particular customs were also citied in support of the claim to high rank. All this led in caste conflicts, because though initially the aims of low castes were to inform caste customs and claim a high rank but after independence, these castes became political pressure groups demanding electoral tickets, ministership in the cabinets, jobs in administration. Caste conflicts in Gujarat, Delhi, Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan, and Madhya Pradesh and in many states in 1970s, 1980s and 1990s were the result of these claims.

In short, the mobility course attempted by the low and backward castes as a means to get rid of social and economic oppression and to as obtain their legitimate rights, has always been resisted by the upper castes to protect their own vested interests. This resistance attempt on the part of the upper castes and mobility movement on the part of the lower castes leads to conflicts between them.

Competition for economic opportunities and acquiring symbols of high status: Though the status of each caste is fixed in the caste hierarchy but in the absence of clear-cut hierarchy, vagueness characterizes the position of many castes. In independent India, competition between different castes seems to be the normal situation. With the passing of political power to the people, castes have become pressure groups and are competing for power and using power to benefit caste fellows. This tendency has increased caste conflicts in the country. Sometimes the desire for successfully competing with other castes compels small segments to unite and form a single caste category. As **Andre Beteille** has pointed out, "Competition for power and office

requires a certain aggregation of segment as individually they cannot compete in the struggle for power." When they come together, they are regarded as powerful castes. The example of Kolis in Gujarat and Yadavas in North India provide an instance of coming together and forming a single caste-category in order to strengthen their political power.

What is important to remember in caste conflicts is that although numerical strength is an important basis of power for a caste but what is more important is organization. In this regard, people with some social and economic standing in the caste play a crucial role. Small tenants and landless labourers have very little power. Far from being able to maneuver for benefits and privileges, they are not even able to get what they are entitled by law (Andre Beteille). Such people are sometimes lured by revolutionary organizations to join them and fight for their rights and status. Caste carnages in states like Bihar and Andhra Pradesh are the result of such efforts.

Different Views on Caste Conflict

According to Cultural Perspective (Dumont, Bougle, Coomaraswami), caste in India is a hierarchical institution. Status of every caste is clearly spelled out. So possibility of caste conflict was historically absent in Indian society.

M.N.Srinivas Yogendra Singh contradicts this view of culturists and indicate how Brahmin's superior position is challenged by Kshatriyas, Vaishyas, Shudras by Buddhism, Jainism and Sikhism, respectively. Birth of these new religions has shown that how conflict influences dynamism in orthogenetic culture of Indian society.

Intensity of caste-conflict increased during medieval period when lot many intermediary caste received patronage from Mughals and subsequently going for secular mobile. They claimed Kshatriya status. Upper castes questioned rise of new Kshatriyas who refused to accept superiority of old Kshatriyas, leading to caste conflict.

- According to **Andre Beteille**, caste conflict had two different dimensions in India- Inter caste conflict, Intra caste conflict. The intensity of the two is variable in time and space. According to Beteille, in the past caste conflict in India was identity centric conflict. Now it is slowly moving towards interest focused conflict.

- **Stevenson** in his study found that dalit community in South India evidently fought against each other pertaining to right over ritual symbol, putting turban on ritual occasions and so on.

- **Oscar Louis** in his study found that in Western UP, Jats sand Rajputs fought against each other in search of superiority and dominance.

- **F.G. Beilly** in study of Bissipara found caste conflict between different caste group in search of both ritual and secular superiority.

- According to **T.K. Oomen**, in the decade of 60s and 70s, caste association like All India Kshatriya Mahasabha, Dalit Panther Party, Backwards class mobilization in South India largely comes into prominence. These associations make efforts to promote vertical integration between sub-castes, contributing for homogenization of people on the basis of supra-caste identity. Srinivas calls this as Varnisation of caste in India.

- **Ghurye** considers that consolidation of caste is offering justification to caste conflict on one hand and on the other it is affecting to the process of national integration.

- According to **S.C. Dube,** green revolution and resultant economic affluence of farmers in Western Uttar Pradesh, Punjab and Haryana gave rise to consolidation of intermediary castes in North India. This consolidation of castes and their search for power led to caste conflict in few cases. In the same manner, All India Agrawal Mahasabha strengthened its organization and campaigned to show that it carries capacity to resist violence from outsiders. **Edmund Leach** calls it as caste-grades coming together and **F.G. Belly** calls it as assimilation of caste clusters.

- **T.K. Oomen** points out that caste conflict are nothing but lower caste search for equality and higher caste challenge and protests to it. When elements of justice, equality, democracy are injected in a traditional society people refuse to accept old fashioned, exploitative laws. So people organize formally, claim new status and involve in protest and conflict.

In contemporary times, caste and caste conflict is not having an organized manifestation, the way it was present in the past. However in everyday newspaper, atrocities against Dalits, specifically against dalit women are reported.

Thorat in his study of violence against Dalits finds out that during the year 2001 and 2002 found that

- Atrocities against Dalits maximally reported in the states of Rajsthan, T.N, Uttar Pradesh, Haryana and Madhya Pradesh.

- He finds out that economic conditions of these states are potentially different. However, Brahminic cultural ideology of superiority is equally present.

- He considers that the incidents of atrocities are neither reported by police nor subjected to public scrutiny. This indicates that now in a democratic society like India, dalits face isolation discrimination, segregation in India.

- He suggests that now dalits are organizing protest taking the help of civil society institutions. They are worrying least about money power, muscle power and hegemonistic dominant caste. So Caste and caste conflict in India is a sub-altern struggle for appropriate space in democratic India that was historically denied to dalit community.

Sometimes caste and caste conflict is driven by political equation. This is discussed in detail by Rudolph and Rudolph and Anand Chakravarti:

- **Rudolph and Rudolph** consider it as a politics of bargaining, where each caste empathized with immediate upper and immediate lower caste to constitute a consolidation for political success, to gather strength to withstand violence of others.

- **Anand Chakravarti** in his study found that caste factions try to get support from adjoining caste groups for political success or to resist domination or violence of other castes.

Lastly it can be concluded that caste and caste conflict is still prevalent. However nature, form and genesis of caste and caste conflict have changed. Presence of caste and caste conflict is a testimony to the fact that there is a contrast between traditional cultural perceptions and modern values of equality and justice.

CASTEISM

The caste system in its distorted form has given rise to the problem of casteism. It has crept into every sphere of our national life. As a result of casteism people have started to ignore the interest of society. According to **Kaka Kalelker**, "Casteism, therefore, is an overriding, blind and supreme group loyalty that ignores the healthy social standards of justice, fairplay, equity and universal brotherhood".

Casteism which exercises a negative influence on the network of social relations is caused by several factors of which the following may be noted:

Endogamous Nature of the Caste: Casteism is often the result of restrictions imposed on the marriage that take place in the Hindu society. Each caste and sub-caste is endogamous in nature. It means that members of a caste or sub-caste have to marry within his or her own caste or sub-caste. Because of this rule of endogamy, marital relations are confined to a small circle/section of the people. Individuals are more prone to develop their loyalties and admiration to their own caste or sub-caste people. This practice of endogamy makes the people to become somewhat narrow-minded.

Strong Desire of Enhance Caste Prestige: People belonging to a particular caste or sub-caste have the tendency of developing loyalty to their caste or sub-caste and to become more conscious of its relative prestige in society. Every member thus tries his level best to see that his caste prestige is safeguarded and enhanced. This type of loyalty towards the caste makes the members of the caste favour the members of the caste wherever they get the opportunity. Excessive caste loyalty tends to keep other caste people at a distance.

Improvement in the Means of Transport and Communication leading to a Better Organization of Caste: Advancement that has taken place in the field of transport and communication has helped the members of the caste to be in touch with one another regularly. It has also helped them to strengthen their caste organization and conduct activities on caste lines. Caste organization and caste get-together are on the increase.

Urbanization Indirectly Favouring Casteism: Industrialization and urbanization have been attracting people in a large number towards cities. When the rural people go to cities they naturally search for their nearer and dearer ones on the basis of their caste. They consider their own caste people as their potential friends and well-wishers. Hence the city atmosphere has also contributed to the strengthening of caste feeling and caste-mindedness.

Powerful Hold of the Caste Over the member: Caste is a strong cohesive group. It has a powerful hold over its members. Member of the caste also look to the caste of obtaining the needed help and assistance in times of crises, difficulties and emergencies. Dependence of the members on the caste in this way has further added to the problem of casteism

Consequences of Casteism

Casteism, though has certain benefits to the members of the caste on the individual basis; it has several harmful effects on the society as a

whole. Some of the major consequences of casteism can be noted here.

1. **Hindrance to the Developments of National Feeling.** Members of the caste imbibed with the spirit of casteism are more prone to show their loyalty to the caste rather than to the community at large. Casteism divides people in the name of caste and encourages intolerance, jealousy, rivalry and conflicts among members of the caste. Caste clashes and tensions that are in society for one reason or another, ends unity of society and damages social harmony.

2. **Dangerous to Democracy.** Strictly speaking, caste and democracy cannot go together. Caste is based on inequality, whereas democracy assures equality and equal opportunities to one and all. Since democracy and caste system co-existing in India, clashes between them are inevitable. Indian politics has become very much complicated because of the caste interference. Caste plays its role in the processes of selection of candidates to the election, formation of cabinet, distribution of portfolios, and so on. It means at every stage in politics caste creates tensions, misunderstandings, infights, rivalries etc. It is in this way national interests are undermined and national unity is underscored.

3. **Encourages Moral Degeneration.** Casteism contributes to the moral fall. It encourages nepotism. It makes one go out of the way to help and favour people of one's own caste. People of the same caste also look to the caste leaders to favour them in the entire situation. This kind of favour damages the moral values and encourages corruption.

4. **Casteism Leads to the Negligence of Talents and Efficiency.** If candidates are selected and appointments are made on the basis of caste, it definitely damages talents, abilities and efficiencies of the people. When unwanted and inefficient people are selected for high offices in the name of caste, honesty, efficiency and duty consciousness becomes the first casualty.

It is clear from the above that casteism has dangerous effects on the society. Though people know casteism is bad they have become the victims of that. Even those who condemn it in public are privately stuck to it. **M.N. Srinivas** has rightly said that the caste "is so tacitly and so completely accepted by all including most vocal elements in condemning it, that it is everywhere the unit of social action."

More than the common people, politicians seem to be contributing much to the survival of casteism. "Political leaders belonging to different castes seem to secure political and other advantages for themselves at the expenses of other, and to this end they utilize the caste sentiment. Caste consciousness and caste prejudices which exist among the masses are thus turned by politicians into caste passions."

One of the seasonal politicians of India, **Namboodiripad** himself has stated, "The existence of caste consciousness, caste prejudices, discontent in the basis of caste inequalities, all these are impediments in the way of the development of the country as a whole, and therefore, of the developments of 'lower' and 'backward' castes themselves".

Suggestions for solution of the problem of Casteism

Casteism is no doubt a social evil that has to be counteracted and removed. Some have even gone to the extent of telling that even caste system is to be wiped out. But removal of caste and casteism is not easy thing. Caste has very strong roots in our social set up and hence it cannot be uprooted from our society. It is need of the hour that the ugly face of the caste, that is, casteism, should be wiped out. We can suggest some solutions in this regard to counteract the problem of casteism.

Education : Education seems to be the most ideal solution to the problem of casteism. People must be properly educated about the dangers of

practicing casteism. Parents, teachers, elderly people, political leaders should take precautions against contaminating the young minds with casteism.

Encouragement to Intercaste Marriages: Marital relations represent the most intimate relations between men and women. Encouragement and promotion of intercaste marriages will help young men and women of different caste to come closer and to develop healthy relations among them.

Minimum use of the term 'Caste' : Necessary precautions must be taken to see that the word 'caste' is used only in limited context. The young generations must be encouraged to give the least importance to it. This is possible only when we make lesser use of the term 'caste'.

Promotion of economic equality : Wide economic gap is found between the upper caste people and the lower caste people. This economic gap widens the social distance and contributes to the development of caste prejudices. Hence, efforts must be made to provide equal economic opportunities for the lower caste people to attain economic prosperity.

In **M.N.Srinivas** opinion most of the shortcoming of the caste system can be removed and the door opened to democratic equality through adult franchise, five year plans, and the provision of education, constant progress of the backward classes and the influence of the culture of higher caste on the living standards of the lower castes.

According to **Ghurye**, the conflicts originated in casteism can be removed by encouraging intercaste marriages. Co-education should be introduced at the primary level and boys and girls should be given the opportunity to come together. This will lead to improvements of the behaviour between different sexes simultaneously with which casteism will be actively refuted. Intercaste marriage will be encouraged and the individuals marrying out of their own castes will be instrumental in creating an atmosphere that will be fundamentally opposed to casteism.

According to **Mrs. Iravati Karve**, in order to put an end to the conflict arising out of casteism it is necessary to create economic and cultural equality between the castes.

According to **Prabhu**, the conflict created by casteism can be ended only when the internal aspects of conduct are influenced. For this it is necessary to try and develop new attitudes in the people. The cinema can do much towards the creation of these attitudes.

ETHNIC CONFLICTS, COMMUNALISM ʔ ID RELIGIOUS REVIVALISM
Defining Ethnicity

Literally speaking, the word "ethnos" means nation, and the word 'ethnicity' is developed from it. However, "ethnicity" is not defined as nationhood. It is defined as a collectivity of people of a distinct nature in terms of race, descent and culture. Thus, an ethnic group is a social collectivity having certain shared historicity and certain common attributes, such as race, tribe, language, religion, dress, diet, etc. A combination of them in a group makes it an ethnic group, which is perceived as such by its members and by members of other groups. One may call this self-perception ethnic consciousness for status and for recognition as a distinct social entity. Ethnicity is not a static or pre-ordained category; it is a manifestation of the common economic, political, social and cultural interests and their protection by certain members in a plural society. Thus, ethnicity, at times, is used as an instrument of mobilization for realizing social, economic and political goals.

Ethnicity is a cultural phenomenon, and as such no culture is "superior" or "inferior". Culture belongs to a people, and they endear it like any other people. E. B. Tylor defines culture as "that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society"

"Culture is the man-made part of the environment". Therefore, all ethnic entities are cultural groupings, and therefore, they enjoy the

same position in terms of the normative orientations of different sets of people. The Constitution in India declares sets of people. The Constitution of India declares that India is a secular state in which distinctions and discriminations based on caste, creed, region, language, religion, etc., are not allowed. The people have been given 'fundamental rights' according to which, primordial or inscriptive considerations do not find any place in modern India.

Ethnic Group: An ethnic group may be defined as a distinct category of the population in a larger society whose culture is usually different from that of the society. The members of such a group are bound together by common ties of race or nationality or culture. In other words, an ethnic group is a group of people having common racial, religious, linguistic or national characteristic.

An ethnic group may think that it is a living being of a unique kind. Its members generally think in terms of a real or factious commonality based on common ancestral, cultural heritage, language, religion and even economic interests. Internally, all ethnic groups are stratified despite their claim of commonality in all respects. Ethnicity has become a very sensitive aspect of India's social fabric, resulting in ethnic cleavage, conflict, violence and hatred. Are ethnic group's classes? Are they the same groupings as of caste groups? A plural or multi-ethnic society like India would have an overlapping of ethnic, caste and class groupings. Continuality of these groupings is important to distinguish among ethnicity, caste and class; as three bases of social ranking and identification.

A given country consists of various communities; and facts about their origin and migration help understand the history of its civilization. The present population of India is over 840 million. About eighty years ago, Sir Herbert Risley noted that there were 2378 main casts among the Hindus in India. Certainly, this number must have reached over 3000 by this time due to the processes of fission and social mobility. Marriage among different caste groups takes place in accordance with the rules of caste endogamy,

clan exogamy and avoidance of relations in father's and mother's sides. Besides these caste groups, there are other communities such as Muslims, Christians. Sikhs Parsis Jains and many tribal groups, who limit marriage and social interaction to their own groups

Nature of Ethnic Conflict

At times, ethnic groups tend to operate as diametrically opposed groups due to a clash of their real or supposed interests. Such a clash of interests may also take the form of communalism.

- Some groups may take undue advantage of their large numbers or of superior of social origin to corner a major share of the national resources. The other communities with smaller populations may feel deprived of what they feel are their 'legitimate claims'. Situations of mutual distrust, disaffection and distance may arise between various ethnic groups. Ethnic groups are called "primordial collectivities".

- One perspective is that "relative deprivation" is the root cause of all ethnic strife.

- The lacks of distributive justice, differential accessibility to resources and cultural differences have been considered the main causes of ethnic problems.

- Sometimes ethnic conflict is due to the distinction made between "outsiders" and "insiders'. "We" (insiders) against 'they" (outsiders) is an attitude found in all societies. Immigrants are treated as 'foreigners'. Such a problem arises when Assamese, Bengali, Gujarati, Oriya, Hindi, Kashmiri, Punjabi, Urdu, Marathi and Sindhi speaking people consider each other different in the national context. Members belonging to one state often consider members from other states as outsiders. They would not like them to seek employment in their state.

- Sub-regions, cities, towns and even villages are often used for drawing a line between the insiders and the outsiders. The question is:

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can we call it ethnicity? The answer is a clear no. India is a poly-ethnic society having distinctions based on race, caste, language, religion and territory.

COMMUNALISM

The most striking feature of India's current socio-political scenario is the 'explosion' of communalism in the face of new Economic policy and Globalization. It is threatening the very social fabric of Indian society.

Communalism is a highly complex phenomenon in pluralistic India. The academics from different disciplines in vague, some based on certain static pre-conceived notions while others on the basis of the ever changing socio-political dynamics. In some of these definitions communalism has been explained as 'above all an ideology', to some others, 'a false consciousness', 'a struggle for scarce resources', 'competition for jobs', 'an instrument of ruling class politics' and so on. On the basis of its highly intolerant anti-democratic nature, it is also seen as a precursor to fascism.

Among the plethora of definitions, W .C. Smith's (1979) definitions presents a fairly generalized and popularly accepted scenario. "Communalism is that ideology which has emphasized as the social, political and economic unit the group of adherents of each religion, and has emphasized the distinction, even antagonism, between such groups."

Communalism can be said to have had more than a hundred years old history, affecting aspects of the socio-cultural and political life of India in myriad ways. During certain times, it lays dormant, while being potentially explosive. Bipin Chandra (1987) in his acclaimed work on Communalism argued that, "Communalism was the false consciousness of the historical processes of the last one hundred fifty years, because, objectively no real conflict between the interests of Hindus and Muslims existed". It was a false view of history. He further argues that "Communalism was an expression of and deeply rooted in the interests, aspirations, outlook, attitudes, psychology and point of view of the middle classes in a social situation characterized by economic stagnation the absence of vigorous struggle to transform society—the communal question was petty bourgeois question par excellence".

K.N. Pannikkar said that "communalism is a state of consciousness ... which primarily draws upon certain assumptions of distinct cultural identity for members professing the same religion".

Gyanendra Pandey suggested that "communalism is a form of Colonialist knowledge, which in its Indian usage, means a condition of suspicion, fear and hostility between members of different religious communities".

All these definitions broadly touch upon the antagonistic relationship whether "imagined" or real between the two major religious communities such as Hindu-Muslim, Hindu-Christian, Hindu-Sikh, Muslim-Sikh relations.

Communal Violence

Violence between religious communities in the form of riots, pogroms or terrorism draws our attention in a dramatic manner but the underlying and long term cause of this violence is the spread of communalism. As Bipin Chandra remarks, while the communal riots give credibility to the basic communal ideological precepts among the ordinary people and enlist further support for communal politicians, it is communal ideology and politics, which the communal politicians and ideologues preach in normal times, which form the real basis on which communal tensions and violence occur. In other words, communal ideology and politics are the disease, communal violence only it's external symptom. "Communal riots and other forms of communal violence are only a concrete conjunctural manifestation of the communalization of society and politics. Communal ideology leads to communal politics and psychology differentiation, distance and competition along religious lines" (Chandra).

Communalism and communal violence are the products of the overall social, economic and political situation of the society. Communal violence has been, by and large, an urban

phenomenon where the deprived and poor people have been involved. But more than religion, it is communal propaganda; rumour mongering and communal mobilization have been responsible. Any type of violence and lawlessness provides an opportunity to the interested people to indulge in loot and plunder largely for economic reasons. But the recent happenings (of 2002) in Gujarat have shaken all the sensible, justice loving, democratic and secular people of the country. The involvement of the state in a communal violence has never been so blatant and naked. It was virtually a state-sponsored violence against the minority community as brought out by several citizens organizations and forums. Some of these reports even described it as 'ethnic cleaning' done under state supervision. Significantly, the dirty work of violence is left to a certain type of communalized militant youth especially belonging to the dalit and backward castes, and sometimes to the tribal groups, while the ideological work evolves with great subtlety. This may be an intelligent tactic on the part of communal leadership to divert the attention of the traditionally deprived sections from their problems. It may also be a ploy of blocking the deprived sections of the society from finding a rightful place in the power structure which till now has been tightly held by the upper social strata. But in the Gujarat carnage the involvement of the upward mobile, prosperous middle class in loot and plunder is a phenomenon that required an urgent analysis by the sociologists.

Indian State was conceived in a secular, non-communal manner. In the secular-democratic state an important rule was assigned to politics and the politics parties. Unfortunately elections in independent India became ends in themselves and narrow self and political interests rather than larger national interests became more important. In this scenario, the communal implications of the numbers game in a pluralistic society became apparent. The political parties conceive of their interests in terms of caste and religion. "Such an ethnic orientation of the numbers game has two prominent features. One is the rise of new political

organizations that are sometimes blatantly and sometimes not so blatantly communal. This happens on the local levels or starts at that levels and then moves up" (Rajni Kothari, 1998). Shiv Sena is a blatant example of this but there are many others too. The capture of political organizations by cultural and sectarian organizations is also a case in point. What starts as non-political organizations take on political roles. Rajni Kothari gives the example of R.S.S. and Jamat-e-Islami of this phenomenon or process. Such organizations declare that they have nothing to do with politics but they go on spreading their tentacles. So that, in course of time, political organizations like parties, trade unions and professional associations like those of students and teachers even women's organizations, become increasingly dependent on sectarian and communal organizations which are not opposed to be political.

Measures to Contain Ethnic and Communal Violence

If the surging tide of communalism is not reversed, it will swamp the country. Before independence, it was easy to argue that communal violence was the result of the British policy of divide and rule. Now the reality is more complex. Religion has come to be politicized and politics has come to be criminalized. Unless all communities consider themselves a part of one nation, the containing of communal disharmony will remain difficult.

A country that prides itself on the secular character of its policies has to be wary of politicians who speak only for their own religious community. It has to expose and alienate the bureaucrats who consider secularism only as a theoretical possibility. The police can no longer afford to allow communal issue to foster in the manner that it has.

Initiating the process of de-communalizing the people at all levels, say, by bringing home to them that communal assumptions are false, by explaining to them the socio-economic and political roots of communalism.

Communalization of the state and of the political elite in power has to be checked because it leads to inaction against communal violence, and covert or overt political and ideological support to communalism by the state apparatuses, including the media under state control.

The communalization of civil society also needs to be checked because it leads to more communal riots and other forms of communal violence. People with communal ideas and ideologies pressurize the government to act in a manner which is always against the principles of secularism. The secular state, the secular party in power and the secular power elite many a time succumb to the pressures of these communal people. It is here that intellectuals, political parties and voluntary organizations can be most effective.

The role of education, particularly emphasizing value-oriented education both in schools and colleges/universities, is important in preventing communal feelings. Education based on new cultural ideologies can protect the young people against philosophies and ideologies of hate. Particularly harmful in the Indian context has been the role of teaching of history. Communal interpretation of history, especially of the medieval period, forms the bedrock of communal ideology in India. Teaching of history along scientific lines in educational institutions has to be a basic element in any ideological struggle against communalism.

The media can also prove to be significantly useful in preventing communal feelings. Communal press can be banned, the legal action can be taken against communal writers.

The ideology that economic development, industrialization, growth of capitalism and the growth of the working class would automatically weaken and ultimately eliminate communalism should not be overplayed. This economic reductionist approach of the left parties and organization like Naxalite only increases communal poison. It is not being suggested that modern economic development is not needed in our society. What is being pointed out is that economic development alone cannot contain communalism. It is not class struggle which increases communalism but communalism surely hampers class unity. Communal violence is more prevalent in developed states like Maharashtra, Punjab and Gujarat and in developed cities like Mumbai, Ahmadabad, Jamshedpur and Kanpur.

Peace Committees can be set up in which individuals belonging to different religious communities can work together to spread good will and fellow-feeling and remove feelings of fear and hatred in the riot-affected areas. This will be effective not only in diffusing communal tensions but also in preventing riots from breaking out.

The state has to plan and use new strategies in dealing with communal violence. India's experience in recent years confirms the utility of this step. Whenever strong and secular administrators have used or threatened the use of strong steps, riots either did not occur or were of short duration. For example, strong police and army intervention prevented repetition of riots in Calcutta in November 1984 and in Mumbai in January 1994. When the anti-social elements and religious fanatics and people with vested interests realize that the government is not partial and the police are serious in putting down communal violence with all the force at its command, they immediately cease spreading communal frenzy. This also calls for non-communalizing law-enforcement agencies.

The role of media is immensely heightened during the course of communal violence. Newspapers can pour oil over the troubled waters or extinguish the raging fire. The fear and hatred can be checked if the press, radio and TV report events in a way conductive to soothing the frayed nerves of people instead of inflaming the temper further. The media can contradict rumours in a sober manner. A careful restraint has to be exercised in reporting the number of persons of different religious communities killed or injured.

The government in power has to treat the extremist communal outfits as its immediate targets and cripple their capacity to disrupt law and order. The secessionists in Kashmir, the militants in Punjab, and other extremist

organizations of Hindu, Muslim and Sikh communalism have to be dealt with by the state through its law and order machinery. The small insecure communities always look to government or move towards communal parties for protection. The communalism of the 1980s and 90s has placed a clear responsibility at the doors of the secular state squarely to confront the communal elements who have emerged as merchants of death.

Today, communalism is on the march and secularism is on the regret, and the state is on the defensive. The state was on the defensive in post-Blue Star Operation phase, on the retreat on Shah Bano case, and under siege on Mandir-Masjid issue in Ayodhya in 1992 and Hazratbai siege in November 1993 and in Charar-e-Shrief shrine siege in May 1995 in Kashmir and Gujarat riots in 2002. In all these situations, Sikh, Muslim, and Hindu communalists were on the offensive. The challenge of Hindu, Muslim and Sikh communalism has to be met by the Indian State at political and ideological levels both with short-term and long-term strategies.

The government is also facing the problem of the emergence of religion-based politics as a central factor in public affairs and elections, although election results in several states in the last five-six years have proved that the people have rejected such policies.

Apart from these measures, it is necessary to look at the real problems of the religious minorities in terms of employment, literacy and getting them a fair share of representation in every field. Efforts are needed for the development of the minority communities and removing their mass illiteracy and unemployment. Secular structures have to be promoted and preserved. Vigorous attacks need to be launched on religious institutions which foster communalism. Suspicions between communities must be rigorously weeded out. A common civil code in the country is the need of the day. There should be no special laws for specific communities and so special status for any state. The reservation policy has to be reconsidered. Political manipulation has to be tackled. Politicians interfering with police functioning and disallowing arrests of trouble makers have to be severely dealt with. Public opinion and mass enlightenment have to be brought about to make secular values functional.

Along with these measures other measures that should be undertaken by the government to contain communal violence are:

- Posting of secular-minded police officials in riot-prone areas.
- Setting up of special courts to try communal offences.
- Providing immediate relief and adequate financial assistance to victims of communal riots for their rehabilitation.
- Taking severe action against all those who incite communal tensions or take part in violence.

Thus, multipronged measures are needed to contain communal tensions and bring about communal harmony in the country. We have not only to fight religious communalism but have also to contain political communalism which is more degrading and dangerous. A vast majority of Muslims and Sikhs in India have no appetite for communal violence, and this is also true of the sentiments of most Hindus. The members of the Muslim and Sikh communities are convinced that the growing communal tension can be stopped if politicians are somehow prevented from exploiting people for their narrow ends. The Muslim on the street is slowly recognizing the exploitative intentions of politicians. Religious sloganeering does not affect him so much now. He no longer harbours a sneaking desire to seek economic redress across the border. He feels far more secure here.

Religious Revivalism

In modern society religion is a fantasy for someone and for others it is an artistic delight for sometimes others it is a ray of hope still for others it's a prove of personal decision, for many others its respect for self and society. In modern society religion is not man's unquestionable faith in god rather it's a form of experience that offers a man guidelines for self-conduct.

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RELIGIOUS REVIVALISM in India can be understood on demand supply phenomena. Though India glorifies secularism, importance of religion has increased manifold in personal life of people. As a result, new sects and cults have emerged. Leaders of these sects and cults aggressively campaign their religion using different means. They lure customers and ensure their importance in the market of religion where supply is very low as compared to demand. Ashish Nandy writes that this is the region why sadhus are not successful in India and successful in West.

The theory of religious revivalism in contemporary times is spelled out by Campbella who introduces two concepts, Endomorph and sociomorph, indicating that religious revivalism is greatly dependent on childs psychic adoptability to immediate institution like family and community. A child who fails to adjust commands and demands of these institutions in early childhood stage, do have a tendency to stand more committed to religion. A child who suffers from maladjustment lives in his own world, develop his independent views to the existential values, ultimately constitute his own culture, get number of supports and reinforces religion in a societv that was one's secular.

He further asserts that religious revivalism is greatly a response to threat to ones family and community or even larger society of which he is a part. In a multi-cultural society growing cultural hostility when experienced by child during his childhood or early adulthood, he becomes more possessive about religion. So while holding secular position he is bound to reinforce activities endorsed by religion. This idea can largely be applied to Indian society, where common experience shared by children in childhood, intensify their association with religion. Hence many educated youth in support of their region don't hesitate to take militant action, even though they have to sacrifice their life for it.

All these illustrations sufficiently imply that religion is making appearance in a big way in the life histories of the societies. Communist Russia has broken on the basis of religion, America is emerging as a risk society living under the threat of religious terrorism. New Age religions are mushrooming in less populous highly developed Scandinavian countries. Every year hundreds of communal conflicts take place in India.

These incidents sufficiently indicates that in a country like India, religious revivalism is a challenge to modernization and social transformation. Commenting on it Bainbridge advocates that the conventional theory of modernity speaking out secularization and happiness has found out no place in present empirical world. So role of region in human society is not predictable, it is dynamic and variable.

One is not always secular because it is not a rule of law. It's a creative act and its discourses are only by the creative mind of the artists. The people who are secular at one point of time are outnumbered by people those who want and religious revivalism. Thus we live in a paradoxical time, whether like it or dislike, we are bound to be affected by religious revivalism, directly or indirectly.

Illiteracy and Disparities in Education

The issue of illiteracy and disparity in education is a crucial problem in Indian society. India is the largest democracy in the world. Quite interestingly, 30% of the world's illiterate population comes from India. The literacy rate of the country is around 60%. Of these literate people, most reside in urban areas which constitute around 10% of the inhabited land; rural areas occupy the rest. Clearly, rural India is dominated by illiteracy. Illiteracy rates in many third world countries are alarmingly high; India's education programme is falling behind other nations. It is country where the population has reached one billion, while only one-third of them are to read.

Illiteracy and disparities in education can be discussed on various level

- disparity between rural and urban areas,
- between upper caste and lower castes,
- between high class and low class,
- between developed regions and developing or backward regions,

- between high collar group and non-white collar group (menial workers),
- between male and female etc.

  Due to various social and economic problems India' education programme continues to be undercut.
- Of the biggest victims of the educational system are those living in rural areas.
- The attitudes of the children and teachers also affect the quality of the schools.
- Allocation of government funds and the conditions of the destitute rural schools contribute to the low quality of education by rural children.
- While there are many rural areas in school systems which are operating in poor conditions there is one in particular whose schools outperform most other rural schools and also those located in urban areas of India. Kerala, a rural state of India remains a puzzle to many educators. Its illiteracy rate does not follow the trend of most rural schools.
- Many children living in rural areas receive a level of education which is very poor.
- Overall enrolment in primary and middle schools are very low.
- Fifty per cent of children living in these areas leave school before the fifth grade. These children leave school for variety of reasons: most leave so that they can work in the fields, where the hours are long and the pay is low.
- A large per cent of the dropouts are females. Forced by their parents, most girls perform household chores and help the family at home. These are some of the reasons why sixty per cent of all females in India are illiterate, a figure much higher than those of males.
- As these children grow into adults, many are still illiterate by the age of forty. These uneducated adults are also reluctant to send their own children to school because of their failure in the education system. This in turn creates a problem for the next generation.

- The children living in rural areas continue to be deprived of a quality education, part of the reason is, due to their teachers. A large number of teachers refuse to teach in rural areas and those that do are usually under qualified.
- In recent years the number of qualified teachers has increased because of increased efforts by the government and private groups to improve the general education and professional training of teacher. There is need of an emphasis on the training of rural teachers, whose educational background is generally not as sound as their urban counterparts.
- Those that refuse to teach in rural areas cite distance and lack of interest by students as problems. Many of the teachers also lack the enthusiasm to teach because of their meager salary – less than one hundred dollars per months.
- Another obstacle faced by the schools is that obtaining more teachers for rural schools is difficult because of state guidelines that approve of high student- to-teacher ratios. '
- As the lack of teachers creates many obstacles for children in rural schools, another setback is the lack of resources which becomes detrimental to the learning process.
- Lack of books and other reading materials seem to be a widespread problem. The use of high-tech devices such as computers is very rare.
- Condition of the schools, the inadequate facilities in the classes is other obstacles. Some schools are located in warehouses while others in small houses. Many of the rural schools operate without electricity.
- While many rural schools search for the proper resources, the distribution of government funds is major hindrance to the educational system.
- According to a recent study done by the World Bank, thirty per cent of the total educational funding goes toward higher

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educational institutions. This is an important issue because the number of students enrolled in these types of institutions represents such a small per cent of India's students.

Though rural children continue to be deprived of a formal education, the education system of Kerala is an exception. Kerala's illiteracy rates are lower than most other rural areas in India. Many of the people of Kerala who work in a different country send lots of donations back to Kerala. These people believe that it is responsibility of them to donate back to their hometown. It is these donations which have funded many of the programmes that make Kerala stand out from other rural states. Coupled with the government and private donations the education system has been able to benefit. More schools are being built and more teachers are willing to work there.

Hampered by the government and by other factors the quality of education in rural districts has been quite poor. High dropout rates and low enrolment by the children have contributed to the large illiteracy rate. Kerala, a rural state of India boasts many areas of progress and serves as a model for other rural areas and many of the wealthier parts of India. Without drastic changes by the government and by its citizens, India is well on its way to becoming the world's most illiterate nation.

The disadvantaged people (i.e., SCs, STs, OBCs, women, and religious minorities) in our society have been terribly exploited because of their illiteracy. Some studies have been conducted on descriptions of disparity in education as evidenced in regional, rural-urban, sex, and caste disparities and imbalances in enrolment and retention at school or college and the consequences of disparities. All these studies have pointed out the impact of education on the status and the identity of the disadvantaged people.

Studies on SCs and STs have indicated that so long these people remain educationally backward; they have to be provided protective discrimination in the form of economic support or reserved admissions to institutions of higher education.

One such study was sponsored by the ICSSR in 1974 under the coordination of I.P. Desai. It covered 14 states and was concerned with the situation and problems of SC ad ST school and college students in the country. This study, pointing out apathy of ST students to education, indicated that illiteracy increases inequality and prevents occupational as well as social mobility.

Victor D'Souza traced the pattern of disparity between the education of the SCs and the others in Punjab and pointed out how the structure of caste system, caste behaviour, economic factors and the form and operation of welfare programmes influence the pattern.

V.P. Shah pointed out relationship between education and untouchability in Gujarat.

Sachchidananda Sinha has described the situation of SC students of colleges in Uttar Pradesh. All these studies, thus, throw light on education as an instrument of equality for SCs and STs.

Similarly, there have been studies on women too, another important category of those who are educationally disadvantaged and backward by **K. Ahmad** and others in terms of significance of education to their role in a developing society. **Baker** studied the aspirations of female students with a view to understanding the problems they encounter in making use of educational facilities. **Chitnis** studied the impact of co-education on Muslim women students in Bombay. All these studies point out the consequences of inequalities and the need for change.

Education acts as a refuge in adversity. It empowers the people. It is the tool that breaks the chains that resist a nation's development. If the growth of a nation is to be people-centric, and if development is to be whole, then the people must be empowered and stimulated through education.

Lack of education has resulted in growth of unemployment, poverty and a substantial increase in the rate of growth of population. Most of the

voters are illiterate; votes of the illiterate people do affect the election process in a major way. Mostly votes are influenced by factors such as religion and caste of the candidates.

Illiteracy has proven to be a major handicap. It has affected various sectors that determine India's growth. The educational system itself operates on nepotism and corruption. The whole system is based on rote learning, the curriculum is rarely updated and teachers in rural schools lack necessary qualifications and knowledge required for their jobs. Most of the people in rural areas live below the poverty line, and thus can't afford to educate their children. The funds that the Government provides for the same, get exhausted before reaching the right people, and, lie in the pockets of corrupt officers.

Education is related to equality of opportunity. This is perceived on the basis of the findings of one empirical study conducted in eight states in 1967 on the social background of students (age, sex, caste, father's occupation, father's education, etc.) studying at various levels – high school, college and professional colleges. This study presented two possible propositions:

Education is a priority with those in the white-collar group, and children in this group use educational facilities more than other groups; and

Education is differentially available to those who do not belong to white-collar group

If the first proposition is correct, it probably underlines the irrelevance of education to non-white-collar groups in our society. Their lack of interest in secondary education arises out of the fact that for the occupations they aspire to, secondary education makes no meaningful contribution. This throws light on the defective planning of our education and the 'backwardness' of the underprivileged groups.

Some suggestions to tackle illiteracy and disparities in education:

- Make education till Standard XII mandatory for all, and free of cost in rural areas.

- Grant 100% tax exemption to all educational institutions as well as on expenditure on education of children.

- Create separate educational funds by levying 2% tax on annual income of all tax payers.

- Increase government funding for education. At least 20% of the annual budget must be used for the same.

- Define educational qualifications for eligibility for the post of the Education Minister as well as minimum educational qualifications for teachers in all institutions.

- Provide concession on necessities like land, electricity, etc., that are required for setting up educational institutions.

- Provide free education, in all government institutions, for citizens living below the poverty line.

- Launch free-to-air educational channels to educate the masses.

- Provide suitable economic compensation/relief to parents whose children are earning members of their families, to encourage the children to study.

- Provide good salary packages of government employed teachers and salary subsidies for private school teachers, to raise their living standards.

- Set up a grievance cell, to sort all problems of the Educational system, headed by the retired Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of India and assisted by a council of eminent people from various fields, having the status of state ministers of a cabinet.

- Establish institutions for the mentally/physically challenged people, so that they can obtain free education.

- Make adult education mandatory and free of cost for all illiterate adults.

Need of Education to Disadvantaged Sections of Society

Women, STs, SCs, and OBCs

Education to women is necessary so that they can attain equality. It is a pre-requisite for value change as without value change, the social objectives cannot be achieved. The social legislations have given them political, economic, social and religious rights but merely giving them rights does not motivate them to avail these rights to their benefit. The law may give them the right to vote in elections, contest elections and hold political posts but it cannot compel them to do so. The law may give them the right to get a share in father's property but women may not compel their brothers to give them their due share. The law may give them the right to select their own life partner and to divorce the husband who humiliates them, tortures them or exploits them, but how many women insist on using this right? This is mainly because illiteracy has made them stick to traditional values. Lack of courage prevents them from taking initiative for a bold step. Education will make them liberal and broadminded and change their attitudes, values and role perceptions.

The empirical study conducted in eight states in 1967 on 11,500 students studying at various levels points out 'gender' as the most pronounced differentiation in educational opportunity. While broadly speaking education of girls has made strides and today in many faculties and departments of universities, more girls than boys are to be seen. Empirical data shows that the girls who enter the educational system are largely those from the urban high caste, white-collar families. Rural residence, low caste, and low economic standing definitely tend to deny opportunities of education to a girl (Gore). The following specific steps have been taken for improving girls/women's participation in education:

- Under the scheme of Operation Blackboard, the government has provided assistance since 1987-88 for the creation of about one lakh posts of primary school teachers mainly to be filled by women. In five years about 75 per cent of these posts were filled up of which about 60 per cent were women teachers.

- The 'Mahila Samakhya' (Education for Women's Equality) Project was launched in April 1989 which aimed at mobilizing rural women for education through Mahila Sangha in each of the villages concerned. This is a Central scheme where full financial assistance is provided to Mahila Samakhya societies in Uttar Pradesh, Karnataka and Gujarat. As an Indo-Dutch programme, it receives cent percent assistance from the government of the Netherlands. The focus of the programme is on generating demand for education and introducing innovative educational inputs for pre-school, non-formal, adult and continuing education.

- Admission of girls to the extent of 28 per cent in Navodaya Vidyalayas has been ensured

- Special attention is given to enrolment of women in adult education centres.

- Under the rural functional literacy programmes, of the total adult illiterates enrolled by 1995, about 55 per cent were women. Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya Yojana for free education to girls from weaker sections, SC, ST, OBC.

The National Policy on Education-1986 also laid emphasis on education for attaining women's equality which will foster the development of new values. The strategies proposed are: encouraging educational institutions to take up active programmes to further women's development, removal of women's illiteracy, removing obstacles inhibiting their access to elementary education. and pursuing policy of non-discrimination to eliminate sex stereotyping in vocational, technical and professional courses.

The law cannot compel a woman to educate herself. Nor the parents can be compelled to send their daughters to schools. And without education. women's equality cannot be attained. What is needed is change of attitudes both in men and women towards girls education.

Education of SCs, STs, and OBCs

Education is directly related to the development of an individual and the community. It is the most important single factor for economic development as well as social emancipation. For the weaker sections of society, education has a special significance because for a number of centuries, their illiteracy and social backwardness have been used for their harassment, humiliation and economic exploitation. The problems of education of the underprivileged groups and the general population are different both quantitatively as well as qualitatively. It was in the context of quantitative and qualitative differences that the Central Advisory Board of Education recommended about two decades ago (in July 1976) that:

- Universalisation of elementary education of SCs and STs is necessary, particularly in selected areas.
- Since SCs and STs are not homogeneous groups (with high variations in literary levels – tribe-wise and caste-wise in different states), differentiated programmes are necessary for them.
- Since educational infrastructure is non-existent in many cases in the tribal areas, a network of educational institutions of single-teacher schools and hostel facilities according to the density of school network need to be planned for each micro unit.

Steps Taken for Educational Development of SCs and STs, and OBCs

- Our Constitution has directed the states to promote the educational interests of the weaker sections of the people, particularly of SCs and STs in terms of establishment of and admission to educational institutions and grant from state funds for scholarships, etc. It has thus consciously provided a policy of temporary discrimination for them.
- In view of this direction, a provision has been made in all Five Year Plans providing crores of rupees for raising the level of education among the SCs and STs by opening schools,

giving pre-matric and post-matric scholarships, constructing hostels particularly for girls. Creating book-banks, mid-day meals, loans to students, coaching centres, houses for teachers and so forth.

- Reserving seats in educational institutions including engineering and medical colleges.
- Relaxation in age and marks for admission.
- Free special coaching to students aspiring for admission to professional courses or preparing for central and state level competitive examinations.

The National Policy on Education -1986 contemplated the following measures to educate SCs, STs, and OBCs:

- Incentives to SC families to send their children to school regularly till they reach the age of 14.
- Pre-matric scholarship scheme for children of families engaged in low occupations (scavenging, tanning, etc.) from Class I onwards.
- Constant monitoring to ensure enrolment, retention and successful completion of courses.
- Recruitment of teachers from SCs. Facilities in hostels.
- Locating schools, Balwadis and Education Centres in such a way as to facilitate full participation of SCs.
- Constant innovation in finding new methods to increase participation.
- Priority to opening primary schools in the tribal areas.
- Devising instructional materials in tribal languages at the initial stages.
- Encouraging educated tribals to take up teaching in tribal areas.
- Establishing residential schools on a large scale.
- Incentives to all educationally-backward sections of society particularly in the rural areas.

- Providing institutional infrastructure in hill and desert districts and in remote and inaccessible areas.

Causes of failure of education programmes for the SCs and STs

- High percentage of dropouts. Though the number of SC/ST children in primary classes has gradually increased in the last five decades yet a large number of students dropout by the time they pass 5th standard. It is estimated that the percentage of wastage in different states both among SC and ST communities vary from 30 (Himachal Pradesh) to 88 (Manipur). However, wastage among the STs is much higher than that among the SCs.

- Ineffective reservations: All reserved seats are not filled up due to non-availability of the required qualified candidates.

- Meager scholarship: Money spent on education is much more than the money received as scholarship.

- Inadequate facilities: In some tribal areas, schools are located in distinct places and children and children find it difficult to reach school. Similarly, adequate hostel facilities are also not easily available.

- Frequent absence of teachers in remote areas: Most of schools in tribal as well as non-tribal areas are one-teacher schools. Teachers are either not willing to be posted in these isolated areas or they remain absent so frequently that student's education suffers.

- Medium of instruction: Tribal children speak their own dialect while teaching in primary classes is through the state language. This language problem makes students distinterested in their studies as they cannot read the text-books written in unfamiliar language.

- Cultural and social barriers: Among many tribals, the custom of marrying daughters at an early age and not permitting daughter-in-law to go for studies acts as a barrier to acquiring education. Moreover, most tribals have a feeling that the educated tribal youths would not respect the traditional norms and values of life.

According to Prasad, it may, unless tribals are taught both their tribal dialects and state languages, teachers are given incentives for working in isolated areas, single-teacher system is replaced by two or more teacher system, and unless school timings are fixed according to the convenience of the local people, an education will remain inaccessible to the vast majority of SC/ST students. Only especially crafted education policy will fulfil the needs of SCs and STs.

Conclusion

Achieving merit and ability is possible only through education. Though education does not guarantee high status and higher positions to all people, yet without education, an individual is unlikely to achieve social mobility. Rationalizing education to educate the masses, and altering the system to suit the needs of the people, not the politicians, is required in India. To secure for our nation a bright future, the youth must be empowered to create a secular, civilized, literate and developed society, for which our ancestors yearned and sacrificed their lives. The visions of a truly democratic and developed nation and prevalence of literacy alone can provide power, inspiration and motivation to do so.

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