

IAS GURUKUL

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BOOK- 2

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CONTENTS

TOPIC	PAGE NO.
Systems of Kinship in India:	
Lineage and descent in India	1
Types of kinship systems	5
Family in India	12
Marriage in India	19
Household dimensions of the family	31
Patriarchy, entitlement and sexual division of labour	36
Religion and Society:	
Religious communities in India	40
Problems of religious minorities	54
Social Changes in India:	
Visions of Social Change in India:	
Idea of development planning and mixed economy	59
Constitution, law and social change	65
Education and social change	70
Rural and Agrarian transformation in India:	
Programmes of rural development, Community Development Programme, cooperatives, poverty alleviation schemes	72
Green revolution and social change	92
Changing modes of production in Indian agriculture	95
Problems of rural labour, bondage, migration	97
Industrialization and Urbanisation in India:	
Evolution of modern industry in India	103
Growth of urban settlements in India	106
Working class: structure, growth, class mobilization	110
Informal sector & child labour	121
Slums and deprivation in urban areas	124
Politics and Society:	
Nation, democracy and citizenship.	125
Political parties & pressure groups	129
Social and political elite	131
Regionalism	134
Decentralization of power	137
Secularization	144

SYSTEMS OF KINSHIP IN INDIA

LINEAGE & DESCENT IN INDIA

In most communities in India descent is traced in the father's line. This is called patrilineal descent. There are also matrilineal societies Garo, Khasi and Pahadi in the northeast, and Nayar, Mappilla, Lakshadweep islanders, and several tribal and 'nontribal groups in south India in which descent is traced in the mother's line. Besides these two main systems, there are also examples of cognatic communities-Anglo-Indians and some tribal groups which have bilateral tendencies. They may take the name from the father but in tracing descent they also take note of the mother's line. Alongside the words patrilineal and matrilineal, there is a tendency to use also Patriarchal and Matriarchal. The latter usage is loose and confusing. Patriarchy refers to male dominant structures and this indeed is the norm in a sizeable part of Indian society. But matriarchy (female dominant system) does not exist. Women in matrilineal groups are important but in several fields they are not the effective decision makers. Major management functions are vested in male members.

There is considerable variation in pattern of residence after marriage. When the wife moves to live in her husband's father's house (or grandfather's or uncle's house, in the event of father not being there) the family type is patrilocal. Conversely, when the husband moves to live with his wife's mother's family, the family type is matrilocal. Patrilocal residence is the most common in India; examples of matrilocality are found among the Khasi, the Nayar, and several other matrilineal groups. In a number of tribal groups a neolocal residence (a new house for the newly wedded couple) is preferred, although it is more common for them to set up a new home after a period of stay in a patrilocal or matrilocality setting. In Lakshadweep and central Kerala the approved pattern of residence is duolocal the husband continuing to live in his mother's Tarawad and the wife in her mother's Tarawad.

India is often described as a country of joint families. In social anthropological and sociological literature this term is less commonly used; a distinction is made between the nuclear and extended family - the latter signifying units commonly referred to as the joint family.

A nuclear family means a married couple and their children. An extended family, on the other hand is a larger group composed of two, three, or more generations of lineally related member their spouses, and children. In matrilineal extended families the husbands of married women are not included. At a given point of time the proportion of nuclear families is higher, but most nuclear families grow into extended families and break up later into incomplete extended families or nuclear families. It is rare to find all or even most, members of two or three generations living together. There are evident limits to the number of persons sharing the same house; domestic discord often leads to the setting up of separate units. The latter are referred to as domestic groups of households.



A Joint Family in Indian Society

A large extended family may live together and may also jointly carry out some economic pursuits, but it is likely to have separate domestic arrangements for its several nuclear units. They gradually come to have separate hearths (chulhas) and have independent arrangements for cooking and dining. A form of jointness is maintained where nuclear families live and work separately, but where there is no formal division of ancestral property, all the members congregate on occasions of marriage and death as well as important ceremonial occasions. Togetherness and solidarity within the family are much lauded virtues, but households are not without their politics and intractable problems.

Kinship denotes to recognition of relatives either through a blood relationship (technically called consanguinity) or through marriage (in the language of anthropology and sociology called affinity). The relatives, as a class, have a special status; as already noted, elaborate rules provide appropriate attitudes and standards of behavior towards them. These rules cover protection, affection care and concern, familiarity (joking relations), avoidance (of physical, speech, or visual contact), deference, respect, intervention, and obedience.

Kinship also has important social, economic, and political roles. The assertion that in modern industrial society the centrality of kinship has been eroded is, at best only partially correct. The entire range of kinship ties may not now be as important as they once used to be, but it cannot be denied that they have an important supportive or corrective role in social, economic, and political spheres.

Rules of descent, residence, and inheritance have been discussed in the context of the family. Further elaboration of them will be tedious and only of academic interest. It is necessary, however, to distinguish between the broad features of kinship in northern and southern India and to comment briefly on some special cases.

In north India the basic kinship groups are the patrilineage - Kula/ Vansha (the two terms are not clearly distinguished by common people), Gotra and Jati (in the sense that one speaks of Jati Bhai or Jati brothers.) The first two are exogamous, but the jati is endogamous. A man is not expected to marry in the Gotra of his father, mother, father's mother and mother's mother. Identity, Status, and property are transmitted in the male line. Members of the lineage cooperate in rituals and ceremonies, and indeed, in some major economic activities. But the group can also be characterized by conflicts and feuds that may run from generation to generation. On specified occasions there is an exchange of gifts among different categories of kin and affines, but there is so much local, regional, and jati variation on this matter that it is impossible even to sketch them in a brief narrative. The most important feature here is that, among those who are closely related, marriage is strictly prohibited. The rule of village/territorial exogamy, in some parts, further distances the bride from the bridegroom. The roles of daughters and daughters-in-law are sharply distinguished. In south India the general features are the same, with some important exceptions. Here, patrilineages figure in some communities, while matrilineages dominate others. In the latter the mother's brother is the manager and exercises authority. As we have already seen in several groups the preferred unions are those between certain categories of close kincross cousins or a maternal uncle and niece, the latter being a daughter of the man's elder sister. The bride in these cases is familiar with the family into which she is being married. Thus unlike in the north where bride-takers are superior to bride-givers, no difference is made between the two in the south. These unions have some definite advantages; apart from the fact that property rotates between sets of close kin and does not go outside the brides in such a setting are less likely to be ill-treated than those in the north, where they are on unfamiliar terrain.

In the end let us consider some special cases that puzzle outsiders. In descent, inheritance, and succession, as mentioned earlier, the Khasi of Meghalaya are matrilineal. They have matrilocal residence. In their inheritance system, the youngest daughter- the Kakhadduh- is very special: she is the heiress. While the other daughters move out after their marriages and the birth of one or two children to set up separate household, the youngest daughter continues to live with her mother along with her husband and children. She is the custodian of the rituals and bones of iing (the house). She has a special position in regard to the land.

Among the Garo the household is known as the Nok. The daughter chosen to inherit the household and continue it is called the Nokma. She has to marry someone from her father's lineage. Her husband is known as a Nokrho. He inherits the headship (and through it the management) of his wife's Nok after the death of his father-in-law. But before he can do so he has to marry his wife's mother. This is essentially an economic arrangement. It is debatable whether this marriage (between the man and his wife's mother) is ever consummated, but some anthropologists are emphatic that sexual relations do take place between them.

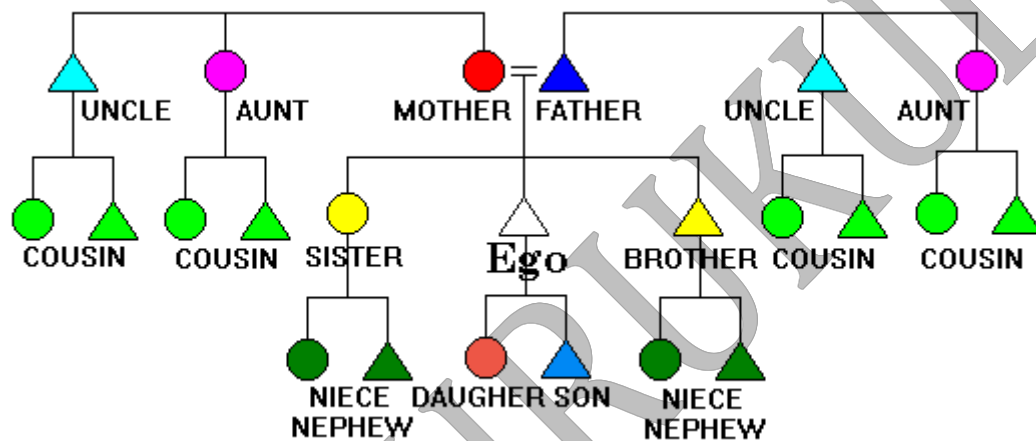
The pattern of duolocal residence and visiting husbands in central Kerala in the past, and in the Lakshadweep islands even now, may seem somewhat bizarre to outsiders, but it has worked and is still working. Nayar women could have Nambudiri or Nayar visiting husbands. Distance being long, Nayar husbands could

not make it to their wives every night, but the Nambudiris had a special privilege. Where land was not in short supply, a Math (residential place) was built for them near the Nayar Tarawad, preferably by the side of a pond or a well. The Nambudiri could not dine with his Nayar wife and children and did not have any physical contact with them during his daylong state of ritual purity. In the night he could be affectionate to his children and intimate with his wife. The pattern of duolocal residence still works in the Lakshadweep Island. In kalapani, an island in this group, studied in 196163, 76 percent of the unions were of this type. The island being small, distances to be traversed are manageable and this facilitates the working of the system.

IAS GURUKUL

TYPES OF KINSHIP SYSTEMS

Kinship in India can be analyzed within family and beyond family separately as well as in terms of the nexus between the two. Kinship within family would include primary relatives with the focus on intra-family relationships which include husband and wife, father and son, mother and daughter, mother and son, father and daughter, elder and younger brother, elder and younger sister and brother and sister. These relationships are part of the same nuclear family which is also referred as 'family beyond family' comprises of secondary and tertiary relatives. Murdock refers to eight 'primary' and thirty three 'secondary' relatives. Each secondary relative has primary relatives. The tertiary relatives number 151 possible kins, and there are also 'distant' relatives who are beyond the tertiary relatives.



Indian Kinship Systems exhibit a great variety

In India we have, generally speaking, 'clan exogamy' and 'caste endogamy'. A given caste has several clans, and a given clan has several lineages. The common ancestor of lineage members is usually an actual remembered person, but the common ancestor of a clan is typically a legendary, supernatural entity. The members of a clan are spread over a given area, and hence they find themselves unable to have common interests or joint action. A clan, however, provides generally a basis for corporate activity, common worship. On the basis of clan, eligibility for marriage within a given caste is determined. In many ways more than clan-based primordality, there is caste ethnocentrism in regard to observance of rituals, performance of economic activities, mutual aid etc. 'Feminal kin' and 'fictive kin' too provide basis for commonality of interests and allegiance.

We have noted earlier that kinship, is certainly a major basis for social organization, but at the same time it is also a basis for division and dissension in regard to succession and inheritance of property. Hostility at times supersedes lineage unity. Fights between sons and grandsons, brothers and cousins have been experienced quite often. Sibling rivalry has also been observed.

Karve's Study of Kinship Organization in India

Iravati Karve undertakes a comparative analysis, of four cultural zones with a view to trace out something like a regional pattern of social behaviour. A region may show various local patterns. There are variations between castes because of hierarchy and caste based isolation and separation. Karve analyses the process of acculturation and accommodation in the context of kinship. She has adopted a historical perspective covering a span of 3000 years based on ethnosources, observations and folk literature along with Sanskritic texts. Karve's comparative study takes the following points into consideration:

1. Lists of kinship terms in Indian languages
2. Their linguistic contexts and corresponding behavior and attitudes.
3. Rules of descent and inheritance
4. Patterns of marriage and family
5. Difference between the Sanskritic north and the Dravidian south.

Iravati Karve spells out the configuration of the linguistic regions, the institution of caste and the family organization as the most vital bases for understanding of the patterns of kinship in India. She divides the whole country into northern, central, southern and eastern zones keeping in view the linguistic, caste and family organizations. The kinship organization follows roughly the linguistic pattern, but in some respects language and kinship do not go hand in hand. For example, Maharashtra has Dravidian impact, and the impact of northern neighbours speaking Sanskritic languages could be seen on the Dravidian kinship system. Despite variations based on these factors there are two common things: (1) marriage is always within a caste or tribe and (2) marriage between parents and children and between siblings is forbidden.

Kinship in North India

In North, there are (1) terms for blood relations, and (2) terms for affinal relations. There are primary terms for three generations of immediate relations and the terms for one generation are not exchangeable for those of another generation. All the other terms are derived from the primary terms. The northern zone consists the areas of the Sindhi, Punjabi, Hindi (and Pahari), Bihari, Bengali, Assami and Nepali. In these areas caste endogamy, clan exogamy and incest taboos regarding sexual relations between primary kins are strictly observed. The rule of sasan is key to all marriage alliances, that is, a person must not marry in his patrifamily and must avoid marriage with sapindakin. Gotras, in the old Brahminic sense of the word, are exogamous units. Sometimes a caste is also divided into endogamous gotras or exogamous gotras, as also gotras which do not seem to have in any function in marriage regulations. There is village exogamy. Thus there are at least four basic features of kinship in north India. (1) territoriality, (2) genealogy, (3) incest taboos, and (4) local exogamy. Considerations of caste status tend to restrict the area of endogamy. Marriage prohibitions tend to bar marriage over a wide area in terms of kinship as well as adhered to in space.



In northern India village exogamy is strictly adhered to: A bride travels from her natal village to her marital home in a Palki

Cognatic prohibitions and local exogamy are strictly adhered to in marriage alliances. Four gotra (sasan) rule, which is, avoiding of the gotras of father, mother, grandmother and maternal grandmother, is generally practiced particularly among the Brahmins and other upper castes in north India. However, some intermediate and most of the lower caste avoid gotras of father and mother only.

Kinship in Central India

The central zone comprises the linguistic regions of Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat and Kathiawad, Maharashtra and Orissa with their respective languages, namely, Rajasthani, Hindi, Gujrati and Kathiawadi, Marathi and Oriya. All these languages are of Sanskritic origin, and therefore they have affinity to the northern zone. But there are pockets of Dravidian languages in this region. There is also some impact of the eastern zone. Tribal people have their unique and somewhat different position compared to other people in the region. In regard to the central zone the following points may be noted:

1. Cross cousin marriages are prevalent which are not witnessed in the north zone. Cross cousins are the children of siblings of opposite sex. Parallel cousins are children of the siblings of the same sex.
2. Many castes are divided into exogamous clans like the north zone.
3. In some castes exogamous clans are arranged in a hypergamous hierarchy. However, none of these features are found all over the zone. In Rajasthan, for example, Jats follow two gotra exogamy along with village exogamy; Baniyas practise four gotra rule; and Rajputs have hypergamous clans and consideration of feudal

status in 'marriage' alliances. Rajputs are not a homogeneous caste. They put a lot of emphasis on purity and nobility of descent. The fact of being a hero and a ruler has been a major consideration. Symbolic marriages (marriage with sword) were quite a practice. Status of mother is also a factor.

Kathiawad and Gujarat one finds a mix of peculiar to local customs and northern practices. Some castes allowed cross-cousin marriages, others allowed marriages once a year, and some others permitted once every four, five, nine or twelve years. When the marriage year arrived, it was village and there was a rush to perform marriages. The practice of 'Nantra' (levirate) exists even today. The Brahmins, the Baniyas, the Kunbis and the higher artisan castes follow the northern pattern of kinship organization, but there are some practices of southern region. Cross-cousin marriage among the Kathi, Ahir, Ghadava and Garasia castes is quite common. Kolis and Dheds and Bhils (tribe) allowed both types of cross cousin marriages. Thus, Rajasthan and Gujarat largely, follow northern pattern. The terminology is Sanskritic in origin and some have central Asiatic derivation.

Karve observes that Maharashtra is an area where Sanskritic northern traits almost hold a balance with perhaps a slight dominance of the former. Northern languages spoken are like Gujarati, Rajasthani, Himachali and Hindi. The tribals in the area speak Mundari. The Dravidian languages are mixed up with the Sanskritic languages. In Maharashtra the caste structure is a little different from both southern and northern zones. The Marathas and Kunbis together form about forty per cent of the population. Marathas are supposed to be higher in status but a rich Kunbis can reach the status of a Maratha. The two groups call themselves Kshatriyas. Maratha Kunbi complex has been a ruling class. Even today headman is a Maratha in a village.

Kunbis are divided into exogamous clans. Some practise levirate; others observe cross cousin marriages' as a taboo; but some others do not prohibit such marriages. In central Maharashtra hypergamy and clan exogamy exists. In southern Maharashtra there are instances of both types of marriages, namely, cross cousin and uncle-niece. The clan organization of the Marathas has some similarities with that of the Rajputs. For example, mythological origin comparable with Rajputs is also claimed by the Marathas. Their names are also similar to that of Rajputs. The rule of exogamy is, however, not dependent on the clan name but on the symbol connected with the clan. The symbol is called Devaka. No two people having the same devaka can marry. The clans and the devaka both play a significant role in marriage. Clan's status is important in hypergamous marriage alliances.

Marathas have 96 clans. Among these 96 clans there are concentric circles of mobility and status. Ethnically, there is no homogeneity. There are 'panchkula', a cluster of five clans; then there are 'seven clans', and all are hypergamous divisions. There taboo attached to bilateral kinship like north zone. No parallel cousin marriages are allowed. There is also taboo on paternal cross cousin marriages. There is a general preference for a man's marriage with his maternal cross cousin. Sisters can and do marry the same man. Brothers generally avoid marrying two sisters. Levirate is practiced among the northern Kunbis. However, exchange marriages are avoided

The tribal people in Orissa like Gonds, Oraons and Konds speak Dravidian languages, and their kinship system can be equated with that of the Dravidian speaking people. The Munda, the Bond and some of the Saora speak Mundari languages. The Oriya speaking people have the same type of caste divisions as are found in northern regions with slightly different names. Brahmins in Orissa seem to be immigrants from Uttar Pradesh, Bihar and Madhya Pradesh. Aranyaka Brahmins and Karans (Kayasthas) do not allow cross cousin marriage. Some agricultural castes allow cousin marriage, but others prohibit. Junior levirate is found among the poorer classes.

Kinship in South India

There are five regions in the southern zone consisting of Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Kerala and the regions of mixed languages and people. The southern zone presents a very complicated pattern of kinship system and family organization. Patrilineal and patrilocal systems dominate. However, some sections have Matrilineal and matrilocal systems, and they possess features of both types of kinship organization. Some castes allow polyandry. Some have both polygyny and polygamy. In Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu and among some castes of Malabar patrilineal and patrilocal joint family dominates as in the northern zone.

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 tharawad consists of a woman, her brothers and sister, her own and her sister's sons and daughters. No affinal relation lives in the tharawad. Some consanguines are excluded (children of the males). There is no father-children relationship in a tharawad.

In the southern zone there is the system of similar to the northern system; it is called Bedagu or Dedag or Bali in Karnataka. The Kotas of Nilgiris call it Keri; the Kotai Vellals call it Kilai, the Koyas name it Gotta and the Kurubas call it Gunpu. Some Telugu people call it Intiperu, and the Malayalis mention it Illom. In Travancore it is referred as Veli. The word Gotra is also widely used. The main symbols used for clans are of silver, gold, axe, elephant, snake, jasmine, stone etc.

In northern zone village exogamy is widely accepted norm. But in southern zone there are intermarrying clans in the same village. Gonds do not observe village exogamy. The only principle is that of exogamy of Illom or Veli. A given caste is divided like northern castes into exogamous clans. Inter-clan marriages do not cover all clans. Within an endogamous caste there are smaller circles of endogamous units made up of a few families giving and receiving daughters in marriage.

The southern zone has its peculiar features which are quite different from that of the northern part of India. Preferential marriages with elder sister's daughter, father's sister's daughter, and mother's brother's daughter are particularly prevalent in the southern zone. The main thrust of such a system of Preferential marriages lies in maintaining unity and solidarity of the 'clan' and upholding of the principle of return (exchange) of daughter in the same generation. However, there

are taboos on marrying of younger sister's daughter, levirate, and mother's sister's daughter.

Maternal uncle and niece marriages and cross cousin marriages result in double relationships. A cousin is also a wife, and after marriage a cousin is more of a wife than a cousin.

Comparing the southern kinship system with the northern system we can mention that there is no distinction between the family of birth and the family of marriage in the south, whereas such a distinction is clear in the northern India. In the north terms for blood relatives and affinal ones are clearly distinct. In the south many terms do not indicate this distinction clearly. For example, Phupha-Phuphi for father's sister's husband and father's sister and Mama-Mami for mother's brother and his wife are used in the north, whereas in the south Attai is used for both Phuphi and Mami. Mama is used for both Phupha and Mami. In the north there are extended family of birth and the extended family of marriage. There is no such distinction in the south. No special terms are used for affinal relatives in the south. Same relatives appear in two successive generations in the south.

Thus southern and northern kinship systems differ in the context of relations by marriage and relations by birth and more particularly in regard to the arrangement of kin in different generations. There does not seem to be any clear cut classification of kin on the principle of generation at all in the southern terminology. In south zone all the relative are arranged according to whether they are older or younger than ego (self) without any reference to generation. There are no words for brothers and sisters in the Dravidian languages. However, there are words for 'younger' and 'older' brothers and sisters. A number of terms are used in common for (1) father and elder brother (Anna, Ayya), (2) mother and elder sister (Ai), (3) younger brother and son (Pirkal), and (4) younger sister and daughter (Pinnawal). These terms denote respectability to the elders and not the actual blood relationships. The point of reference is the ego and the persons older and younger than the ego are ranked based on their age.

Age and not generation is the main consideration in the southern kinship system. Marriage is outside the exogamous kin group called Balli or Begadu or Kilai. Exchange of daughters is favoured and Marriage among the close kin is also preferred. The rules of marriage are (1) one must marry a member of one's own clan; (2) a girl must marry a person who belongs to the group older than self, and also to the 'younger than the parents'. Older cross cousins and also younger brother of girl's mother are preferred. A person can marry any of his younger female cross cousins and also a daughter of any of his elder sister. Consequently, we find reciprocal relations and kinship terms referred to this reciprocity; Louis Dumont highlights the following points about the southern kinship system:

1. Principle of immediate exchange.
2. A policy of social consolidation
3. A clustering of kin group in a narrow area
4. No sharp distinction between kin by blood and kin by marriage.
5. Greater freedom for women in society

Kinship in Eastern Zone

The Eastern zone is not compact and geographically it is not continuous like other zones. Besides northern languages, Mundari and Mon Khmer languages are also spoken. The main communities are Korku, Assamese, Saka, Seng and Khasi. The other languages are Mon, Khmer and Cham. The area consists of a number of Austro Asiatic tribes.

All the people speaking Mundari languages have patrilineal and patrilineal families. The Ho and the Santhal have cross cousin marriages. But till the sister or the mother's brother is alive, they cannot marry their daughters. For example, do not have taboo on cross cousin marriage, but one does not go among them as reported by Elwin. They have unique theories for bachelors and maidens and marital sexual relationships. Sometimes these relationships into marriages but quite often the marriage mate is different from the mate of dormitory days. All these people are divided into exogamous totemistic clan person must marry outside of, the clan and also outside of the circle of relations like first cousins.

Money is given for procuring a bride. Service by the would-be husband in girl's father's house is also considered as bride price. After marriage one establishes his separate household, but may keep his younger brother and widowed mother etc. along with him in his newly established house. The Mundari people thus differ from the rest of India in not having joint family. People maintain patrilan relations by common worship of ancestors and residence. They extend help to each other but live independent life.

The Khasi of Assam speak Mon Khmer language, and they are a marilineal people like Nayars, but are quite different from them. The Nayars have a matrilineal joint family and husbands are only occasional visitors. The Khasis have joint family with common worship and common graveyard, but the husband and wife live together in a small house of their own. After death the property goes to mother or youngest daughter if there are no female relatives. Widow gets half of the property if she opts not to remarry. A man's position is like that of a Hindu bride in the patrifamily. But there is difference because the Hindu bride is incorporated as a member of her husband's family whereas a Khasi husband is considered as a stranger. A woman enjoys a great amount of freedom. After divorce children are handed over to her. The Khasis have clan exogamy. Marriages of parallel cousins' are not allowed. Cross cousin marriage is also quite rare.

Though we have drawn a sketchy view of the kinship organization in India, we come to know that both rigidity and flexibility exist side by side in regard to values and norms related to the kinship systems. These are reflected in regard to divorce, widow remarriage, incest taboos, caste endogamy, clan exogamy, rule of avoidance, family structure, systems of lineage and residence, authority system, succession and inheritance of property etc. However, 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 organizations.

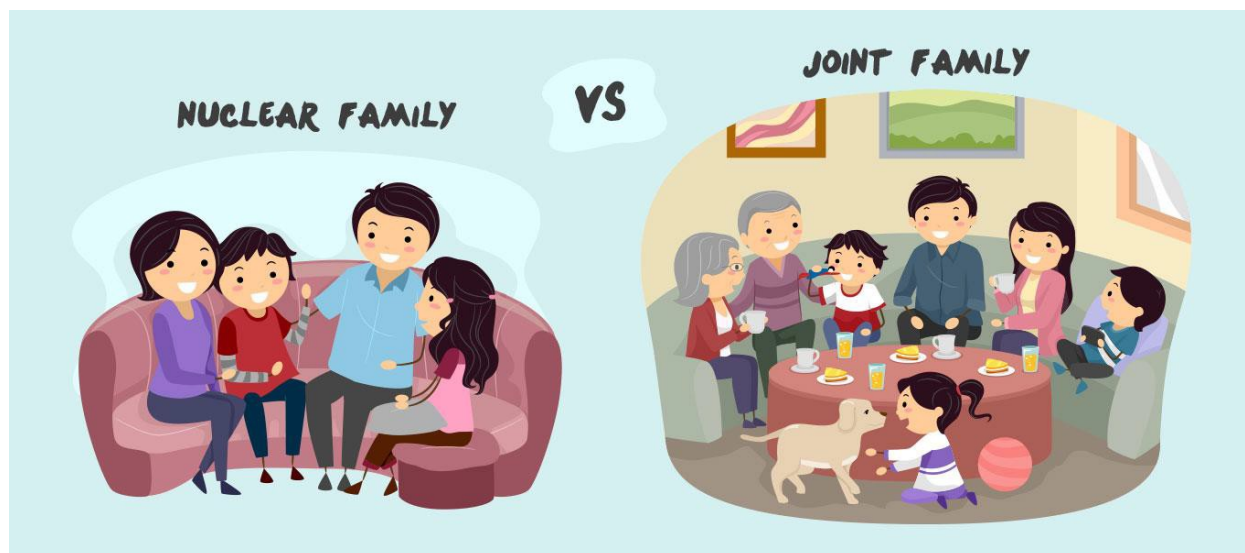
FAMILY IN INDIA

Desai asks the question: What is happening to the family in Mahuva? Mahuva is a small town in Gujarat which Desai studied, in early sixties. Desai, based on the data collected from Mahuva, examines the question of jointness in terms of religion, occupational relations, property, education, urbanization, kinship obligations and household composition. 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 son 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 children 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: (1) natural, and (2) 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 ongoing quarrels in the family. Married and unmarried or parents and unmarried 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: (1) men staying with relatives such as the maternal uncle later on establish one's own household; (2) other relatives staying with the head die or go away and (3) head of the family goes away alone for business purposes.

Besides the structural aspect of family; Desai examines carefully the type 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 degrees of jointness:

1. Households with zero degree of jointness
2. Households of low degree of jointness (joint by way of the fulfilment of mutual obligations)
3. Households with high degree of jointness (jointness by way of common ownership of property)
4. 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 percent are nuclear and 39 per cent are joint in Mahuva with varying degrees as indicated above. Of the 423 respondents in Desai's study only 5 percent are not joint at all. There are 27 per cent families with low degree of jointness, 17 percent with high degree, 30 percent with higher and 21 percent with highest degree. Desai also reports that 220 respondents have faith in nuclearity unconditionally, and 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 interactional unit with diverse and dynamic intra-family relationships 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 family from a legalistic point of view. An extended joint family 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 family, family 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 points to be noted in the functioning of family in India. There are also regional variations in

proportions of joint families. Higher education does not weaken joint family system, 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 is nothing but structure of obligations among the closest kinsmen.

CHANGING STRUCTURE AND FUNCTIONS OF FAMILY

The family institution in the whole world is undergoing change. In the developed societies of the west, this change is quite fundamental in nature, so that the very existence of family is threatened. Industrialization and development of material culture have mainly led to this change. In the less developed countries like India the change in family is still not touching threatening proportions. However, drastic changes in the family in India are also taking place though slowly.

Changes in the Structure of Family

An important change in family is the diminution in the size of the household. Earlier, the number of persons in the family used to be quite large. Extended families consisted of persons of several generations and several married couples with a number of their children. The present family hardly consists of more than three generations and the couples are not interested in having more than two or three children. The number of nuclear families is fast increasing. The family size is getting smaller because of the fact that industrialization and urbanization have led to the migration of rural people to cities. The emotional bonds are thinning and getting confined only to the members of one's own family as a result of stress on values, of individualism and independence. This is also evident in the rise of divorce rate and in the rising number of single member households.

Changes in the Functions of Family

In the tribal and agrarian societies, the family was a unit of production. The family had an occupation; agriculture, household industry, handicraft and hand loom, blacksmithing and carpentry etc. All the members of the family contributed to the production, which they commonly shared. Industrialization has displaced the household production system. The urban industries have created new jobs. The people have shifted away from their family occupations, their dependence on family has consequently decreased or ceased.

Industrialization has led to the development of several organizations, which have taken over the social function which only family could provide. Family is an interactional unit with diverse and dynamic intra-family relationships 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 family from a legalistic point of view. An extended joint family 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 family, family composition, basic norms of deference and etiquette, authority of the head of the family and rights duties of other members, performance of common and particular tasks etc. are some other points to be noted in the functioning of family in India. There are also regional variations in proportions of joint families.

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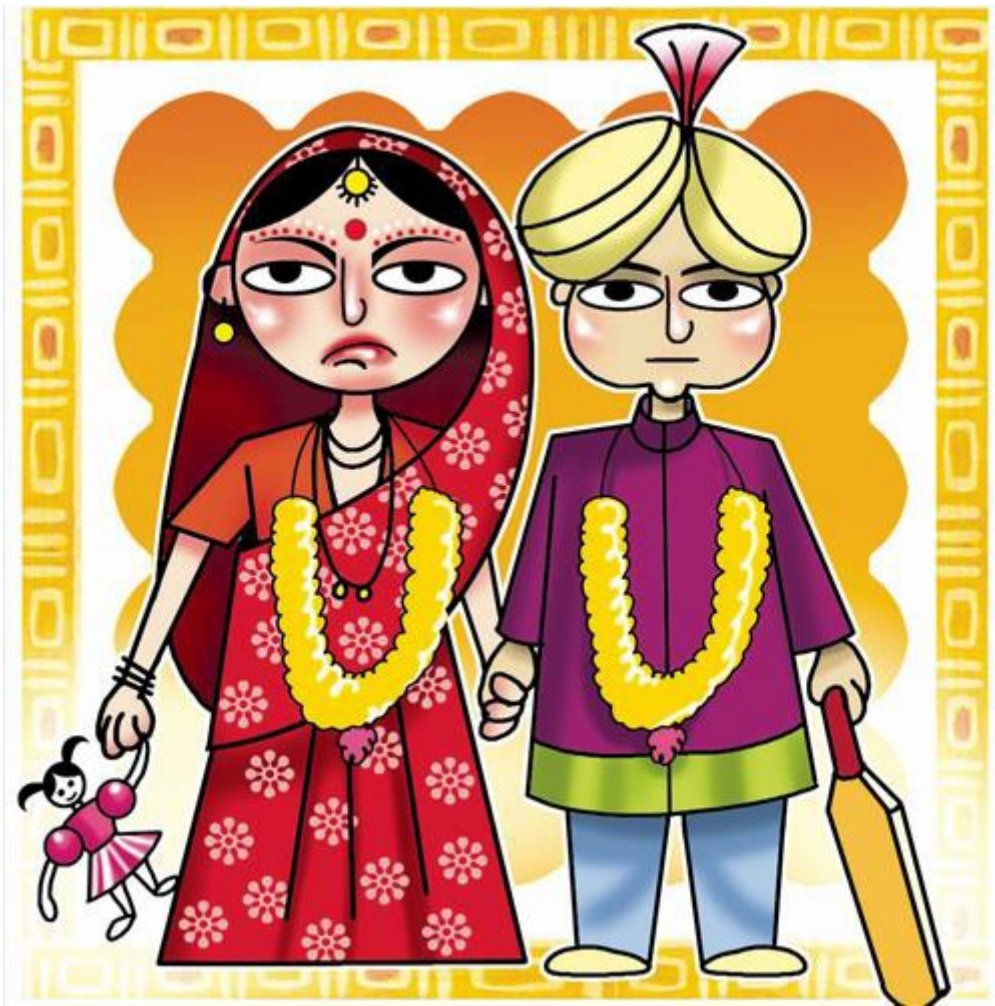
Influence of Legislations on Marriage

Many of the beliefs, values, ideals and rules of marriage laid down by the Hindu shastrakars have lost their original meaning and purpose now. As a result, the Hindu marriage has developed some defects. Attempts were also made by some of the social reformers to remove these defects and correct the system. During the British rule and also after independence legislations were passed in order to bring about desirable modifications in the Hindu marriage system.

The laws enacted in India related to the (i) age at marriage (ii) field of mate selection (iii) number of spouses in marriage (iv) breaking of marriage (v) dowry to be given and token and (vi) remarriage.

Social legislations that were undertaken both before and after independence brought about some significant changes in our marriage system among which the following are to be noted.

1. Various inhuman practices associated with the marriage such as the practice of sati has been removed by law.
2. Legislations have not only abolished child marriages but also fixed the minimum marriageable age of boys and girls.
3. The legislations have also made clear the selection in marriage that is, who should marry whom. They have also legalized intercaste and interreligious marriages and have made provision for registered marriages.
4. In the case of Hindus, Christians, Parsis, Jains and Sikhs monogamy has been made compulsory, Further, bigamy and polygyny are prohibited for these communities.
5. Legislations have made provision for divorce. Equal rights are conferred on men and women in this regard. Legislations have also specified the conditions of divorce.
6. Legislations have also made provision for remarriage. Divorced women and men could remarry if they desire so. Legislation makes provision for that.



Child marriage is becoming less prevalent in Indian society due to legislation and awareness campaigns

Details of the Legislations Affecting Hindu Marriage

1. The Prevention of Sati Act 1829: The glorification of the ideal of Pativrata had led to the inhuman practice of Sati. Widows were often forced to make vow or sankalpa to die after their husbands. Some were forcibly pushed to their husbands funeral pyres. Famous Brahma Samajist, Sri Raja Ram Mohan Roy took up the cause of women and impressed upon Lord Bentinck who was the then British Governor General of India, to bring out a legislation prohibiting the practice of Sati.

The Prevention of Sati Act 1829 made the burning or burying alive of widows culpable homicide punishable with fine and/or imprisonment. This legislation saved the lives of a number of widows though it could not immediately stop the practice in total.

2. The Hindu Widow Remarriage Act, 1856: This legislation was complementary to the previous legislation that is 'prevention of Sati Act of 1829'. Though widows were saved from the jaws of death they were subject to exploitation and humiliation. To remove the deplorable condition of the Hindu widows, a leading social reformer of the day, Pandit Ishwara Chandra Vidya Sagar, brought pressure on the British

Govt. to make legal provision for widow remarriages. The Hindu widow Remarriage Act of 1856 was hence passed.

3. The Civil [or Special] Marriage Act, 1872: This legislation treated Hindu marriage as a civil marriage and provided legal permission for intercaste, interreligious and even 'registered marriages. This Act was repealed by the Special Marriage Act, 1954. According to this Act, the parties interested in registered marriage must notify the marriage officer at least, one month before the date of the marriage. It insists on the presence of two witnesses for the marriage.

4. The Child Marriage Restraint Act, 1929: This Act came into force on April 1, 1930. The Act restrains the marriage of a child. According to this Act, marriage of boys under 18 and girls less than 14 years of age was on offence.

Latest Amendment: The Act was amended in 1978 which further raised the age for boys to 21 years and for girls to 18 years. The violation of this act prescribes penalty. It provides punishment [three month of simple imprisonment and a fine up to Rs. 1000/] for bridegroom, parent, guardian and the priest who are party to the marriage. No woman is, however, punishable with imprisonment under this Act.

5. The Hindu marriage Act, 1955: This Act which came into force from May 18, 1955 brought about revolutionary changes not only in the marital relations but also in various other social aspects. This Act applies to the whole of India, except Jammu and Kashmir. The word Hindu in the act includes Jains, Sikhs, Buddhists and the Scheduled Castes.

Conditions for valid marriage as provided in this Act: (1) neither party has spouse living; (2) neither party [bride groom or bride] is an idiot or a lunatic, (3) the groom must have completed 21 years and the bride 18 years of age as per the 1978 Amendment brought to this act, (4) the parties should not be 'sapinda' of each other unless the custom permits such a marriage.

The Hindu Marriage Act provides for divorce and also specifies conditions under which divorce is permitted. The act gives equal rights for men and women for divorce under the conditions specified by law.

Other Important Aspects of this Act: This Act gives permission for intercaste and interreligious marriages (ii) It provides for equality of sex; (iii) It provides equal right for men and women in marriage, divorce or separation; (iv) Its 1986 amendment permits divorce on the ground of incompatibility and mutual consent; (v) During judicial separation and after divorce, both husband and wife have the right to claim maintenance allowance.

6. The Dowry Prohibition Act, 1961: This Act which prohibits the practice of dowry was passed on May 20th 1961. The Act does not apply to Muslims. It permits exchange of gifts for not more than Rs. 2000. It prescribes the penalty of 6 months imprisonment or a fine up to Rs. 5000/ or both for its violation. This Act got amended in 1986 and thereafter its rules have become still more stringent.

The above mentioned legislations, in addition to many other social legislations, have affected the Hindu marriage in several ways. These legislations, however, have

not transformed it into a mere legal contract. The Hindu beliefs and values relating to marriage are still alive and legislations have only strengthened it by removing sortie of the anomalies associated with it.

Influence of Legislations on Family

The impact of the social legislations on the institution of family could be understood by means of the effects that they have brought in it. Some such effects are mentioned below:

1. Legislation has provided to all the members of the family without making any discrimination on the basis of sex, equal right to inherit the ancestral property.
2. The legislation has provided equal rights and opportunities to all the members of the family without discrimination on the bases of sex, the right to marriage, divorce, enjoyment of parental property and such other matters.
3. Legislation provided equal opportunities even to female members of the family to work outside the male members. There are also legislations protecting the jobs interests of women.
4. Legislations have also been undertaken to give special protection to women preventing the exploitation of their helplessness and weaknesses by others.

In order to loosen the tight grip of the patriarchal values over the joint families legislation have been undertaken providing equal opportunities, privileges, rights and facilities even to women.

Details of the Legislations Affecting the Hindu Family Life

1. The Married Women's Property Act, 1874: This Act confers ownership right to women not only on their Streedhan but also on the property which they have personally earned.
2. Gains of Learning Act, 1930: As a result of this Act, member of a joint family Secures individual right over income or property which he or she has been able to earn by means of his or her educational attainment. This Act; has made the individual members of the family to develop personal interest in the property and this tendency has damaged the collective interest of the family.
3. The Hindu Women's Right to Property Act, 1937: This Act enables a woman to have equal share to that of a son in the property of her deceased husband. If the property was joint and unseparated at the time of her husband's death, she is entitled to have the same interest therein as her deceased husband was entitled.
4. The Hindu Succession Act, 1956: This Act confers on women right to property. As per this Act, not only a daughter is given a right in her father's property equal to her brothers, but also gets a share in her deceased husband's property equal to her sons and daughters. The legislation has removed the distinction between Streedhan and non-Streedhan. This Act, in course of time, led to the changes in the position of women in the family.

5. Legislations Protecting the Economic Interest of Women:

(i) The Maternity Benefit Act 1961 provides maternity benefits [2 months maternity leave with salary] to married women.

(ii) The Equal Remuneration Act, 1976 does not permits wage discrimination between male and female workers.

(iii.) The Factories [Amendment] Act, 1976: Besides including provisions dealing with working hours, weekly rest, standards of cleanliness, ventilation, temperature, first aid facilities and rest rooms, the legislation provides for the establishing of creches for children [if the factory employs thirty or more women]. Separate toilets for females and lays down a maximum work women and no employment of women between 10:00 p.m. and 5:00 a.m.

6. Legislations Preventing the Exploitation of Women:

(i) The Hindu Adoption and Maintenance Act, 1956 permits the wife deserted by her husband to claim maintenance allowance from her husband; and it also permits women to adopt a child.

(ii) The Suppression of Immoral Traffic of Women and Girls' act, 1956 gives protection to women against kidnapping and pushing them to brothel homes to do prostitution.

(iii) Medical Termination of Pregnancy Act, 1971: permits the termination of pregnancy by a registered doctor if it does not exceed 12 weeks on certain valid grounds [such as pregnancy causing risk to the life of pregnant woman, 'pregnancy caused by rape or failure of contraceptive devices etc.

(iv) The Criminal Law Amendment Act, 1983 gives protection to women against rape, violence or any other types of criminal act.

(v) The Family Court Act, 1984 assures women justice in family disputes and at the same time, preserves the secrecy of family matters.

MARRIAGE IN INDIA

MARRIAGE AMONG HINDUS

The meaning of Hindu marriage can properly be understood if it is analyzed from the sociological standpoint. The marriage system of Hindu community has a uniqueness of its own which makes it distinct from other communities. Hindu marriage is not merely a union between a female and a male which is sanctioned by society. Along with the social sanction, it has a religious and divine aspect. What is more important in Hindu marriage is that it is a sacred secure physical pleasure for the individuals but also to advance their spiritual development. K.M. Kapadia says that Hindu marriage is a socially approved union of man and woman aiming at dharma, procreation, sexual pleasure and observance of certain obligations. According to P.H. Prabhu the primary object of marriage is the continuity of the family life. Marriage binds the wife and the husband into an

indissoluble bond which lasts beyond death. Sociologists have noted the relative stability of marriage relationship in India.



There are multiple aims and various forms of marriage amongst Hindus

Aims of Hindu Marriage

Sociologists and Iridologists have discussed about the following aims of Hindu marriage in India. As a sacrament, Hindu marriage aims to fulfil certain religious obligations. During the course of marriage the wife and the husband take an oath to live together. A traditional Hindu passes through four Ashrams or stages of life called Brahmacharya (student life), Grihasth, (family life), Vanaprasth (retired life) and Sanyas (renunciation). At the commencement of each such Ashram, a Hindu undergoes a sacrament and takes a vow. As a result this, one becomes purified in body and mind. Marriage is a gateway to Grihasth Ashram.

(2) It is very essential for a Hindu to be married for the fulfilment of religious duties like dharma (practice of religion), praja (procreation) and rati (sexual pleasure). The foremost purpose of Hindu marriage is to practice dharma in accordance with 'varna', 'jati' and 'kul' norms.

(3) The Hindus consider Vivah or marriage as one of the 16 Samskar or sacraments sanctifying the body. It is doubly essential for a woman because marriage is the only significant Samskar for her.

(4) A Hindu Grihasth is expected to perform daily fire sacrifices such as Deva Yajñ, Bhut Yajñ, and Pitri Yajñ by daily chanting Vedic mantras, offering ghee or clarified butter in fire giving some portion of food to different creatures, extending hospitality to guests and by performing shraddh or offering of pind or rice balls to ancestors respectively. Without the active participation of his wife, a man cannot perform these duties.

(5) Hindus believe in a concept of three religious debts or Rinās. These are Pitri Rin, Daiv Rin and Guru Rin. Marriage is essential for repaying Pitri Rin and the individual repays it by being the father of a son. Role of a wife is essential for the completion of Grihasth Dharma and performing religious rites. The wife among the Hindus is called Ardhangini and the Husband is called Ardhangana.

Forms of Hindu Marriage

Hindu scriptures described eight forms of marriage which are as follows:

1. Brahm Vivah: This is the most ideal and the most sought after marriage among the Hindus. In this form of marriage the father of the bride invites for marriage the most suitable groom, in terms of learning capacity and character for his daughter who is given to the groom in Kanyadaan. These days it is called Samajik Vivah or Kanyadaan Vivah as well.

2. Daiv Vivah: The father of the bride offers his daughter in the hand of the priest as Dakshina and Yajñ, which has been officiated by him. It was considered as an ideal form of marriage in ancient times but has become irrelevant today.

3. Arsh Vivah: This was the sanctioned procedure of marriage for sages or renunciatory persons, in case they wanted to lead a family life. They used to gift a pair of cow and a bull to the father of a girl of their choice. In case the father of the girl was in favour of this marriage proposal he accepted the gift and marriage was arranged. Otherwise, the gift was respectfully returned to the sage.

4. Prajapatya Vivah: This is a modified, less elaborate form of Brahm Vivah. The main difference lies in the rules of sapind exogamy.

5. Asur Vivah: In this form of marriage, the bridegroom pays bride price to bride's father or her kinsmen and marries the bride. Marriage by exchange is also permitted within this marriage.

6. Gandharv Vivah: It was traditional form of contemporary love of marriage. It was sanctioned form of marriage in exceptional circumstances and among as an ideal in the tradition.

7. Rakshas Vivah: This is that form of marriage which is known marriage by capture among the tribals. This type of marriage was widely prevalent during the ancient age among the kings as the prizes of war or the mechanism to improve relation with the defeated people. It was sanctioned but not an ideal form of marriage.

8. Paisach Vivah: This is the least acceptable form of marriage. The man cheats the girl and thereby forces her to marry him. The woman, having lost her chastity, has

no other alternative than to marry him. Recognising this form of union as marriage was an attempt to protect the rights of the cheated woman. It also gave legitimacy to the children born of such unions.

Rules of Mate Selection

To maintain the purity and distinctive identity of groups in society, the Hindu lawgivers have laid down detailed rules and regulations regarding the choice of a partner for the marriage union. These laws are based on two principles i.e., the endogamic rule and the exogamic rules.

(a) Endogamy

While selecting a mate; a person has to choose from her or his own sub caste and/or caste.

(1) Caste Endogamy: This rule prescribes marriage within one's own caste and prohibits the members of a caste to marry outside their own caste. The violation of this rule would result into sever social and economic punishments by the caste council or 'Panchayat' amounting to isolation and denial of all sorts of social help and cooperation.

(ii) Sub-caste Endogamy: Each caste is subdivided into many small groups the members of which have such feeling of superiority over the others. Each such unit is an endogamous group, directing its members to choose their mates only from that sub caste. For example, Brahmins are also having some sub-castes like Saraswat, Gaur, Kanyakubj, etc. All these groups are endogamous groups.

(b) Exogamy

In exogamy a person is supposed to marry outside one's own group. Though endogamy and exogamy seem to be contradictory rules, in Hindu society both these rule are practiced simultaneously, of course, at different levels. There are two types of exogamous rules in Hindu society: (i) Sagotra (or same gotra) Exogamy: Gotra is a clan or family group, the members of which are forbidden to marry each other. It is believed that Sagotras or persons with the same gotra have originated from the same ancestor and are, therefore, related by blood. But, this rule has been made legally ineffective by the Hindu Marriage Act, 1955.

(ii) Sapind Exogamy: Sapinds are supposed to be blood relatives. Sapinds are those who are relatives. Sapinds are those who are related to one another in ascending or descending order, by five generations through mother's side and seven generations through father's side. One cannot select one's life partner from one's own Sapinds. Though the Hindu Marriage Act 1955 prohibits Sapind marriage in general, it allows this in the form of cross cousin marriages as a peculiar custom of South India. Sapind exogamy indicates the prohibition placed on inter marriage of sapinds. Sapind represents the relationship between the living member and dead ancestors. The term sapind means (1) Those who share the particles of the same body, and (2) People who are united by offering pind or balls to the same dead ancestor. The Hindu lawgivers differ in their definitions of Sagotra. The Hindu

marriage act, however, does not allow marriage within five generations on the father's side and three generations of mother's side.

Other Rules of Marriage

(i) Hypergamy or Anuloma: Hypergamy is that form of marriage in which the ritual status of a man is higher than that of his prospective wife.

(ii) Hypogamy or Pratiloma: Hypogamy is that form of marriage in which the ritual status of a woman is higher than that of her prospective husband.

The intercaste marriage have however, been legalized by legislations such as Special Marriage Act 1954, Hindu Marriage Act 1955, Hindu Marriage Laws (Amendment) Act 1976 etc.

MARRIAGE AMONG MUSLIMS

A Muslim Marriage is called Nikah. Conceptually, Muslim marriage is a social contract or civil contract. In India, however, marriage among Muslims is also a religious affair. A Muslim marriage can be terminated by divorce. The marriage as a relatively permanent bond between a woman and a man seems to be the common heritage of Indian culture and Muslim marriages in India are reported to be more stable than in Arab world and other places.

There are two main Sects among the Muslim community in India the Shias and the Sunnis. There are differences between rituals of different sects but the defining features of all Muslim marriages (nikah) are the same. There are four parties in Muslim marriage recognized as valid by the Muslim Personal Law:

- (1) The groom
- (2) The bride
- (3) The kazi
- (4) Witnesses (two male or four female witnesses)

The bride and the groom are formally asked by the Kazi in the presence of the local community and the chosen witnesses about their voluntary consent to their marriage. If they agree 'voluntarily' their marriage contract is sanctioned. It is called Nikahnama. This contract includes the amount of Mehr or bridewealth which the groom has to give to the bride as part of the contract the time of the marriage or later as agreed upon.

The marriage rite usually takes place at the bride's place in both amongst the Hindus and the Muslims in India. There are many customs which are commonly shared by the Hindu and the Muslims in a particular region. For example, among the Moplah Muslims of Kerala, the Hindu rite of Kalyanam is a necessary component of traditional Nikah. Parallel cousin marriage marriage of one with the daughter/son of one's father's brother has been the preferred marriage among Muslims. Further, widow the remarriage is not a problem among Muslims.

There are two types of Muslims marriage regular (Sahi) and irregular (Fasid). Irregular Marriages occur in case of:

- (1) Absence of witnesses at the time of making and accepting the proposal.
- (2) Fifth marriage of a man
- (3) Marriage of a woman during the period when she is undergoing iddat. The duration of iddat is three months for divorcee and four months and ten days for widow to assure that the woman is not pregnant.
- (4) Difference of religion between wife and husband.

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 latter 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 Gods, 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 priest 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.

Christian does 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 condition 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 like 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 has simply to prove adultery where as 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 courts are convinced that living together is an 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. The Divorce Act was first challenged in the Madras High Court in 1953 and again in the Supreme Court in 1995 for being gender discriminative but the petitions were turned down. The Christian law as it exists today encourages perjury, collusion, and manoeuvring. Christians need a law which should cater to the changing needs of the times. The Law Commission had formulated in 1960 the Christian Marriage and Matrimonial clauses Bill but the Bill was allowed to lapse after the government promised to introduce it in the parliament. In 1983, the Commission again recommended changes in 1869 Act but in vain. In 1994 the Joint Women's Programmes (JWP) drafted Christian Marriage Matrimonial clauses Bill and Christian Maintenance Bill but no measures were taken to get them passed.

MARRIAGE AMONG TRIBAL PEOPLE

In India, there are some tribes which allow premarital and, extramarital sex relations on festive occasions. But, this does not mean that the tribes have no marriage rules. In fact, most of the tribes are strictly monogamous except on some festive occasions when there is a laxity in sex morals: Even among the most primitive tribes like the Toda, the Andamanese, the Kadar, the Chenchu, we find the existence of strict marriage rules. Marital fidelity is found to be enforced in most of the tribes. Proscriptions, Prescriptions and Preferences in the choice of mates in tribal societies are based on very elaborate rules.

Preference in Mate Selection

The tribes of India are different from each other on the basis of mate selection. Most of the tribes of India prefer to select mates in their own kin, Gonds and Khasis prefer a cross cousin marriage. These preferential marriages can be viewed as a device to avoid bride price and to keep the property of the household intact. For instance, the Gonds call it Dudh lautav (return of the milk) implying thereby that the bride price a person pays for his wife will be returned when his daughter marries her mother's brother's son. In addition to cross cousin marriage other types of preferential marriages are:

- (a) Levirate: In this type, after the death of husband, his wife marries the younger brother of her dead husband.
- (b) Sororate: In this type, after the death of wife, the husband marries the sister of his dead wife. In restricted sororate, after the death of one's wife, the man marries the younger sister of his wife. In simultaneous sororate, the younger sister of one's wife automatically becomes his wife.

Types of Marriages

1. Monogamy: The union of one woman with one man is called monogamy. During the lifetime, neither spouse can marry again. It is accepted among many Indian tribes. It is pronounced among the matrilineal tribes of Khasis and Garos of NorthEast India.

2. Polygamy: In this form, one woman can marry two or more men, or one man can marry two or more women. It is further divided into two types:

(i) Polygyny: Man is eligible to marry more than one woman. It prevails among the Nagas, the Baigas, the Gonds, and the Todas.

(ii) Polyandry: One woman marries more than one man. This is again subdivided into two types:

(a) Fraternal Polyandry: It is the marriage of one woman with several brothers of a family. All the brothers in a family have the same woman as their wife. It is especially found among the Todas of South India, Khasas of Jaunsar Bawar. The paternity of children, born of this marriage is determined by a social festival.

(b) Non fraternal Polyandry: In this marriage one woman can marry more than one man, who are not brothers. They belong to different families and are not related by brotherly relations. It is found among the Todas of India. When a child is born, then any one of the husbands is chosen as her or his father by a special ceremony.

Ways of Acquiring mates among the Tribal Communities

Tribal marriage is a social contract for sexual pleasure, production of children and mutual cooperation. It is not a religious sacrament like the Hindu marriage. There are mainly eight ways of acquiring mates:

1. Marriage by Probation: In this type of marriage, a man is allowed to live with the woman at her parent's house for a particular period of time, during this period of probation. If they adjust with each other, they marry, if not, they separate and the man has to pay some money to the Parents of the woman as compensation. If the woman becomes pregnant during this probation period then that man must marry that woman. It is found among the Kuki tribe of Manipur.

2. Marriage by capture: It is a type of marriage in which without the consent of woman, a man marries her forcibly. Excessive bride price is the main factor responsible for this type of marriage. Marriage by capture is of two types:

(i) In Physical capture a man adopts a procedure whereby he carries away the woman by force and marries her.

(ii) In ceremonial capture a man adopts a procedure whereby he surprises the woman by marking her forehead with Vermilion. Physical capture is found among the Nagas, Hos, Bhils, Muria, Gonds, Badagas and Saoras etc. Ceremonial capture is found among the Santhals tribes.

3. Marriage by Trial: In some of the tribes of India, a man is required to prove his powers and courage by braving the obstacles thrown in his way before procuring

his wife. This is found among many tribes including the Bhils of India. Among the Bhils, men and women perform a folk dance around a tree or a pole during Holi festival. A coconut with some gur is tied to the top of the tree or pole.

Women dance very near to the tree or pole and men dance around the circle of the women. Any man from the group has the right to reach the tree or pole. Women beat that man venturing to perform the feat with bamboo sticks and tear his clothes. In spite of all resistance, if he reaches the tree and breaks the coconut and eats gur, that man has the right to marry one of the girls who have participated in the trial.

4. Marriage by Purchase: In this form of tribal marriage, the parents of bridegroom pay something in cash or kind to the bride's parents. This money or material is the bride price. A Garo man cannot get a bride if bride price is not paid. The bride price is said to be the compensation to the bride's parents which is generally fixed by the tribal customs and traditions. Besides, the so called bride price is only a contribution from the bridegroom's family towards the expenses of the marriage feast on which is usually spent. The system prevails among the Nagas, the Juangs and some of the tribes of Central India.

5. Marriage by Service: Certain tribal families observe this custom. According to this custom, the bridegroom before marriage, simply goes to his prospective father-in-law's house and serves there as a servant for a particular period of time. After the expiry of this period, if the father-in-law is satisfied with the work of the man, he gives his daughter's hand to him. If he is dissatisfied then the man is banished from the house. During the period of service the man cannot establish sexual relations with the woman. The tribes of India differ from one another regarding the modalities or the duration of service. The members of many tribes of India such as the Gonds, Baigas, etc. practice this.

6. Marriage by Exchange: 'According to this practice, two families exchange their daughter and son so that neither side is required to pay the bride price.

Marriage by exchange is very common in Indian tribes. The Uralis of Kerala, the Muria Gonds and Baiga of Bastar and the Koya and the Saora of Andhra Pradesh practice this.

7. Marriage by Elopement: It takes place when a woman and a man love each other and want to marry, but their parents refuse their matrimonial relation. In such cases, both of them escape from the village. After some period, they come back to the village and then they are recognized as wife and husband. It is known as Raji Khushi marriage among the Ho tribes of Jharkhand.

8. Marriage by Intrusion: When a man has intimate relation with a woman and promises to marry her but always postpones the marriage ceremony, the woman herself takes the initiative and enters his hut and occupies her place in one of its corners. Sometimes, she is much harassed, ill treated and beaten by the parents of the man. If the woman withstands all this, she wins and the man is compelled by his neighbours to marry her. Among the Oraons it is known as Nirbolok and among the Ho as Anadar.

CHANGING TRENDS OF MARRIAGE AND ITS FUTURE

The Hindu attitude to marriage has come down from the ancient Vedic times when it was regarded as a social and religious duty. Even today it is regarded by most Hindus as a sacrament, ordained and imperative which every normal man and woman should undergo. The marriages of children are the grand events of a family's career. Parents have always considered the marriage of their children one of their most sacred duties. This attitude makes it difficult for parents to accept the new marriage patterns that are slowly evolving as a result of the modernising influence in the post independence period. The new ways of earning a living, the wider spread of education, the modern facilities of transport and communication, on the post independence eliminate of legislative action, increasing employment opportunities for women have all affected the traditional marriage patterns. Indian marriage pattern is being changed in several ways. The full importance of these shifts cannot yet be assessed. However, certain directions of change are clearly apparent.

Age of marriage: The age of marriage of both Men and women has varied from time to time and region to region as well as with religion, caste and language differences. But the main consideration which determined the girl's age of marriage until recently was that she was supposed to marry before attaining puberty. The custom was mainly due to the high regard for the chastity of woman. Another reason for pre-puberty marriage and child marriage, Kapadia says was that it facilitated the transfer of the girl from the domination of the father to that of the husband. The subordination of women to men is a basic tenet of the traditional Hindu theory of marriage. Pre-puberty marriages began in the higher castes and were gradually taken over by the whole society.

Though the Child Marriage Restriction act of 1929, amended in 1939, abolished child marriages by raising the marriageable age of boys and girls to 18 and 14 respectively, pre-puberty marriages still take place in rural India. On the other hand, well educated girls tend to marry at a later age. But twenty five years is now considered the limit and girls have difficulty in finding husbands after that age.

Age at Marriage has gone up due to several structural factors: (1)unwillingness of young men to marry till they are settled in life; (2)preference for educated, particularly educated working girls; (3)difficulty of securing suitable young men for girls; (4)hypergamy & concomitant constraints of wedding expenses, specially dowry.

Choice of marriage partner: The choice of a marriage partner, as says Kapadia, may be considered from three different points of view, 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 in selection of marital partners. In addition to these rules which limit the field of selection, caste and religion are the principal traits that define the group within which a person is likely to marry. Indians, with a few exceptions, marry within their religious group. Despite the Special Marriage Act which gives a person freedom to marry outside his/her caste group, caste endogamy remains a hard fact of life. In some quarters intercaste marriages have received encouragement

occupational mobility, migration, education and common workplace for both men and women.



Many Indians today seek romance in marriage

The Hindu Marriage Act of 1955 defines the degrees of prohibited relationships', which completely ignores rules of caste endogamy and clan exogamy. However, the local customs of various communities related to marriage among cross cousins have been held valid. Among Muslims, for example, marriage with a father's brother's daughter is more or less obligatory, Endogamous rules are also observed by the Muslims. The Shias and the Sunnis do not intermarry. Moreover, the various subgroups among the Sunnis (Sayyid, Sheikh, Mughal, Pathan, etc.) marry within their communities. In the choice of their mates there is a growing desire of educated young men and women to have more say and many have gained the right to see and talk, of course under supervision of their own and their prospective marriage partner's parents. Generally speaking, freedom of choice in marriage is not yet a widely accepted pattern. Even when young people are given more freedom of choice, the parents do most of the arranging or at least must approve his/her choice. The initiative and negotiation of marriages are still largely where they traditionally have been, in the hands of parents and elder kinsmen.

In addition to the above the dynamic forces of urbanization and industrialization have introduced new elements into the marriage picture; romantic love as a necessary prelude to marriage and the possibility of divorce. Romantic love as a basis for marriage is not unknown in India. In fact, it is often mentioned in the Epic literature, but is so exceptional that it is not in the customary expectations;

few partners have a chance of meeting in a way in which they can form romantic attachments. Most parents are not pleased when sons or daughters want to marry the people they fall in love with. The theme of romantic love as a basis for marriage is still not a part of the family mores of India today.

Divorce was not sanctioned in the Hindu concept of marriage; barring some lower castes which had a custom of divorce, Hindu marriage was indissoluble. Under Islamic law, only the husband enjoys the privilege to divorce. The Hindu Marriage Act (1955) provides for divorce or judicial separation if certain conditions are fulfilled. Divorce has however not yet gained general acceptance, though its role is increasing. Till December 2000, altogether 37 lakh divorce cases were pending at various courts across the country.

Dowry. The practice of making dowry payments is not new, especially among the higher jatis of north India. This traditionally and generally accepted association of dowry marriages with high social status has not been effaced by liberal reformism. Education and the Dowry Prohibition Act of 1961 have not mitigated practice. On the contrary, there has been an increase; of late in the practice of dowry marriages, largely through its adoption by upwardly mobile jatis. Particularly among the middle classes, there has been an increase in the monetary value of dowries; and the fiction that they are daughters' inheritances (Streedhan) rather than the purchase price for sons-in-law becomes palpable. The high costs of dowry fall heavily on families burdened by the biological lottery with a preponderance of daughters. The failure to meet the dowry often results in domestic violence. Indian women's groups have brought to light a number of hideous instances in which brides with discrepant dowries were brutalized and even murdered or driven to suicide by their married families.

Weddings. Some changes have occurred in weddings. Not only some of the elaborate rituals have been eliminated but the length of ceremonies have been shortened to a few days. Yet increased wedding expenses continue to burden many levels. Weddings, particularly in urban areas, no longer serve the function of reuniting the large kinship group and a means of keeping the larger family unit together. Yet weddings are still the occasion for public display of wealth and prestige and are still carried out traditionally.

Assessment Marriage is a complicated process which involves many aspects of behaviour. The mores and folkways surrounding marriage are usually deeply set. It is hard to expect fundamental and rapid deviation from the customary ways of behaviour. Despite the legal prohibition of such traditional practices as child marriage and betrothal, and bringing the legal minimum ages in line with internationally accepted standards, many marriages in rural India are contracted in adolescence. The right of the young adults to meet, engage in a courtship, and decide whom and when to marry has not yet gained general acceptance. Arranged marriages are still normal and girls are strictly chaperoned. Caste endogamy is generally observed. There exists strong social pressure against interfaith marriages. Though divorce is legalized it remains hard and shameful. Contrary to Hindu traditions most people favor the remarriage of widows but there are few takers. Tradition dies hard, as it has been said.

HOUSEHOLD DIMENSIONS OF FAMILY

A family may be large or small depending on the prevailing principles of organization of descent relations between the dependents of married persons. Thus, the family is based on the principles of kinship whose members usually share a common residence. They reside in a house/homestead; this residential unit is called the household. The members of a household have a set of relational ties amongst them. These ties are linked with the status held and the corroborating role complexes members of the family expected to constitute. The household (ghar) is a residential and domestic unit composed of one or more persons living under the same roof and eating food cooked in the same kitchen (hearth/chulah). It may so happen that not all the members of a family live in the same household all the time. Geographically distanced homes may be occupied by a few of the members of a given family. These members then reside in two or more households but they consider themselves as belonging to the same family. The household is a commensal and co-resident group/unit (with the provision for the phenomenon of single person household). Thus kin and residence rules distinguish between family and household.

Family is a commonly used word and in a general sense it is well understood. It refers to a universal, permanent, and pervasive institution characterized by socially approved sexual access and reproduction, common residence, domestic services, and economic cooperation. But here troubles start. In ancient India, Niyoga permitted a woman sexual access to a person other than her husband later for the specific purpose of reproduction. The progenitor had later nothing to do with the woman of his progeny; the latter was incorporated into the lineage of the woman's husband and shared a common residence as well as domestic services with them. In the past, amongst Nayers several men could have access to a woman through the Tali rite and subsequent Sambandham unions. The Tali, a chain and locket worn round the neck, was tied by a man of appropriate ritual status on behalf of his sub-caste as a collectivity, which acquired sexual rights over the woman concerned. These rights were extended to any member of a higher caste who was attracted to and was found acceptable by her. Man who had Sambandham relations did not have any exclusive rights either as husband or as father, the woman could withdraw the sexual access allowed to them at any time if she so wished. The right over her progeny was vested in her Tarawad (household of matrilineal kin). The Tali rite performed before the commencement of menstruation symbolized the state of marriage of a girl to a collectivity of men from appropriate castes. At childbirth someone of acceptable rank had to provide the delivery expenses. This provision of a ritual father and a legalized genitor conferred legitimacy on the offspring and spared the woman the ignominy of excommunication. In the sense that it provided legitimacy to the offspring, such a union could be called a marriage, but the two other features of the family common residence and economic cooperation (including domestic services) were absent. The conjugal unit did not necessarily constitute a domestic groups or household. In the Lakshadweep islands and in some matrilineal groups of central Kerala, the husband is no more than a nightly visitor entitled only to sexual access to the woman, but without any prescribed economic role or authority. In the Nayar Nambudiri Sambandham, the latter could not even interdine with his wife or

children, not to speak of sharing any, domestic chores or economic activity. These exceptions have bothered anthropologists a great deal, and the debate on the minimum definition of marriage (and, in consequence, of the family) has remained inconclusive. But that need not deter us: where a union has social approval that grants legitimacy to the offspring, it may be treated as marriage. Marriage and the family do not necessarily go together; the spouses can continue to belong to their respective matrilineal families. There is great diversity in the forms of family in Indian society. These forms can be distinguished on several different bases- descent, residence, membership and number of mates.

In most communities in India descent is traced in the father's line. This is called patrilineal descent. Mention has already been made of matrilineal societies like Garo, Khasi and Pahadi in the northeast, and Nayar, Mappilla, Lakshadweep islanders, and several tribal and nontribal groups in south India in which descent is traced in the mother's line. Besides these two main systems, there are also examples of cognatic communities- Anglo Indians and some tribal groups which have bilateral tendencies. They may take the name from the father, but in tracing descent they also take note of the mother's line. Alongside the words patrilineal and matrilineal, there is a tendency to use also patriarchal and matriarchal. The latter usage is loose and confusing. Patriarchy refers to male dominant structures and this indeed is the norm in a sizeable part of Indian society. But matriarchy (female dominant system) does not exist. Women in matrilineal groups are important but in several fields they are not the effective decision makers. Major management functions are vested in male members.

There is considerable variation in the pattern of residence after marriage. When the wife moves to live in her husband's father's house (or grandfather's or uncle's house, in the event of the father not being there) the family type is patrilocal. Conversely, when the husband moves to live with his wife's mother's family, the family type is matrilocal. Patrilocal residence is the most common in India, examples of matrilocal residence are found among the Khasi, the Nayar and several other matrilineal groups. In the number of tribal groups a neolocal residence (a new house for the newly wedded couple) is preferred, although it is more common for them to set up a new home after a period of stay in a patrilocal or matrilocal setting. In Lakshadweep and central Kerala the approved pattern of residence is duolocal- the husband continuing to live in his mother's Tarawad and the wife in her mother's Tarawad.

India is often described as a country of joint families. In social anthropological and sociological literature this term is less commonly used, a distinction is made between the nuclear and extended family- the latter signifying units commonly referred to as the joint family. A nuclear family means a married couple and their children. An extended family, on the other hand is a larger group composed of two, three or more generations of lineally related members, their spouses, and children. In matrilineal extended families the husbands of married women are not included. At given point of time the proportion of nuclear families is higher but most nuclear families grow into extended families and break up later into incomplete extended families or nuclear families: It is rare to find all, or even most, members of two or three generations living together. There are evident limits to the number of persons

sharing the same' house; domestic discord often leads to the setting up of separate units. The latter are referred to as domestic groups or households. A large extended family may live together and may also jointly carry out some economic pursuits, but it is likely to have separate domestic arrangements for its several nuclear units. They gradually come to have separate hearths (chulhas) and have independent arrangements for cooking and dining. A form of jointness is maintained where nuclear families live and work separately, but where there is no formal division of ancestral, property, all members congregate on occasions of marriage and death as well as important ceremonial occasions. Togetherness and solidarity within the family are much lauded virtues, but households are not without their politics and intractable problems.

Family types may, also be classified on the basis of the number of mates.

In monogamy an individual can have only one spouse at a time. Before the passing of the Widow Remarriage Act of 1856 widows were not permitted to remarry in several upper Hindu Jatis; for them it was straight monogamy, as against the serial monogamy current in Western societies and now through legislation in many other societies including Indian. Polygamy can be subdivided into two types: polygyny, in which a husband can have two or more wives and into which a woman can have two or more husbands.

Polygyny was widely practiced in India among the tribes, Hindus, and Muslims. The Hindu Marriage Act of 1955 has sought to adopt monogamy as a rule among Hindus, but from Census data it appears that polygyny is still prevalent on a limited scale. The Scheduled Tribes are permitted to follow their customary law. Muslim personal law, being a sensitive issue, has not been touched in India; it permits polygyny, although several Muslim countries (including Pakistan) have passed legislation intended to eliminate the abuse of polygyny. However, all Muslim men do not marry four wives the incidence of polygyny among Muslims in India in 1931 was 7.29 percent, in 1941 it was 7.06 percent, and in 1951 it was 4.31 percent. Comparable figures for Hindus during this time frame were 6.79, 7.15 and 5.06 percent. These figures are based on the survey of nearly 1,00,000 marriages. They show a definite decline in polygynous marriages and thus of polygynous families.

Polyandry is confined to some small pockets. In the north it is practised by the Khasa (Jaunsaris) of U.P. and the people of Kinnaur and Lahaul and Spiti in Himachal Pradesh. Having been declared Scheduled Tribes they do not come under the purview of the Hindu law prohibiting bigamy. They practise fraternal or Adelpic polyandry. Among them, when the eldest brother marries a woman all the younger brothers simultaneously become her husbands. More than one woman can be married to the brothers. Such a situation can be regarded as group marriage. Among the Todas of south India, the husbands of a woman need not be brothers. This is known as non fraternal polyandry such union inevitably raise the question, of paternity. The problem is solved by the bow and arrow ceremony. In this ceremony one of the husbands of the woman generally performs this rite, but if she conceives before marriage, or for some reason any of her husband is unable to perform it, anyone from an appropriate group (i.e., one into which she can be married) may perform the ceremony. At first pregnancy, the man performing the

rite takes her, along with some relatives, to a nearby forest. A square socket is made by them in the trunk of a tree and a small lighted lamp is kept in it. The man makes a set of small wooden bow and arrows and gives them to the woman, who lifts them gently and touches them to her forehead. Then she fixedly gazes at the lighted lamp until its flame is extinguished. The man then prepares a meal, both eat and spend the night together. They return to their village the next day. The husband who performs this ceremony when the woman becomes pregnant, becomes the father of that child. He will be regarded as the father of all subsequent children even those born after his death unless the ceremony is performed by another husband. Thus, among the Toda social paternity is rated as more important than biological paternity. Polyandry is believed to have been practiced by the Nayar of Kerala, but that was at least over a hundred years ago. An important landed Jati in north India is believed to have traces of polyandry, the younger brothers of a man being allowed sexual access to his wife. From some accounts one gathers that this favour may be claimed even by the husband's elder brothers if a woman is widowed, she is claimed as a wife by one of the younger brothers under the Karewa custom and if there is no younger brother, then by an elder brother. A father-in-law can stake his claim also some even going to court to establish their right. This view however, is hotly contested and the existence of the practice is being denied for reasons of social prestige. Among the educated classes of this Jati this practice is being discontinued, but to the shock of some educated brides their younger brothers-in-law do make traditional demands.

Interpersonal relations within the family are often explained in terms of norms that should apply to certain categories of relations, such as between the father mother and son; between brothers and sisters; between sisters, the mother-in-law and daughter-in-law; between husband and wife, and between brothers-in-law and sisters-in-law. These norms spell out the ideal and provide guidelines for appropriate behaviour. But there is considerable variation in their observance. No two sons are cast in the same mould and no two households are alike. Daughters-in-law, because of their different socialization, bring with them different sets of attitudes and behaviour patterns. This is recognized and efforts are made to accommodate the differences. The underlying principles behind the norms of age, sex, and distance in kinship scale are important. It is expected that deference be shown to age. In patrilineal groups women are expected to give precedence to men. Distance in the kinship scale has to be observed. A woman is expected to avoid close contact with her husband's father, uncles and elder brothers. In traditional north Indian homes, she has to cover her face in their presence; if ever she has to speak to them she is expected to use as few words as possible and her manner suitably subdued. Uncles of one's age and even younger, are accorded recognition of their superior kinship status. But privileged familiarity is permitted between certain categories of relations. For example, in north India there is a recognized joking relationship between a man and his wife's younger sister and woman and her husband's younger brothers. It has to be noted that as time passes the warmth of some relations cools off. Distance in space also alters the nature of interaction between relations; form is often maintained but the sense of closeness goes.

A number of factors have affected the solidarity of the family and the quality of relationships within modern times. Education, non-traditional occupations,

disparities in income, and spatial distance are the more important factors impinging upon relationships and pushing, them in the direction of change. The culture of live in.' coupling, the single woman phenomenon, and unwed mothers has not yet come to India in a big way, but at least the urban family is undergoing, a transformation.

Notwithstanding changes of considerable magnitude overtime, the family continues to perform some important functions. Through it, membership replaced and the physical maintenance of society is ensured. It regulates reproduction and provides the minimum conditions of survival; such n nutrition, shelter, and care of the sick. It provides for the socialization of the young; within its setting they internalize the norms of society and learn to conform to appropriate forms of behaviour. It also controls deviant forms of behaviour among its members, especially of the young. The family provides the necessary emotional support, affection, appreciation, and encouragement. Above all, it is an important economic unit. It used to be a unit both of production and consumption. While the urban family is tending to become a unit only of consumption as it depends on its income from Work outside, in India as a whole, the family still remains an important unit also of production. These salient functions contribute to the permanence of the family as a unit of social organization.

IAS GURUKUL

PATRIARCHY, ENTITLEMENT AND SEXUAL DIVISION OF LABOUR

The term 'patriarchy', literally means 'rule of the father' (or patriarch) but has been adopted by feminists to refer to male domination over women in all its forms physical, political, psychological and ideological. In particular, it refers to the social and political structures, cultural institutions and social forces which keep women oppressed and powerless in male dominated societies.

Patriarchy can be traced back to the Bible, to the assumption that God is male and to the Book of Genesis where, after Eve ate the forbidden fruit in the Garden of Eden, God condemned her and all womankind to subordination to men, 'in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children, and thy desire shall be to thy husband and he shall rule over thee': Every known society is ruled by men and, although examples of female equality can be cited (e.g. the Tchambuli tribe of New Guinea), there is no known example of female rule, or matriarchy.

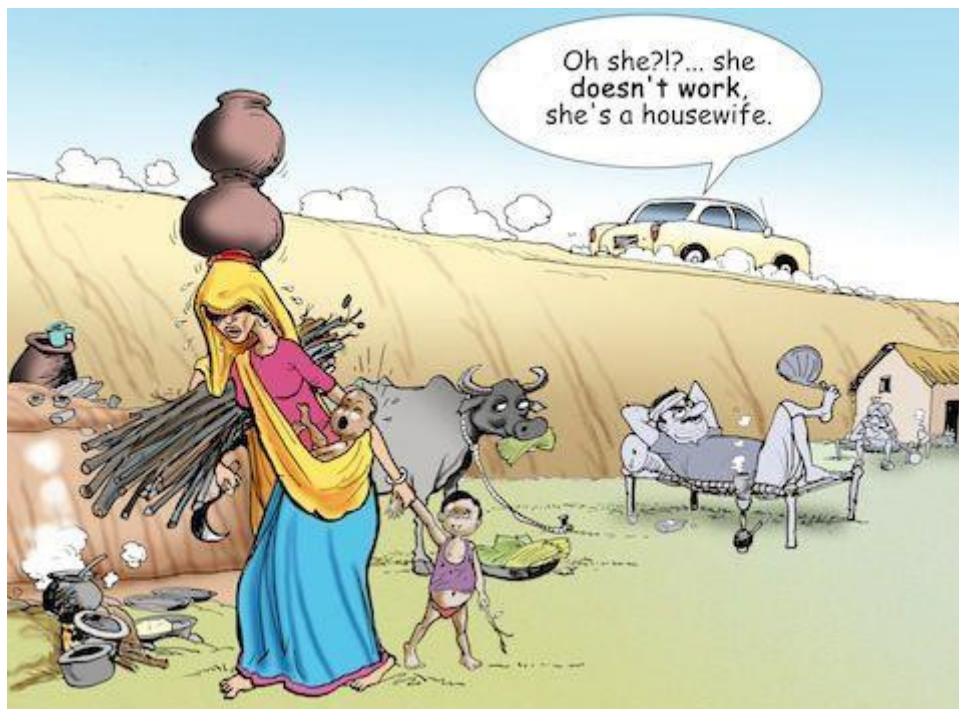
Feminist writers, however totally reject the idea that patriarchy is either inevitable or natural. They have instead developed a variety of theories to show that patriarchy is manmade a physical and ideological force used by men to keep women in their place in the background of society and historically invisible. The notion of patriarchy has provided feminism with a core concept for identifying explaining and ultimately changing sexual inequality and oppression and for inspiring women to be female in the fullest and freest sense of the word. Within the feminist movement, however a wide and diverse range of theories have emerged, each identifying different causes and so different solutions to patriarchy.

India is a great paradox. It is a country where women have been worshipped and crucified at the same time. Our scriptures regard women as the goddesses, the incarnation of compassion provider of food and destroyer of evil. But in practice women had to be content with a subservient role within the house for centuries. There may be exception but, by and large, the social mindset has been that of discrimination against women. Right from the birth for a majority of Indian women; life itself has been a long hurdle race, both within and outside the family.

The gender disparities persist with uncompromising tenacity, more so in rural areas and among the disadvantaged communities. These disparities are nutrition and health care, education, age at marriage, access to recreation. However, in equality between women and, men can take many different forms like mortality inequality, natal inequality, basic facility inequality, special opportunity inequality professional inequality; household inequality caste class inequality etc.

The structure of India society is essentially patriarchal, where the male child is considered as the legitimate heir and the carrier of family name and genes. In rural India, a male child is welcome addition to family, as he means enhanced workforce and reduced work load in agricultural activities. Sons also receive extra attention and care by the parents who cherish hope of relying on them during old age. On the other hand prevalence of how and ostentatious marriage ceremonies work to the detriment of the girl child. Non compliance of rigid social norms often carries a social stigma while compliance places heavy financial burden on family often leading to a debt trap. So, for many, bringing up a daughter is like catering to a

plant in another courtyard. The net result is relegation of girls to domestic chores and upbringing young sibling.



A cartoon highlighting the patriarchal nature of Indian society

Moreover to avoid payment of heavy amount of dowry at a later stage, people in rural area often resort to childhood marriage. Marriage at such a tender stage places heavy mental as well as physical burden on girls retarding their natural growth.

Women's development is directly related to national development. A large number of programmes have been initiated for women's development. These programmes lay emphasis on providing equal opportunities to women by removing gender bias, empowering women and creating self reliance. Some of the measures adopted by govt. of India noteworthy of mentioning are

(a) Swayam Siddha (b) Swadhara (c) Swashakti (d) STEP for women (e) Balika Samridhi Yojana (f) Rashtriya Mahilakosh (g) Mahila Samakhya (h) Indira Mahila Yojana (i) Mahila Samridhi Yojana (j) Giving 33% reservation to women in PRI in the 73rd & 74th amendment Act etc.

All these programmes revolve round the central notion of adopting a holistic approach to women's development encompassing health, education and employment. Education is the best panacea for eradicating the hardship of women and empowering them. Women's education leads to reduction of family size, greater attention of mother towards health; education and character building of their children, greater participation of women in labour market, greater participation of women in labour market, greater per capita income and better quality of human capital. Educating a girl child means providing her an opportunity to acquire information that can be utilised immediately to raise not only her social status but also her self esteem.



The December 2012 Delhi Gang rape of Nirbhaya ('fearless') sparked massive public outrage across India: Mother of the victim addressing a public rally.

It has been felt that inadequate machinery for detection of crime, poor and ill equipped investigation agency, lacunae in certain legal provision and lack of community support are responsible for crime against women. Formation of self help group and awareness among women can tackle this problem.

Though political empowerment of women in Panchayati raj is a statutory provision, still the 81st constitutional amendment bill regarding reservation of women in state assembly and national parliament has not been passed. There can be no true democracy no true people participation in governance and development, without equal participation of women and men in all spheres of life and at different levels of decision making.

In India voluntary organizations have mushroomed in towns and villages highlighting women's issues, giving legal aid, health training, doing developmental activities- creating an image of tremendous growth and proliferation of women's movement.

The newer trends in feminism emphasising the politics of difference or extolling feminity have also influenced the essence of feminism. With these politics of plurality certain the tarn questions emerge. For instance, would profession of modelling or participation in beauty pageants be an expression of independence and entry into feminist space or falling victim to a consumerist culture that turns women into sex objects? Would 33% reservation for women in elected bodies, women in police force, army, bureaucracy, and judiciary be expression of women's empowerment or merely an assimilation of women into exploitative state machinery?

Apart from giving due emphasis on the education of the girl child, a multi pronged strategy need to be adopted to tackle and solve her problems. Massive awareness

drives need to be launched and community participation in them ensured. Now many States in India have launched welfare schemes in the form of monetary incentives. At the birth of the girl child; the states invests some money by her name in various govt. money growth schemes. Many states have made education free for girls upto university level.

The year 2001 has been celebrated all over India as the year of women's empowerment. The govt. of India has changed its approach from welfare to development to empowerment of women. Unless an active approach coupled with mass awareness programme is pursued women of the 21st century would continue to live in darkness. It can be concluded that a concerted efforts by all of us is required to get rid of the malady of gender disparity which is affecting our society today. We have to overcome age old barriers of silence, isolation and discrimination by making serious and sincere efforts. We have a wish to do it, what we really need is a will to succeed.

IAS GURUKUL

RELIGION & SOCIETYRELIGIOUS COMMUNITIES IN INDIA

Religion refers to the most sublime of human aspirations. It is considered a bulwark of morality, a source of public order and inner individual peace. Human beings live in conditions of perpetual uncertainties. Human being's capacity to control and affect the conditions of her or his life is inherently limited. This generates a need to enter into 'a relationship with the supra empirical aspects of reality, need that is fulfilled by religion.

Although religion and dharma are normally used interchangeably the connotations and meanings are not exactly same. Whereas 'religion' denotes beliefs and rituals, dharma denotes social duties and the normality order of the cosmos. Dharma is the orientation of the human action towards its fruits. It is the regulation of social life by norms of conduct. In Indic practices, dharma has implications that go beyond religion, as normally understood.

For Emile Durkheim, A religion is a unified set of beliefs and practice relative to sacred things, that is to say, things set apart and forbidden beliefs and practices which unite into one single moral community called a church to all those who adhere to them. In other words, religion presupposes a classification of all things into two classes or opposed groups, generally designated as sacred and profane.



India is a land of many religions

Many sociologists also emphasise another aspect of religion: It serves as a mechanism to help people solve the problem of meaning of life, death, illness, failure, success, happiness etc. It, thus, provides an overall sense of direction and meaning to human life.



Members of different faiths have lived in India for thousands of years

A religion has three aspects- rituals, beliefs, and organisation. Rituals deal with religious behaviour. Beliefs deal with the sources as well as the patterns of faith. Organisation deals with the mechanism by which religions manage the behaviour, expectations, status and role of the members concerned. India is a multi-religious country. According to 1991 census of India, there are 82 per cent Hindus, 12.12 per cent Muslims; 2.3 per cent Christians, 1.94 percent Sikhs, 0.76 per cent Buddhists, 0.40 per cent Jains; and 0.44 per cent others. The last categories of others include Parsis or Zoroastrians, Jews and Animists groups of tribal origins. In other words, almost every major religious group is represented in India. Traditionally all the groups have lived together respecting the other's beliefs and practices.

The different religions practised in India can be broadly classified into the following two groups:

1. Religions of Indic Origin:

Hinduism, Jainism, Buddhism, and Sikhism. These are rooted in religious tradition of India.

2. Religions of Semitic Religions:

Judaism, Christianity and Islam. These are rooted in prophetic tradition of Adam and Abraham.

No village or town in India is devoid of a religious monument temple, mosque, church and Gurudwara etc. There are two aspects of religion in India, the

individual aspect and the collective aspect. It is the latter aspect which is emphasized in India.

Religion, Law and the States in India

Indian tolerance of beliefs and acceptance of diversity are proverbial. India is a multi religious state in which various faiths are entitled to the protection of their religious laws to an extent. The Indian constitution respects the religious law of different communities under the rubric of personal law 'Personal law' refers to the system of religious rules, customs and practices related with family, marriage and succession, particularly in the case of religious minorities.

The Indian constitution does not refer to religious pluralism as such, but its overall effect is often described often as 'secular'. It gives equal importance to all religions and this accords well with the tradition of pluralism in India.

Article 25(1) of the Indian Constitution grants the right to freely profess, practice and propagate one's religion. It is guaranteed to all persons subject to considerations of public order, morality and health.

Religion as a Way of Community Life in India

In Indian society religion is, primarily, associated with communities rather than with individual. The Indian Constitution as well as the Indian traditions recognise the place of individual beliefs and individual attempts to search for the divine. The individual quest is considered spirituality, whereas religion is conceptualised as a collective affair to lead a moral life.

Let us look at the major religious groups in India in brief.

THE HINDU COMMUNITY IN INDIA

A notable dimension of Hinduism is the belief that God is pervasive and easily accessible to the people in one form or the other. Hindu communities do not believe in one God. Hinduism as a way of life is very accommodative regarding beliefs and rituals.

There are no beliefs or rituals which are common to all Hindus, and which mark them off from others. While the caste system and joint family are fundamental to Hinduism, these are not confined to Hindus alone. By and large, recruitment to Hinduism is by birth into one of the many Hindu castes. Arya Samaj and other modern sects, however, are exceptions. They convert new members into their own variety of Hinduism. In the course of centuries, other groups who came to India often assumed the character of castes and entered the Hindu fold gradually. Although there is too much diversity in Hindu Dharma but the three central tenets of Hinduism at the philosophical level are dharma, karma and moksh. Dharma is the basic moral force that holds the universe together. Karma is a theory which believes that every action of human being bears a definite fruit and a person has to enjoy the fruit- good or bad, depending upon the action performed. There is no escape from Karma. Mostly, a person enjoys the fruit of her Karma within this life. In case death intervenes in between, she or he is bound to take rebirth just to enjoy the fruit of her or his previous Karma. This is called fate or Prarabdhi. Fate can be

modified to some extent by the present Karma. In this way the present conduct holds a key to future existence.

Moksha is liberation from karmic bondage, the cessation of cycles of births and deaths. Even in present life one can attain liberation from worldly attachment and achieve mental, peace.

Varnashramdharm- the most popular example of Hindu social organisation. It is an ideal framework of a moral community and has functioned as the reference point from the time of Rig Veda. It presents a functional division of Hindu society into four categories- Brahmins, Kshatriyas, Vaisyas and Shudras. The Brahman Varna is a symbolic equivalent of intellectual professions teachers, priests, astrologers and Vaidyas. Kshatriyas are symbolic equivalents of kings, administrators, and managers. Vaisyas are symbolic equivalents of entrepreneurs, traders and merchants. Shudras are service provider groups.

Such classifications are found in many traditions and societies. What makes the classification of Varna unique are the requisites professional and other duties required to perform dharma of the concerned Varna.

Ashram is the complementary institution of Varna. If Varna tried to present an ideal principle of social organization, ashram tried to present an ideal principle of the organisation of an individual's life. This concept divides life into four parts (i) Brahmacharya or student life, (ii) Grihasth or family life (iii) Vanaprasth or life of gradual withdrawal as well as social services and (iv) Sanyas or renunciation of the world and transcending the limits of human life.

The importance of ashram is dependent on the concept of Purusharth. It is believed that an ideal Hindu must give equal importance to dharma (duties), artha (sources of livelihood), Kama (desire of sex), and Moksha (liberation from all types of bondage and attachments). In other words, Hindus believe that both material and spiritual aspects are important for a balanced life.

The classical texts mention sixteen Samskars for an ideal Hindu but only three sacraments are popular: 1. Initiation sacrament (wearing the sacred thread), 2. Marriage sacrament, and 3. Death sacrament. Out of even these three lifecycle rituals, sacred thread is usually given to the male members of the Dwija or so-called twice born castes only. Usually Hindus do not bury the dead body of the adults.

There are three types of rituals which are performed in Hindu families:

(a) Lifecycle rituals like initiation ritual, marriage ritual, death ritual etc.

(b) Domestic rituals like Raksha Bandhan or Bhai Duj (performed by sisters for brothers), Teej and Karva Chauth (performed by Wives for husbands), Jitia (performed by mothers for sons), and some others, (c) Annual festivals- Hindus celebrate annual festivals like Diwali, Dushehara, Holi, Onam, Makar Sankranti, Baisakhi etc. Pilgrimage is also a defining feature of community life in India. Most Hindus visit temples situated all over India, take a dip in the sacred rivers, pay homage to their ancestors in sacred places. Varanasi, Haridwar, Prayag, Madurai,

Puri, Dwarka, Badri Kedarnath, Shringeri, Tirupathi, Vaishnodevi and KainarupaKamIdiya etc., are some sacred places of the Hindu.

Most Hindus give donations and gifts to the needy as well as to the virtuous. However, they believe that philanthropy or charity is virtuous only when it is given secretly. Charity that is publicly given or advertised is usually looked down upon.

The Religious Groups and Sects of Indic Origin

Hinduism is divided into many sects. Vaishnavism, Shaivism, Shaktism, Lingayats, Kabirpanthis, Ravidas panthis are among the most notable sects within Hinduism.

There have been interlinkages among these religious groups and the wider Hindu society. Sikhs and some Hindu castes in Punjab were intermarrying among each other until recently. Buddhists and Hindu also have marital relationships. Jains and Hindu Baniyas have very close social and cultural links.

Buddhism and Jainism were the early religious orders (Sampraday) of India which devalued priestly power and the constraints of caste and status. Buddhism made compassion to all living entities human beings, animals and plants religiously significant. Jainism believes in Ahimsa (non-violence).

Subsequently, the Bhakti (devotional) sects emerged in South India during sixth to eleventh century AD, and in North India during fourteenth to seventeenth century AD. These sects propagated a liberalism which freed people from rituals and social inhibitions and made them all equal before God. Kabir Panth, Ravidas Panth, Nanak Panth, Lingayat Sampraday etc. are some of the famous devotional sects of Indic origin.

In the wake of colonial rule, new reformist trends emerged in Indian society. The reformist movements included Brahma Samaj, Arya Samaj and Ramakrishna Mission, among others. In more recent times, the Anuvrat Andolan, Bhoodan movement and Swadhyay movement have given new dimensions to reform within the Hindu society.

THE MUSLIM COMMUNITY IN INDIA

Islam came to India in the late seventh century AD. When some Arab traders migrated to the Malabar coast. The Muslim conquest of Sindh in eighth century A.D. led to the beginning of conversion of Hindu castes to Islam. Between eleventh and eighteenth centuries, India faced waves of Muslim invasions by Turks, Afghans, Mughals and Persians. Thus, Islam in India is thirteen centuries old. The Muslims from West Asia came as conquerors, settled down, got attuned to native ways and ruled India for seven centuries. Those who came from outside, first as traders then as conquerors or as Sufi Saints, were far less in number than those Indians who converted to Islam. India has the third biggest Muslim population in the world today.

Islam says that there is one God and submission to Him results in peace. Islam simply means surrender to the will of one God, Allah in Arabic. To become a Muslim, it is sufficient to bear testimony and accept by heart before two Muslim witnesses that there is not God except Allah and Mohammad is the messenger of

Allah. The first testimony asserts the unity of the divine principle and the second testimony establishes Mohammad as the final prophet of the supreme God.

The Islamic religion is composed of diverse schools and interpretations that are deeply rooted and united in the principles of the Islamic revelation. All Muslims agree that the Quran is the verbatim revelation of God and they agree about its text and content. Muslims also believe in the reality of the here afterlife. They are united in the main rituals performed, ranging from the Namaz to Roza to making the Haj pilgrimage.

Muslims in India, as elsewhere, are divided into two major sects, Sunnis and Shias. These two sects separated from each other upon the death of the Prophet on the question of succession. The Sunni Caliphs and the Shiite Imams have never accepted each other's authority.

In comparison to Shias, Sunnis are in majority in India. The Ahmadiyas, the Dawoodi Bohras, the Ismaili Khoja etc. are some other denominations of Muslim in India. There are caste-like groups in Indian Muslims, e.g., Syed Sheikh; Khan, Malik and Ansari. etc. These become more significant during matrimonial match making.

One of the key concepts in Islam is that of the Ummah or the totality of the people who are Muslims and compose the Islamic world. Ummah creates an Islamic brotherhood that goes beyond a single ethnic, racial and cultural group.

In the Islamic perspective, religion is not seen as a part of life or a special kind of activity along with art, thought, commerce, social interaction, politics, and the like. Rather, it is the matrix and world view within which there and all other human activities, efforts and creations take place or should take place. Islamic religion is a total way of life. Islam does not accept the dichotomy between sacred and profane or spiritual and secular. Islam asserts that nothing can be legitimate outside the realm of religion. The Qur'an, the Prophet, the Hadith, the Shariat and the Tariqat are the foundations of Islam.

The Qur'an is the central foundation of Islam. It is supposed to contain the revealed words of the God. The God revealed Qur'anic words to Prophet Mohammad through the angel Gabriel. The text of Qur'an is considered divine not only in meaning but also in structure.

The Prophet Mohammad is the second foundation of Islam. He is the most perfect human being, the perfect creation of the God, the best interpreter of the God's message as well as its faithful transmitter. Islam is based on the Absolute Allah, and not on the messenger, yet, the love of the Prophet lies at the heart of the Islamic piety. The love of the Prophet embraces all the dimensions of Islam, affecting both those who follow the Shariat and those who walk upon the spiritual path the Tariqat, of which he is the founder and guide.

The Hadith is the third important foundation of Islam. The Hadith is a book of sayings dictated by the Prophet himself as well as recordings of his Sayings by his companions and followers. The Hadith deals with nearly every question from details of legal significance to the most exalted, moral and spiritual teachings. The Hadith

is the indispensable guide for the understanding of God's word as contained in the Qur'an.

The Shariat or the Divine Law of Islam is the fourth important foundation of Islam. Muslims consider the Shariat to contain the concrete embodiment of the will of the God. The life of a Muslim from the cradle to the grave is governed by the Shariat. The Shariat is the sanctioned path that women and men must follow in this life. The root of the Shariat is found in the Qu'ran and the God is considered as the ultimate legislator.

The Tariquat or the spiritual path is the fifth important foundation of Islam. It represents the inner dimension of Islam. The Tariquat or the spiritual path was perfected by the Sufi orders in the Sunni sect as well as by the Shia sect.

Haj is the supreme pilgrimage of Islam and is made to the sacred building of Kaba at Mecca. Muslims believe that the God forgives a human being's sin if she or he performs the Haj with devotion and sincerity.

Islamic Practices and Institutions

The basic rites of Islam include worship of only one God (Toheed), the Canonical prayers (Namaz), fasting (Roza), the obligatory offering for charity (Zakat) and pilgrimage (Haj). Every Muslim is supposed to perform Namaz five times a day. The Namaz must be performed in the direction of the Kaba in Mecca in Saudi Arabia.



Muslims offering Namaz at a mosque in Rourkela, Odisha

Obligatory offering made annually under Islamic law on certain kinds of property and used for charitable and religious purpose.

Muslim festivals come from the life of Mohammad and the history of Islam. The lunar Hijra calendar is followed by the Muslims for all religious matters, weddings and celebrations. The Muslim new year starts with the month of Moharram.

Ramazan, the ninth month is the holiest of all the months. From dawn to dusk, for one month, women and men fast during the hours of daylight as a means of self-purification. On the twenty ninth or twenty eighth day of Ramazan when the new moon is sighted in the evening, the festival of Eid-al-fitr is celebrated. Men go to the Eidgah for congregational prayers after which people visit and embrace one

another. Muslims other important festivals are Eid-ul-azha, Moharram and ShabeBarat etc. which, are celebrated in India.

THE CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY IN INDIA

Jesus Christ as the Prophet, the New Testament as the revealed book, and the Church as the religious organisation are the foundation stones of Christianity. Jesus and his early disciples were all Jews. The New Testament in the present form was accepted in the churches around the fifth century AD. In early years the Old Testament or the Hebrew Bible or the Torah was their only scripture. Christianity and Islam are rooted the revelation of Moses contained in the Old Testament.

The three constituents of Christians' religious life include (i) Faith in Jesus Christ as the messenger of the God, (ii) Active service and (iv) Love to the neighbour.

Christianity came to India in different phases. According to the Syrian Christian tradition, Apostle Thomas, one of the Jesus' original twelve disciples, came to the vicinity of Cochin in 52 AD. There was a Christian church in India perhaps as early as the end of the second century. Thomas' or 'Syrian' Christians have never shown any great desire to expand beyond their own natural frontiers.

The second, a Roman Catholic phase of India's Christian history, began in the 1250s with the arrival of the first missionaries of the Franciscan and Dominican orders. After 1500 AD following the Portuguese occupation of parts of Western India, there was fresh infusion of missionaries.

The third phase of Christian history in India began in July 1706 with the arrival of the first Protestant missionaries from Germany. The fourth phase of Christian expansion started during the British Rule in India. The English Baptist missionary William Carey arrived in India in 1793. He inaugurated the most concentrated phase of Protestant Christian activity in India. Between 1757 and 1813 the East India Company was against Christian missionaries but later its policy changed in favour of the Christian missionaries.

During the British rule after 1833 there were two dimensions of Christian activity (i) it was very active in and around colleges and universities at Kolkata, Mumbai and ,Chennai (ii) it was also active in rural and tribal areas especially among the weaker sections.

During 1920s the fifth phase of Christian activity began in India. The American organisation, Young Men's Christian Association (YMCS), and American Christians like Stanley Jones and Katherine Mayo were influential during this phase. The sixth phase of Christian activity began after 1947. The Church of South India was founded in 1947. It comprised fourteen dioceses and about a million members spread over four language areas. Most notably it did not involve the Roman Catholics or the Lutherans. The Church of North India, founded in 1970, tried to Indianize Christianity at the organisational level.

Following the second Vatican Council in the mid of 1960s, the Roman Catholic church in India was liberated from many of its earlier restrictions. Many

experiments were made to Hinduise the church's liturgy by the introduction of elements from the temple and Bhakti traditions.

The Indian Census merges Christians into single group, but they belong to different denominations. Catholics form the largest group; nearly 50 per cent are Protestants, 7 per cent are the orthodox Christians (eastern orthodox church) and 6 per cent belong to indigenous sects.

Catholics are organized according to a well defined hierarchy and they consider Pope as the supreme head in all religious affairs. Protestantism includes many distinct persuasions and churches. Orthodox groups, such as the Syrian Christians, are affiliated to the orthodox churches of Eastern Europe or West Asia or to the churches dependent on these.

At one point, even today, the boundaries between the Kerala Syrians and Hindus are blurred, as in the rituals of house building or astrology. The ceremonies of marriage and birth among the Syrian Christians also manifest many similarities with Hindu custom, particularly in the use of ritual substances such as sandalwood paste, milk, flowers, areca, nut and rice. In Tamil Nadu and Goa, Christianity is embedded in the indigenous socioritual order.

Pilgrimage: Whereas Protestant Christians, with the exception of the Anglicans, do not go on pilgrimages, Catholics and the orthodox visit places of pilgrimage on the occasion of festivals. Owing to their greater Christian population places like Goa, Kerala and Tamil Nadu and cities like Chennai, Mumbai and Kolkata have many places of pilgrimage.

The Roman Catholics in India regard the Pope their bishop of Rome as their supreme religious leader. Indian Catholics are guided by two cardinals one at Mumbai and the other at Ernakulam. There are over 120 bishops in India. There are thirty five religious orders of Christian priests in India.

Ceremonies: Seven sacraments of the Roman Catholic Church have to be administered by a priest or bishop. Baptism- the ritual process of becoming/making a Christian is performed when a child is a few days old. Confirmation is performed when a child is seven years old among Catholics and fifteen year old among Protestants. She or He is taught the main tenets and obligations of the Christian faith for several months by the priest. After this instruction one's rites have to be solemnized by a priest in church.

The Christian masses have castes or caste like groups. Joint family is a dominant institution. They do not have a distinct style of life (except Anglo-Indians) and are usually absorbed into the local regional linguistic communities.

JAINISM

Jainism is one of the oldest religions in India. It is a form of Sanatan Dharma. It has 24 Tirthankaras. The first Tirthankar was Rishabhdev and the twenty fourth Tirthankar was Mahavir. The Jains share some doctrines, rituals and general religious beliefs with early Buddhists and Hindus but they have a religious system

of their own. Mahavir is supposed to be senior contemporary of Gautama Buddha. He was a great system builder.



A Svetambara Jain Muni

The Jain community is divided into two important sects, Svetambar (white clothed), and Digambar (unclothed). Another lesser known sect is called Sthanakvasi. The Sthanakvasis think that Tirthankaras need not be represented in images. The Svetambaras think that Tirthankaras should be represented in images with white robes. The Digambaras think that Tirthankaras should be represented in images without robes or clothes.

The word 'Jain' is derived from Jin, which means the conqueror. Mahavir (599527 B.C.) said that everything, animate or inanimate, has Jiva (life force). The goal of human endeavour should be to exhaust karma and the way of deliverance is in the three gems or rules of behaviour and right faith, right knowledge and right conduct includes nonviolence, adherence to truth, chastity and the renunciation of worldly possession.

Jains believe in soul, theory of karma the cycle of birth and death like the Hindus. Jainism has, however more similarities with Buddhism. Jainism along with Buddhism belongs to the shramanic forms of Sanatan dharma. The shramanic traditions as a whole emphasize the renunciation of worldly belongings and pleasures. Their quest is directed at achieving emancipation from worldly existence and the cycle of birth and death. Emancipation (Kaivalya) and renunciation (vairagya or Sanyas) are the two themes addressed principally.

For all Jains, fasting and austerity are considered essential for self purification. They lay stress on mental disciplines to obtain self control, concentration in contemplation and purity of thought. Jainism also stresses that personal spiritual development achieved through penance should be for the benefit of the community. The teaching of Mahavir is that, altruism in individual life source of positive social welfare. The five fold discipline of non violence, truth, honesty, sexual purity and indifference to material gain is not for personal virtue alone but also aims at the social good.

Jain festivals are meant for the spiritual development of the self through the practice of austerities. Mahavir Jayanti is the most well known festival of Jains.

The Jains are among the richest community in India. The majority of Jains are engaged in trade and commercial activities.

BUDDHISM

Buddhism was one of the new religious movements that arose in India around the sixth century B.C.. It is rooted in the traditional Indian religion called Sanatan Dharma. It is one of the three major form of Indic religions the other two being Hinduism and Jainism. It was founded Buddha.

The Buddhist profession of faith is known as the Triple Refuge or the Three Jewels- the Buddha, the Dhamma, and the Sangh. The Buddha is the enlightened teacher or the prophet. The Dhamma is the doctrine given by the Buddha and the Sangh is the community of believers in the doctrine taught by Buddha. One formally becomes a Buddhist by reciting the Triple Refuge three times- I go for refuge to the Buddha; I go for refuge to the Dhamma; I go for refuge to the Sangha.

Dhamma has four meaning (1) the absolute truth, (2) right conduct, (3) doctrine, and (4) the ultimate constituent of experience. The first three meaning are found in Hinduism as well but the fourth meaning is specific to Buddhism.

The Buddhists believe in the four noble truths preached by the Buddha. The first noble truth preached by the Buddha is that there is suffering. The second noble truth says that here is cause of suffering (desire). The third noble truth says that the cause of suffering can be removed. The fourth great truth supplies a detailed blueprint to remove the cause of suffering.

The Eightfold Path consists of right view, right aspiration, right speech, right action, right livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness and right meditation. The Eightfold Path leads to Nirvana, which involves the cessation of all sufferings. The Four Noble Truths and the Eightfold Path are meant to serve as provisional teaching.

Vinay Pitak (Book of Discipline), Sutta Pitak (Book of Sermons) and Abhidhann Pitak (Book of Doctrine) are the basic scriptures of Buddhism: There are four major forms of Buddhism: (i) Theravada (ii) Mahayana, (iii) Vajrayan or Tantra, and (iv) Zen. Different forms are predominant in different countries or geographical areas.

The most important festival of the Buddhists in India is the Buddha Purnima. There are other festivals which are celebrated by different sect and denominations. Some Hindu festivals like Diwali, Holi and Makar Sankranti are also celebrated by many Buddhist families.

SIKHISM

Sikhism emerged as a devotional sect within the Indic religion around the teachings of Guru Nanak (1469 539). The term Sikh has originated from the Sanskrit word Shishya, which means disciple. Nanak travelled all over India, and to

Sri Lanka, Mecca and Medina. He sang his hymns wherever he went, spreading his message of love, purity and universal brotherhood.

There are ten Gurus (religious teachers) of Sikhs. Nanak was the first Guru and Govind Singh was the tenth Guru. Arjun was the fifth Guru who compiled the Guru Granth Sahib (holy book of the Sikhs). The Guru Granth contains hymns composed by the devotional saints as well as the writings of the Sikh Gurus. Guru Arjun infused great vigour into Sikhism. He made Amritsar his headquarters where he built a Gurudwara (temple of the Guru). From the time of Guru Arjun, Sikhism gradually became a militant organisation.

Govind Singh (1675-1708), the tenth Guru converted the Sikhs into a militant community called the khalsa (the pure). He gave the Sikhs a distinct individuality in 1699 by initiating five of his followers. He enjoined them, among other admonitions, never to cut their hair, always to wear a comb, a pair of short drawers, a bangle and a kirpan (dagger). These are called five 'K's' Kesha, Kangha, Kachha, Kada and Kirpan. The Sikh community life is centred around Gurudwara (gateway or temple of the Guru). The central object of worship in the Gurudwara is the Granth Sahib.

The Sikhs are primarily divided into two broader groups (i) The Sanatani Sikhs, and (ii) The Khalsa Sikhs. The Sanatani Sikhs are the followers of Guru Nanak and his son Sri Chand.

The Sanatani Sikhs do not stress separate religious identity of Sikhs, rather they consider themselves as an offshoot of a broadly defined Hinduism. The Khalsa Sikhs or Tat Khalsa is based on the radical interpretation of the teachings of Guru Govind Singh; It claims to represent 'true' Sikhism, stripped of the popular customs of Hinduism: It separated Sikhism from the broader rubric of Hinduism. They emphasised that Sikhism is an independent new religion based on three foundations Guru Granth and Gurudwara.

In 1925 the Gurudwara Act was passed. It led to the emergence of Shiromani Gurudwara Prabandhak Committee (SGPC), as the supreme body of Sikhs in Punjab. It manages the religious affairs of Sikhs and the Gurudwaras.

Sikhs still participate in some of the festivals celebrated by the Hindus like Basant Panchami, Holi and Diwali. Their own festivals include Baisakhi and the birthdays of Sikh Gurus of Guru like Nanak and Govind Singh and the Martyrdom of Guru Arjun, Guru Teg Bahadur and the two sons of Govind Singh. They also celebrate the founding of the Khalsa and Hola Mohalla.

Sikhs, too are a prosperous community in India. They are engaged in diverse professions in both villages and cities. Although Sikhism does not believe in caste, there are castes like groups among the Sikhs as well.

OTHER RELIGIOUS GROUPS

ZOROASTRIANS OR THE PARSIS



*Parsis are a microscopic but powerful community:
Tatas, Wadias, Shapoorji Pallonji Group & Godrejs are top business houses*

The word Parsi means Persians and refers to those Persians who migrated to India from Iran in the tenth century AD. They had migrated to India from their Iranian (Persian) homeland. The Parsi community recognizes Zoroaster or Zarathustra as their Prophet. Therefore, they are also known as Zoroastrians.

Zoroastrianism is one of the oldest Prophetic religions of the world. Zoroaster lived in the Northeast of Iran on the Asian steppes around 6,000 B.C.. He inherited much of the Indo-Iranian tradition so that Zoroastrianism and Hinduism have something of common parentage. This results in a number of similarities between the two: as the place of fire in ancient texts- the Vedas of Hindus and the Avesta of the Parsis and certain purity laws and attitudes toward the priests.

The Prophet's teachings are preserved in hymn form in Gothic Avestan language which has strong links with Vedic Sanskrit. Zoroastrianism was the state religion of Iran until the Muslim Arab invasion of the seventh century AD. By the ninth century, the persecution of Zoroastrians in Iran became unbearable so that they decided to migrate to different places in India and other countries.

Most Parsis in India are city dwellers. They are settled in Mumbai and different places in Gujarat. They are one of the most prosperous communities of India. Among the minority communities they are also one of the most integrated communities to the mainstream of modern India. Dadabhai Naoroji, Pherozeshah

Mehta and the family of Tatas have played significant role in the building of modern India. They have been pioneers in modern trades and industrial enterprises. They have also played important roles in building the various institutions of Mumbai.

Parsis usually spend little time in theological study. To most Parsis, their religion is tied up with their identity. Their identity is maintained by the performance of lifecycle rituals and observances of moral practices in daily life. The ideas of purity and pollution are very important among the Parsis. Their daily prayer is called navjote. There are only two religious duties for Parsis, the daily prayers and the observance of the seasonal festivals, the gahambar.

Zoroastrianism was originally a religion of Nature Worship. Natural objects like fire, air, the sun, and water were considered sacred. Today they are primarily fire worshippers. At Udwada, the centre of pilgrimage for Parsis, there is one 'permanently burning fire' shrine. There are two types of fire temples which are distinguished from each other by the grade of fire which burns within them, one is called the 'Royal Bahrain' or victorious fire and the other is called the 'Dar i' or the ordinary fire.

The Parsis are known for their philanthropy. The many sided philanthropy of the Parsis has established through their Panchayat, a remarkable social security system for the community. Its members make their contributions to the local anjuman fund or community chest which constitutes the foundation of the system. The community has many trusts and foundations, benefiting nonParsis as well. The Parsis have laid claim to no territory and to no special right for themselves. They emphasise the moral and civic sense and philanthropy over philosophical doctrines.

JUDAISM

The Jews or the followers of Judaism are perhaps the smallest religious community in India. According to Indian Census of 1991 there were about 5000 Jew's in India. They were classified by census authorities of India along with Zoroastrians and Animist tribals as part of a miscellaneous category called other religious groups.

The Jews in India comprise three main communities the Bene Israel, Kerala Jews and Baghdadi Jews. Some Jews came to India before the beginning of the Christian era. The oldest communities have been the Bene Israel who are settled mainly in the coastal areas of Maharashtra. The other groups settled in Kerala near Cochin. The third group came from the Middle East (Baghdad) and settled in Mumbai, Kolkata, Pune, Surat and Chennai. A large number of them have migrated from India to Israel in 1948.

Judaism is the original Hebrew or Semitic religion. It is based on the revelation of Moses. The Hebrew Bible or the Torah is their sacred religious text. Their temple is known as synagogue. Led by Abraham, they settled in Israel, originally called Canaan and later Palestine. In 63 B.C. Palestine came under Roman Rule and between 70 AD to 1948 the Jews lived in different places as scattered groups. In 1948 they reestablished Israel as their holy nationstate and Jews came, back to their homeland in large numbers from different countries.

Jews in India began to integrate themselves increasingly with their surroundings. They adopted the customs, dress, characteristics and day to day practices of the people of the region. They are a very homogeneous group and strictly adhere to their religious beliefs. Unlike Christianity and Islam, Judaism is not open for non Jews. They do not convert.

ANIMISM

Most tribals who have not converted to Hinduism, Islam or Christianity are classified by sociologists as Animists or Nature, worshippers. There are striking similarities, between Animist tribals and followers of Folk Hinduism. Therefore, Indian census authorities have always encountered difficulties. In 1991 census, Animist tribals are classified in the category of 'other Religious Groups' but some other tribals have been classified as Hindus. There is always ambiguity in the classification of Hindu tribals and Animist tribals. There are different types of nature worshippers both among the Hindu as well as the tribals. One thing is common among all Animists that they do not have written texts. They usually believe that every animate object of this world is inhabited by spirits and they venerate all these.

PROBLEMS OF RELIGIOUS MINORITIES

India is a multilingual and a multireligious country. Indian 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. 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%], 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.

Concept of Minority

*The dictionary meaning of the word minority is that it signifies a smaller number in opposition to the other party.

* 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 community 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 to 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.

*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 groups of ethnic, religious, racial or linguistic character are found in several countries of the world; The recent history of these, minority groups reveals that most of these groups are faced with two main types of problems, (i) the problem of prejudice and discrimination; and (ii) the problem of preserving the distinct social cultural life.

1. Problem of Prejudice and Discrimination

Prejudice and discrimination are found in any situation of hostility between racial and ethnic groups and divergent religious communities. The two terms are often used interchangeably in ordinary speech, but in fact, they refer to two different, but related phenomena:

(a) Prejudice refers to a prejudged attitude toward 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.

(b) Discrimination, on the other hand, refers to 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 own group.

The Preamble of the Constitution declares that all people irrespective of their caste, class, colour, creed, sex, region or religion will be provided with equal rights and opportunities. Article 15(1) 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 been 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 crowds; 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 persist in India

2. 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 30 (1) 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 sociocultural 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.

SOME OF THE 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.

1. 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 criticised. For example, (i) the Rajiv Gandhi Government was severely criticised 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. (ii) The Gujarat government was criticised for its inability to provide protection to the Muslim minorities in the [Feb: Mar. 2002] communal violence that burst out. (iii) Similarly, the Government of Kashmir's inefficiency in providing adequate security to the Hindu and Sikh minorities in that state against the atrocities of Muslim extremists is also widely condemned.

2. 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 became wide spread. It becomes a tough task for the government in power to restore the confidence in them. The Delhi [1984] and the Gujarat [2002] episode of communal riots as stated above clearly reveal the situation.

3. 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 not availed themselves of these facilities. There is a feeling among them that they are neglected. However, such a 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.

4. Problem of Separatism: Some of the demands put forward by some the religious communities in some areas are not acceptable to others. This has widened the gap between them and others. Example: The separatist tendency present among some Muslim extremists in Kashmir and their demand for the establishment of Independent Kashmir is not acceptable to others. Such a demand is regarded as antinational. 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.

5. 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 laws and order problems are given religious colours. These parties are always waiting for an opportunity to politicise communal issues and take political advantage out of it. Hence the credibility of these parties in their commitment to secularism is lost. This has created suspicion and felling of insecurity in the minds of minorities.

6. Problem Relating to the Introduction of Common Civil Code: Another major hurdle that we find in between the majority and minority relations is relating to the failure of Governments which have assumed power so far, in the introduction of a common civil code. It is argued that social equality is possible only when a common civil code is enforced throughout the nation. Some communities, particularly the Muslims oppose it. Even though some progressive.

Muslims are in favour of the Common Civil Code, the orthodox Muslims have been opposing it very strongly. Pressure is mounting on the Government to introduce such a uniform code, The Supreme Court itself had issued directives, to the Government to take necessary steps to introduce such a Uniform Civil Code. Some intellectuals have, for example, cautioned that the Government must be very careful in introducing it. Prof. M. Mujeeb has stated: A uniform Civil Code is a good idea, but the necessary integration of different communities should be achieved first through judicial decisions and practical government measures.

The traditional Muslims who are not in favour of this proposal argue that the imposition of common civil code will take away their religious freedom for it is opposed to the Shariat. The Governments which ruled over the country so far have not dared to take the risk of introducing it for fear of losing Muslim votes. Intellectuals like Justice Krishna Iyer too have cautioned the Government to be very careful in taking steps in this direction. Sri Iyer had stated in one context: Hurried remedies, enthusiasts and Chauvinists, will aggravate the malady; for in the socio-political field one wrong step forward is two regrettable steps backward and a policy of principle compromise, not of doctrinaire as sectarian rigidity, moving up in zigzags, may be, is the right approach. The very issue of Common Civil Code has become controversial today. It has further widened the gap between the religious communities.

UNIT C: SOCIAL CHANGE IN INDIA

IAS GURUKUL

VISION OF SOCIAL CHANGE IN INDIA

IDEA OF DEVELOPMENT PLANNING AND MIXED ECONOMY

India embarked on the process of planned, socioeconomic development after independence. The various schemes of development drawn up by the leaders of independent India not only cover economic aspect but not also economic, education, population control political participation etc. Thus we can say that India's emphasis is on socio culture development and not merely on economic development.

The goals of development have been enshrined in the Constitution and various planning documents. Soon after Independence the Constitution laid down that its aim was to build a socialist, secular and democratic polity. This meant a social order which guarantee equality freedom and justice. In order to achieve these goals the government devised institutional mechanism and mobilized both human and material resources to achieve the goal set by the constitution. The planning commission has stated the following regarding the goal of development: To initiate a process of development which will raise living standard and open for the people new opportunity for a richer and more varied life.

It is not possible to list here all the scheme of development. Let us state some of them and see how principles of socialism, equality, social justice and democracy have been incorporated in the development scheme.

1) Socialist Path and Mixed Economy.

India has adopted a path of development which is known as the mixed economy on the one hand India has encouraged private business and industry control and on the other it has almost full control, at least in principle, over all the major entrepreneurial and business activities. The State acts as an entrepreneur in setting up heavy industries such as steel and generation of electricity. Banks have been, national railways and postal services are also a part of the public sector. That the state of India exercises dominant control on keys sector of the economy is indicative of the ideology of socialism. Certain Industries have been reserved for the private sector to encourage individual enterprises. In certain industries like textile and cement both private and state enterprises have been allowed to operate. In many other sectors too like health, education and transport both private and state agencies work either independently or in collaboration.

Some scholars argue that India's path of 'development, in practice has become a capitalist one. They point out that privately managed industries have become attractive and profitable and economic power has come to be concentrated in the hands of a few big private business houses. However, one cannot deny the fact that India is trying hard to pursue a mixed path of development.



2) Rural Development

More than 70% of India's population has been living in village. The developmental plans have devoted a lot of attention to rural development. A number of Programmes like the Community Development programme, Panchayati Raj, Cooperative Institutions and Target group oriented programme have been launched over the past three decades.

Two streams of thought primarily have guided rural development through these decades since independence. One of these was initiated by Gandhi and the other by the government. Gandhi's vision of development was that of self supporting and self reliant village community where every body's need were met. people lived in harmony and cooperation. he wanted the village community to be political autonomy and economically self sufficient. He strongly believed that social equality would prevail in a village community which would be devoid of any form of exploitation his plane was one of moral reconstruction of the social order where development involved every aspects of human life social economic and political. Many of his followers have launched programme in different parts of the country based on .But all his ideas have been not incorporated in the policies and programmes adopted by the governments for rural development, in post-

independent India. Let us briefly describe some of the programme launched by the government.

(a) *Community Development Programme (CD)*: CD programme was the first major effort for rural development. It was conceived as a method through which the five year Plans would initiate a process of transformation of the social and economic life of the village. The emphasis of CD programme was not on material prosperity but on nonMaterial aspects of community life.

The goals laid out were: (a) increase in employment; (b). increase in production through application of scientific methods of agriculture, (c) establishment of subsidiary and cottage industries, (d) promotion .of self help and sel freliance and (e) extension of the principle of cooperation.

CD programme came to be viewed as a social movement with active involvement of the people and aimed at all round development of the country side Operationally, this programme was based on the assumption that the describe change could be ushered into the countryside by providing the necessary infrastructure facilities in the villages. However, the programme could not achieve the desired results due to several factors arising from such sources like governmental structures and a divided rural society based on caste based relation and land relations and hierarchical social organization.

(b) Panchayati Raj:

A committee handed by Balwantray Mehta was appointed in 1957 to assess the impact of community Development Programme The report of the committee pointed out of the goal of CD Programme have not been achieved. It advocated that rural development would be possible only with local initiative and local direction. The committee favoured devolution of power at lower levels So in 1958 Panchayati Raj came into existence in different state with power and duties allocated at different level like the Community Development Programme the scheme too did not achieve its desired result though the scheme was evaluated and revised time and again through the 70 s and the 80s.

d) Cooperative Institution:

Cooperative institutions were set up in the villages as supportive institution of CD programme and Panchayati Raj. The aim of the cooperative Institutions was: a) to provide essential agricultural inputs and credit farmers to ensure adequate return to the farmers for their produce, c) to ensure supply of essential commodities to villager at reasonable rates and d) to promote harmonious relations and a sense of participation among rural people Credit societies, service cooperatives, producer's cooperatives and labour cooperatives came into existence, as the cooperative movement grew. The daily cooperatives specially became a big movement, which resulted in what is popularly known as the white revolution in India. Though the cooperative societies increased in number through the decades, critics observe that the movement has been only a partial success: It has no doubt provided infrastructural facilities credit and essential agriculture inputs to the large and middle 'farmers. But the landless and poorer people have not benefitted by this scheme.

(d) Target Group Planning:

Realizing the inadequacies of the programme launched in the village, the planners redefined the concept of rural development in the Fourth Five Year Plan. The focus was on the rural poor which were defined as the 'target group' for ameliorative measures. The target group include small and marginal farmers, tenants, agricultural workers and the landless some of the programme launched were, Small Earners Development agency Drought Prone Areas Programme (DPAP), Food for work minimum need programme (IVINP) etc. These programmes were directly administered by the central and state governments. The programs thought well intentioned ran into many difficulties. It paved the way for development; it extended the power of bureaucrat and undermined the role of local and popular participation in rural society.

On the whole, while assessing the development of the rural society in India it can be said that on the economic front food production has increase over the year but the green revolution and the while revolution has not helped in reducing the socio economic disparities between regions and group of people. The goal of establishing a social order based on equality and social justice seems still distant.

Planning : Five year plans

So far we have described India's scheme of development; let us now describe the Indian approach to planning.

Social Planning represents an important factor in social change in India. It has been described by some planning in Indian has aimed at drawing the mass of people into a process of relation and deliberate transformation of their social life. The aim of planning has been to bring .social change under purposeful human control.

The Indian Constitution of 1950 defined the purposes of independent India's political system as being to establish social economic and political justice, liberty of thought, expression, belief and worship, equality of status and opportunity and fraternity. The National Planning Commission was set up in. 1950. and was conceived as an important agency for, achieving the purposes. The National Planning Commission was given the task of assessing the natural and manpower resources of the country. It also had to prepare plans for mobilization of these resources for economic development. In fact, the two main aims as outlined by the First Five Year Plan (1951-52 to 1955-56) are to increase productivity (*economic development*) and to reduce inequality of income, wealth and opportunities (*social development*). The first Five year plan ambitiously aimed at achieving, progressively, for all members of the community full employment education, security against sickness and other disabilities and adequate income. Thus through planned development, India aimed to bring about a change in the traditional social structure, so that through education and full employment, it would become possible for the individual to practice of the aim and of each and every Five Year Plans reveals the emphasis on growth equality and social justice.



The ' Second Plan (1956-57 to 1960-61) emphasized the achievement of a socialistic pattern of society The III Plan (1961-62 to 1965-66) aimed at securing a major advance towards self sustaining growth The Fourth Plan (1969-70 to 1973-74) aimed at raising the standard of living of the people through programme which were designed to promote equality and justice Between 1996-69 three Annual Plans were formulated. The Fifth Plan (1974-75 to 1977-78) emphasized the objective to achieving self reliance and adopted measure for raising the consumption standard of people living below the poverty line. The Sixth Plan (1980-81 to 1984-85) evaluating the achievements and shortcoming of the previous plans laid down its foremost object as removal of poverty. The Seventh Plan (1985-86 to 1989-90), emphasised growth in food grain production, employment opportunities, self reliance, and social justice (Govt. of India, 1988).

India has prepared Five Year Plans with a long term perspective. Within framework of the Five Year plan, annual plans have also been prepared and been integrated with the budgetary process. Every Five Year Plan has a midterm appraisal. India has completed nearly five decades of planning. Five 'Plans have been viewed as instruments (a) to evolve a socialist pattern of society (b) to usher in growth with social justice and (c) for removing poverty. Dubashi describes India's approach to planning in the following manner.

- (a) Indian plans are comprehensive and balanced and include both public and private investment. Growth of all sectors of the economy is encouraged.
- (b) The Indian approach can be called as democratic planning as different from totalitarian planning. In democratic planning people regularly and effectively organize and develop their own social life through active participation. In totalitarian planning, people's participation is not encouraged.

(c) India's approach to planning is aimed at setting up a socialistic pattern of society. Both economic and social aspects of development are considered. Though the Plans have not always succeeded in achieving the objectives they have constituted a third way to development, rejecting a total capitalistic and a communist way to development.

(d) India's approach to development has strived to combine the economic technological human and institutional components of development for instance attention has been paid to improvement and upgradation of traditional technology adopted by village and cottage industries. Along with this India Imports high technology from different countries to keep pace with the technological development around the world.

According to Dubashi (87) India's approach 'to planning tries to reconcile planning with democracy and increased production with equitable distribution. India developmental plans encourage establishment of large industry with of cottage industries and introduction of latest technology with Upof gradation traditional technology. The Indian approach to planning emphasizes upholding of human values and pursuit of material advancement.

Critics of India's approach to and strategies of planned development point out that all these development efforts have benefited only a class of people namely the industrial, commercial and financial groups, segments of the rural rich comprising section of landlords and rich peasant and a section of the urban unemployed and under employed also reveals the fact that the development measures have not been able to utilise the vast human resources development measures have not been able to utilise the vast human resources for economical gainful purpose On the whole, critics point out that disparities between different regions and groups have been increasing over the decades (Desai, 84). Fundamental problem relating to land reform modernizing village structures, and controlling population growth remain unsolved in spite of four decades of planned social change. The achievement in industrial production, agriculture and foreign trade have not helped in n objectives of planning namely growth with equality and social justice.

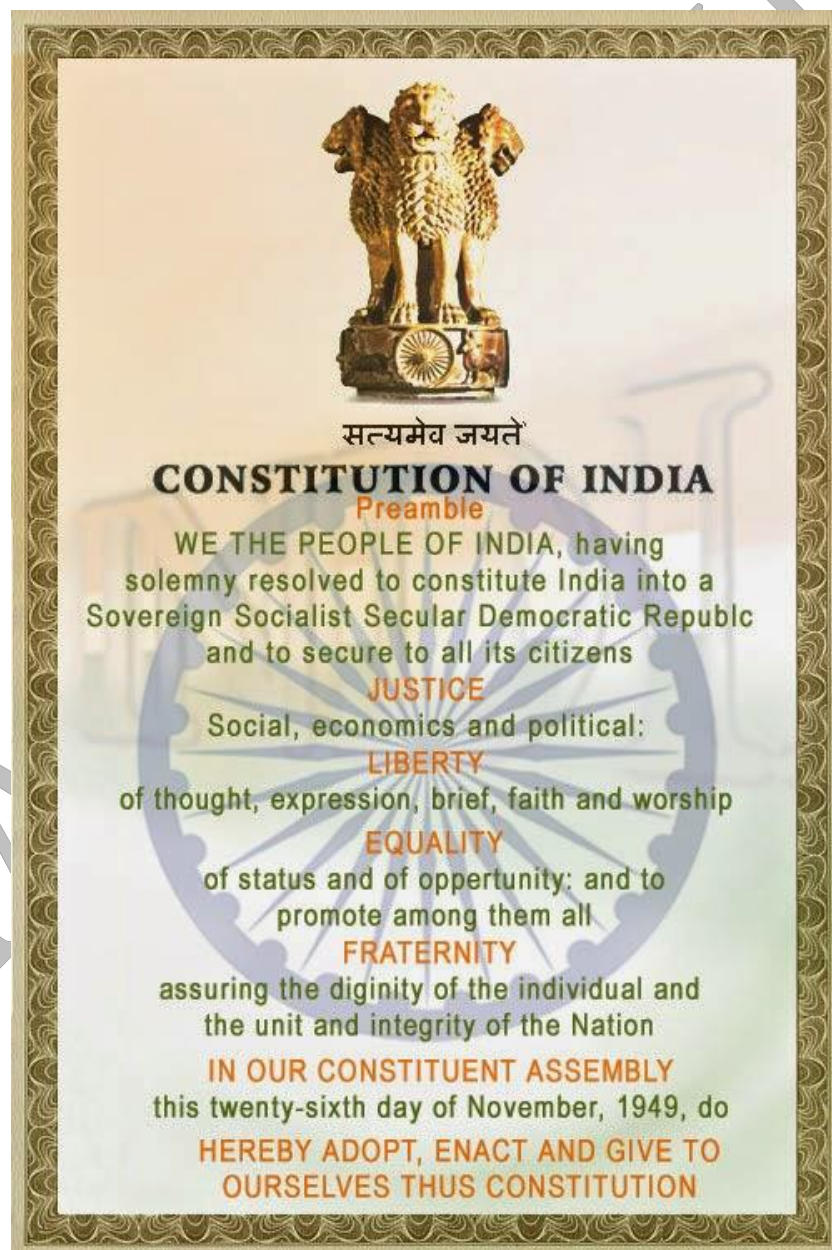
Change in Relation to Caste, Rural society and Women

So far we have said that India has embarked on a path of planned socioeconomic change. Social planning has been an important factor in social change in India since independence. A detailed examination of the process of social change in India' has to include a multitude of interrelated factors apart from planning which have shaped the content rate and direction of change. Historical forces and internal process have to be linked up in a description of social change. For instance colonial rule specially the introduction of British ideas science and technology is an important element. in social change in India. This element has to be linked up with the caste anchored character of Indian society while describing the content rate and direction of change Many who have examined social changed in India have mainly looked, at the changes that have take place in various spheres of life since the British rule in India. Some emphasized the point that colonialism and the struggle for 'independence, on the hand and pluralistic , caste based stratification of Indian society on the other has been a major influence of the ideology and the

strategies, India has adopted relating to planned socioeconomic change since independence.

CONSTITUTION, LAW & SOCIAL CHANGE

India is a Sovereign Socialist Secular Democratic Republic with a parliamentary system of government. The Republic is governed in terms of the Constitution, which was adopted by the Constituent Assembly on 26 November 1949 and came into force on 26 January 1950. The Constitution of India has the distinction of being the lengthiest written constitution in the world. It contains provision not only for the smooth democratic functioning of the governments of the Union and the State but also for ensuring equality and liberty to the citizens.



The Constitution of India is a radical document

There are provisions which provide channels for all around development of the people. In this sense, the Constitution is the prime mover of social change. Some of these constitutional provisions have been discussed here to illustrate the point.

Fundamental Rights

The Constitution of India has provided some basic right to all citizens. These are known as Fundamental Rights. These are fundamental because. These are essential for civilized human existence. In the context of our Constitution. These are called fundamental because these are protected by the written constitution and cannot be altered without amending the Constitution.

There are six. categories of fundamental rights. Article 12 to 35 contained in Part III on the Constitution deal with these rights. These are

(i) Right to equality:

According to this provision the state shall not deny to any person equality before law. it also prohibited the state from discriminating against any individual on ground of religion, race caste, gender or place of birth. it further provide equality of opportunity in matter of public employment. Abolition of untouchability in any form has been specified by Article 17.

(ii) Right of Freedom:

This right consists Freedom of (a) speech and, expression (b) peaceful assembly without arms; (c).forming association: and Unions (d) free movement throughout the territory of India; (e) residence and settlement in any part of the country: and (f) practice of any profession, occupation, or business.

(iii) Right against Exploitation:

It prohibits all forms of forced labour, child labour and traffic in human beings.

(iv) Right to Freedom of Religion:

Every person has the right to profess, practice and propagate any religion. No person is compelled to pay taxes for the management of any particular religion. According to it, no person is allowed to impart religious instructions in state-owned educational institution

(v) Cultural and Educational Rights:

Every section of citizen has the right to conserve its distinct culture, language and script. further are minority whether based on religion or language have the right to established and administer educational institutions of their Choice.

(vi) Right to Constitutional Remedies:

Under the every person have the right to seek justice for the enforcement of Fundamental right.

Directive Principles of State Policy

The Constitution lays down certain Directive Principle of state policy. Like the Fundamental Rights, the ideals behind the principle were rooted in our freedom struggle. Leaders of the freedoms struggle strived not only for political freedom but also for social and economic upliftment of the toiling millions. These Principles, were inserted in the Constitution to provide guideline for the determination of Policy and Actions to be undertaken by the state after the Independence. Articles' 36 to 51 of Part IV of Constitution deal with these principle

The significant aspect of the directive principles is that the State shall strive to promote the welfare of the people by securing and protecting effectively as it may a social order in which justice—social, economic political shall inform all the institutions the national life. Keeping this objective in view the state shall secure (a) adequate mean of live hood for all citizen (b) control and distribution of wealth so as to Sub serve the common good (c) equal pay of equal work (d) health and strength for all from economic avocation and (e) protection of child labour

The state is expected to take steps and secure other social; economic political programmes. Some other programmes include (a) organisation of village panchayats, (b) right to work and to education, (c) uniform civil code for Citizens, (d) provision for free and compulsory education, (e) promotion of educational and economic interests of Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and other weaker Sections and (f) separation of the judiciary from the executive.

It is, however, important to note that there is one basic different between the fundamental Right and the Directive Principles of the State the violation of the former. can be challenged in the court of law. the letter is not enforceable' by any court. In other words, if a citizen's fundamental right are curtailed,' she/he can seek justice from the court. But if the state does not undertake any programme provided for in the Directive principle; she he cannot move the court for his its enforcement. It does not, however means that these directive Principles have. no value. The Constitution clearly states that directive principles are, nevertheless, fundamental in the governance of the country and it shall be the duty of the State to apply these principles in making laws.

Fundamental Duties

The Constitution of India has also enumerated fundamental duties for the citizen s. By the 42nd amendment of the constitution adopted in 1976, Article 51A was inserted in chapter IVA of the constitution. Accordingly it shall be the duty of every citizen of India:

- (a) To abide the constitution
- (b) To cherish and follow the noble ideas which inspired our national struggle for freedom
- (c) To uphold and protect the sovereignty and integrity of the country
- (d) To defend the country and render national services

- (e) To promote harmony and the spirit of common brotherhood amongst all the people of India transcending religious linguistic and regional or sectional diversities to renounce practice derogatory to the dignity of women
- (f) To preserve the rich heritage of our composite culture
- (g) To protect the natural environment
- (h) To develop the scientific temper
- (i) To safeguard public property and to abjure violence; and
- (j) To strive towards. in all sphere's of individual and collective activity.

We have discussed, so far, some of the general provisions in the Constitution of India having implications for social change. The Constitution also makes some special provision. for the deprived and disadvantaged groups of population such as women , children, Scheduled Castes,' Scheduled Tribe Classes and other backward classes and Minorities.

These special provisions essentially emanate from the basis feature of our constitution mention above Let us now examine these special constitutional provisions.

Women

While Article 14 of the Constitutions of India confers equal rights and opportunities for women and the men in political, economic and social spheres, Article 15 prohibits discrimination against any citizen on the grounds of gender. Article 15 (3) empowers the State to make affirmative discrimination in favour of women. Similarly, Article 39 enjoins upon the state to make provision vide equal means of livelihood and equal to pay for equal work. Article 42 directs the State to make provisions for ensuring just and human condition of work and maternity relief. Finally, Article 51 A Imposes a Fundamental Duty on every citizen to renounce the practices d dignity of women.

Children

Realizing that children have neither a voice nor political power, the constitution of India lays down certain special safeguards for them. As in case of women Article 15 (3) empowers state to make special provisions in favor of children Article 24 prohibits employment of children below 14 years of age in any factory or mines or in other hazardous occupations. Furthermore, Articles 45 provides for free and compulsory education for all children up to the age of 14 years

Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and Other Backward Classes

We have already seen how the founding fathers of our Constitution wished to secure social, economic and political equality for all the citizens of the country. However, it was realized that this objective could not be achieved unless persons belonging to special disadvantaged groups were provided special protection to

emancipate them from centuriesold prejudices and exploitation. previous were therefore incorporated in the constitution to promote their economic educational and social development.

It is against this background that the two types of reservation are available to the members of the backward classes under the constitution. They are reservations of seats in the Lok Sabha the Vidhan Sabha and the various Panchayati Raj bodies and (b) reservation in government services while the reservation of seats in the Lok Sabha, the Vidhan Sabha and the Panchayati Raj the bodies are available .to the members of the SCs and STs the Provision of reservation for the OBCs is available to all the three category of people

Moreover under Article 244 (2) special provisions have been made for the tribal areas in the states of Assam Meghalaya, Mizoram and Tripura under the Sixth Schedule of the Constitution

Constitutional Safeguards for the Minorities

Under the constitution of India certain safeguard have been granted to the religious and linguistic minorities Articles 29, and 30 of the Constitution seek to protect the inserts of minorities to conserve their language script or culture. They may establish and administer educational Institutions of their choice.

Article 350 A provides for instructions in the mother tongue at the primary stage of education belonging to linguistic minorities. Article 350B provide for a Special Officer to investigate all matters relating to the safeguards for ling minorities. It is evident from above that provisions of the Indian Constitution are exhaustive and they have helped to design a strong democratic polity under which. equality and justice for all the citizens can be achieved. The Constitution has, thus, created an environment for ushering in an era of effective social change. It has acted not only as a facilitator of change but has also encouraged and promoted economic and social development. Moreover, it has defined and guided the strategy of planning which was adopted and fostered .Subsequently, in the Country. The constitution is the driving force effecting socioeconomic reform in the country through the process of amendment. A large number of constitutional amendments have directed, controlled and regulated almost all activity of the society. The process of social change leading to socioeconomic transformation of the Indian society was accelerated by these enactments. Some of these have influenced the lifestyle of the Indian people.

EDUCATION & SOCIAL CHANGE

In the present century, education has become the principle avenue of opportunity in all developed and developing societies. Realizing that the avenue of opportunity is provided by the, educational system parents have encouraged their children to go further and further in school. Amount of education is a good indicator of socioeconomic status from lower working class up through middle class; for education lead to economic opportunity, it is through education, young people secure higher status jobs than their parents with higher incomes they come to associates with person of higher status and adopt their ways. Thus education provides the channel not only to better socioeconomic status, but also to social mobility in the broader sense.



Education is seen as the key to a better future

As a general statement of the mobility generating role of education, this is true. An Industrial society like the United States or Great Britain places increasing emphasis on the attainment both of the skills acquired in elementary secondary the skill for a given job. The educational system is expected to provide opportunity mobility by selecting and training the most able and industrious youth for higherstatus position in society.

The school system primarily does this job. The principle of gradation of children inschools according to their ability to meet standards allows those who succeed to advance while those who fail to drop out. In this way the educational system distributes the younger generation within the larger society. It places those With the greater ability and training in higher positions and those with the lesser ability and training in lower ones. Thus 'education, in a broad sense, tends to generate vertical social mobility by assisting young people to move up the social scale, by preparing them for a higherstatus occupation than that of their parents, by increasing their earning power, and by giving them more of general knowledge of the past and the present which marks middle class people.

But in real life this mobility generating role of education is counteracted by several factors: wealth, social class, castes, financial and occupational status of the family,

Modern industrial societies, which established mass literacy for the first time to quote Bottomore did not by this means remove the educational distinctions between different social strata. The educational system whether in industrial societies or in developing societies like India tends to create and maintain a broad division between elites and masses between education of intellectual and for manual occupations. Such different within the education system is closed like to the system of social satisfaction. The higher we look up the education ladder the more the social economic effect of parental status and attitudes outweigh the factor of sheer Individual ability in determining the changes of further education and hence to great extent occupational attainment and provide social mobility. Practically everyone realizes that growing up in a low income strata is not conducive to the attainment of a higher social status later. Evidence shows that most lower are disadvantaged before they enter school and are not able to achieve much success through the school or other social institution. The 1972 British Study conducted at Nuffield College (Halsey, 1976) suggests that the effect of education on mobility in recent decades may well have been as much or more in the direction of perpetuating and unfreezing the social class structure. Institutionally, education is the principal agent of achievement. But at the same time, ascriptive forces are at work in the passing of occupational status between generations. There can be little doubt that the educational system now affords nominally greater, chances of upward social mobility for the children of low social status than before. But the nature of the stratification system itself functions so as to curtail the possibility of substantial and long range mobility. In modern capitalist societies the educational system develops, sorts, and selects person to fill the hierarchical positions of modern bureaucratic organizations so as to maintain the capitalist social relations of production. The social relations of the larger society are reproduced in the school in a way that tends to reproduce the class structure later, as the Marxists argue..

In summary, functionalism in the USA, egalitarian reform of opportunity in Europe and human capital theory in economics all these asserted casual linkage between amounts of schooling and the economic advertisement of both individuals and societies. They also implied that with Industrialization the need for technologically educated labour and undermines classes and other ascriptive system of stratification and that educational credentials promote social mobility. However, statistical and field research in numerous society revealed a persistent link between social class origin, and achievement and suggested that only limited social mobility occurred through the gave rise to intense controversy over the determinants of educability of groups disadvantaged by class and ethnic background. Sociologic studies have indicated a wide range of material, cultural and cognitive factor like to depress intellectual development

This mean that the educational system can function both as a route to mobility for some people and a barrier for others, even though some social Scientists speak to the educational system', as being either a force' of meritocracy and egalitarianism or a means by which the existing social structures perpetuate.

RURAL & AGRARIAN TRANSFORMATION IN INDIA

PROGRAMMES OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT, COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME, COOPERATIVES, POVERTY ALLEVIATION SCHEMES

In the beginning of planning in the country the Government did not pay attention to the rural sector and its development. The major thrust for development was laid on agriculture, industry, communication, education, health and allied sectors but later on it was realized that accelerated development can be provided only if governmental effort or effectively supplemented by direct and indirect involvement of people at the grass root level. Accordingly, on 31st March, 1952, an Organization known as Community Projects Administration was set up under the planning Commission to oversee the programme relating to community development. The community development programme inaugurated on October 2, 1952 was a significant milestone in the history of the rural development.



Rural development is a priority item for Indian policy makers

Rural Development was given serious consideration only during the 4th Five Year Plan by adopting Small farmer Development Programme, Drought Prone Area Programme and crash Scheme for Rural Employment etc. In the 5th plan Food for work programme, and Minimum Needs Programme were launched. In Order to remove the unemployment among the rural youth, Training to Rural Youth for self employment (TRYSEM) programme was started in 1979. During the 6th plan, in 1980, the Government started the National Rural Employment Programme (NREP) in place of Crash Plan, Food for Work Plan and Integrated rural Development Programme (IRDP). In 1982, Development of women and children in Rural Areas (DWCRA) programme was launched to provide suitable opportunities of self employment to the women belonging to the rural areas who are living below the poverty line. To remove the rural poverty and unemployment, Government started Rural Landless Employment Guarantee Programme (RLEGP) in 1983.

At the end of the 7th plan in 1989, Government combined NREP and RLEGP to form a more extensive plan called Jawahar Rozgar Yojana. In 1993, District Rural Development Agency (DRDA) was formed to provide financial assistance for rural

development. In March 1999, the Government introduced Annapurna Yojana for providing 10 kg free food grains to eligible old people. During the 9th plan period in April 1999, several antipoverty Programme Self Employment Programme have been revamped by merging the IRDP, DWCRA TRYSEM, the Ganga Kalyan Yojana and the million wells scheme have been restructured into a holistic selfemployment scheme called Swarnajayanti Gram Swarozgar Yojana (SGSY).

After SGSY, various programme were launched fulfill basis requirement of the poor rural people and to develop infrastructure such as Pradhan Mantri Gramodaya Yojana, Antyodaya Yojana , Anna Yojana, Gram Sadak Yojana, Sampurna Gramin Rozgar, and National Food for Work Programme. Panchayati Raj Institutions have been involved in the programme implementation and these institutions form the core of decentralized development of planning and its accomplishment On 25 Dec. 2002, under Drinking Water Sector, a new initiative `Swajaldhara` empowering the Panchayats to formulate, implement and operate Water Projects has been launched. In order to further involve PRI in the development process, a new initiative Hariyali has been launched on 27 January 2003. The empowerment of rural women is crucial for the development of India. Therefore, the programme for poverty alleviation have a women' components to ensure flow of adequate funds to this section.

Major Rural Development Programmes

- National Food for work programme (NFFWP)
- Swarnajayanti Gram Swarozgar Yojana (SGSY)
- Sampurna Gramin Rozgar Yojana (SGRY)
- Rural Employment Generation Programme (REGP)
- Pradhan Mantri Gramodaya Yojana (PMGY)
- Antyodaya Anna Yojana (AAY)
- Prime Minister's Rozgar Yojana (PMRY)
- Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY)
- Indira Awaas Yojana. (IAY)
- Samagra Awaas Yojana (SAY)
- Rural Water Supply Programme (RWSP)
- Accelerated Rural Water Supply Programme (ARWSP)
- Total Sanitation Campaign Programme (TSCP)
- Integrated Wasteland Development Project Scheme (IWDPS)
- National Social Assistance Programme (NASP)
- Drought Prone Areas Programme (DPAP)
- Desert Development Programme (DDP)

1. Swarnajayanti Gram Swarozgar Yojana (SGSY)

Integrated Rural Development programme (IRDP) and allied programme such as Training of Rural Youth for self Employment (TRYSEM), Development of Women and Children in rural area of (DWCRA), Million Wells Scheme (MSW), Supply of Improved tool kit to rural Artisans (SITRA), and Ganga Kalyan Yojana have been restricted into a Self employment programme called ' the Swarnajayanti Gram Swarozgar Yojana (SGSY) from April 1, 1999. The scheme of SGSY cover all aspects

of self employment such as organization of the poor into self help training, credit, technology, infrastructure and Marketing.

The objective of the Swarnajayanti Gram Swarozgar Yojana (SGSY) is to bring the assisted poor families (Swarozgaries) above the Poverty Line by ensuring applicable sustained level of income over a period of time. This object is to be achieved by inter alia organizing the rural poor into Self Help through the process of social mobilization, the r training and capacity building and provision of income generating assets. The SHG approach helps the poor to build their selfconfidence through community action. An interaction in group meetings and collective decision making enables. them in Identification and prioritization of their needs and resources. This process would ultimately lead to the strengthening and socioeconomic empowerment of the rural poor as well as improve their collective bargaining power.

Salient Features of SGSY

- This is a comprehensive scheme for self employment of rural poor with the beneficiaries called as swarozgaries
- Basically this scheme is group oriented with 75% of allocation earmarked for Self Help Groups.
- 25% can be provided for individual swarozgaries.
- The members of the Self Help Group should be form below poverty line as approved by the Gram Sabha
- Expenditure can be incurred on Group formation revolving fund, Training and Subsidy for activity undertake
- 20% of allocation earmarked for creating marketing infrastructure
- As a Self Help Group, Subsidy is provided up to 50% of the project cost or Rs 1.25 lakhs whichever is less.
- As an Individual Swarozgary Subsidy is restricted to 30% of the project Cost or Rs 7,500/ whichever is less for Non SC / ST and Rs 1000/ or 50% of the Project cost which ever in less for SC / ST Swarozgary
- The minimum size of the self help Group should be 10 and maximum 20 members.
- For irrigation Activity there is no monetary ceiling of Rs. 1.25 lakhs on Subsidy.

Development of women and children in Rural Area (DWCRA)

(DWCRA) was started in September 1982 in the form of subplan of Integrated Rural Development Programme. Since April 1, 1999 DWCRA has been merged with newly introduced scheme namely Swarna Jayanti Gram Swarozgar Yojana. the main objective of this programme was to provide proper selfemployment opportunities to the women of those rural families who are living below the poverty line.

Integrated Rural Development Programme (IRDP)

IRDP launched on 2 October, 1980. Since April 1, 1999 IRDP has been. merged with Swarna Jayanti Gram Swarozgar Yojana The main aim of this programme was to make the rural poor families economically independent.

Supply of Improved Tool Kits to Rural Artisans (SITRA)

SITRA started on July 1, 1992. The main objective of this scheme was to make the rural artisans technically capable of improving the quality of their products and increasing their production and income with the help of modern tools. Since April 1, 1999 SITRA has been merged with Swarna Jayanti Gram Swarozgar Yojana.

Training to Rural Youth for Self Employment (TRYSEM)

TRYSEM Started on 15 August, 1979 as an integral part of IRDP main objective of this scheme was to provide technical and business expert to poor rural youths so that they may become self employed. This scheme is not in existence at present because it has been merged with Swarna Jayanti Gram Swarozgar Yojana

Million Wells Scheme (MWS)

During 1988-89; to provide MWS was started as sub plan of NREP / RLEGP in order to provide open irrigation wells free of cost to the poor belonging to the SC/ST, in marginal and small farmers and to freed bonded labours. Since April 1, 1999. this scheme has been merged with Swarna Jayanti Gram Swarozgar Yojana.

Ganga Kalyan Yojana (GKY)

This Yojana was started from Feb 1, 1997 in all the districts of the country with an objective to assist the farmers by means of subsidy, maintenance support and loan related arrangement undertaking minor irrigation schemes covering both surface and ground water. Since April 1, 1999 GKY has been merged with Swarna Jayanti Gram Swarozgar Yojana.

Sampoorna Gramin Rozgar Yojana (SGRY)

The ongoing schemes the Employment Assurance Scheme (EAS) and the Jawahar Gram Samridhi Yojana (JGSY) were Merged into the Sampoorna Gramin Rozgar Yojana (SGRY) on September 25, 2001. The objective of the programme is to provide additional wage employment in rural areas and also to provide food security, along side creation of durable community, social and economic assets and infrastructure development in these areas.

The scheme has an annual outlay of Rs 10,000 crore including food grains component of Rs. 5,000 the scheme envisages providing 100 crore man days of wage employment every year. This centrally sponsored scheme is implemented on a cost sharing basis between the centre and the state in the ratio of 75:25. In case of Union Territories 100% expenditure is met by the centre

Jawahar Rozgar Yojana. (JRY) JRY was started on April 1, 1989 as a broad rural employment programme by dissolving the National Rural Employment Programme (NREP) the rural landless Employment Guarantee Programme (RLEGP)

Jawahar Gram Samridhi Yojana (JGSY)

JGSY was launched on April 1, 1999 to ensure development of rural infrastructure at the village level by restructuring the erstwhile JRY. at present this scheme is merged with Sampoorna Gramin Yojana wet September 25, 2001.



Generating employment in villages is essential for rural development

Employment Assurance Scheme (EAS)

This scheme was started on 2nd Oct., 1993 as an employment providing scheme. At present this scheme is not in existence it is merged in Sampoorna Gramin Yojana Since September 25, 2001

3. National food for work Programme (NFFWP)

National Food for work Programme (NFFWP) is a unique attempt initiated by the central government to provide an impetus to the development of 150 most backward district of India. This programme was launched on November 14, 2004 Sustainable resources in the form of cash and food grains are to be provided under the program to generate additional, supplementary wage employment and to create productive assets in these 150 identified districts. The programme is open to all rural poor who are in need of wage employment and desire to do manual unskilled work. It is implemented as a 100 percent centrally sponsored scheme and the food grains are provided to states free of cost. Even though it is a 100 per cent centrally sponsored scheme, the states would have to bear transportation cost, handling charges and taxes on grains.

The focus of the programme is on works relating to water conservation drought proofing (including afforestation / tree plantation) and land development Flood control/protection (including drainage in water logged area) rural connectivity in terms of all weather roads and any of other similar activity for economic sustainability, keeping in view the area specific problem can be included provided the principal focus of the programme on water conservation and drought proofing is Maintained.

4. Rural Employment Generation Programme (REGP)

REGP, launched in 1995 with the objective of creating self employment opportunities in the rural areas and small town is being implemented by the Khadi and Village' Industries Commission . Under REGP, entrepreneurs can establish village industries by availing of margin money assistance from the KVIC and bank loans, for project with a maximum cost of Rs 25 lakh. Since the inception of REGP, up to 1, 86,252 projects have been financed and 22.75 lakh job Opportunities created. A target of creating 25 lakh new jobs has been set for the REGP Tenth Plan. 8.32 lakh employment opportunities have already been created during 200304. For 200405, a target of creating 5.25 Lakh Job Opportunities has been fixed.

5. Pradhan Mantri Gramodaya Yojana (PMGY)

This Scheme has been introduced from 200001 and under this scheme Additional Central Assistance (ACA) is provided to State Governments and UTs for providing basic minimum services in villages such as primary health, primary education rural shelter, rural drinking water supply, nutrition and rural electrification. The target group and other criteria are the same as applicable under IAY Government of India provides entire funds under the scheme.

National Programme on Improved Chulah

The National Programme on Improved Chulah is a fully centrally sponsored Programme with the main objective, to prevent deforestation of minor forest produce for use in cooking, to eliminate hazard related to health and hygiene of women folk and to reduce drudgery in collection of fuel materials and in cooking. This scheme is implement through district administration. Village wise approach has been suggested for implementation i.e. instead of spreading out the allocation among all villages saturating needy villages to its irrespective of numbers has been envisaged.

6. Antyodaya Anna Yojana (AAY)

AAY started on December 2000 provides food grains at a highly subsidized rate of Rs 2.00 per kg for wheat and RS 3.00 per kg for rice to the poor family under the Targeted Public Distribution System. The scale of Issue which was initially 25 kg per family Per month, was increased to 35 kg. per family per month from April 1,2002. The scheme initially for one crore families was expanded in June 2003 by adding another 50 lakh BPL Families During 2003,04 under the AAY, against an allocation of 45.56 lakh tones of food grains 41.65 tonnes were lifted by the State/UT government Budget 200405 expended the scheme further from August 1, 2004 by adding another 50 lakh BPL Families With this increase, 2 crore families have been covered under the AAY.

7 Prime Minister Rozgar Yojana (PMRY)

PMRY started in 1993 with the objective of making available self employment opportunity to the educated unemployed youth by assisting them in setting up an economically viable activity so far about 20 lakh unit have been set up under the

PMRY 30.4 lakh additional employment opportunities. The targets for additional employment opportunities under the Tenth Plan and in 2004 05 are 16.50 lakh, and 3.75 lakh respectively. While the REGP is implemented in the rural area and small towns for setting up village industries without any cap on income educational qualification or age of the beneficiary PMRY is meant for educated unemployed youth with family income of up to Rs 40000 per annum, in both urban and rural areas, for engaging in any economically viable activity.

8. Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY)

Keeping in view the fact that Rural Roads are vital to economic growth and measures for poverty alleviation in the villages, Government have launched a 100% Centrally Sponsored Scheme called the Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY) On/December 25, 2000. The Programme seeks to provide connectivity to all unconnected habitations in the rural areas with a population of more than 500 person through good Allweather roads by the Tenth Plan of Period (2007) in respect of the hill states (North east, Sikkim, Himachal, Pradesh) and the desert area. as well as the Tribal areas, the objective would be to connect habitation with a population of 250 persons and above.



Many Indian villages have improved road connectivity today

The PMGSY will permit the Up gradation of the existing road in those Districts Where all the Habitations of the designated population size have been provided all weather road connectivity however it must be noted that Up gradation is not central to the Programme and cannot exceed 20% of the State's allocation where Unconnected habitation in the state still exists in Up gradation works, priority should be given to conversion of fair weather road to all weather road in the core network

9. Indira Awaas Yojana

Housing is one of the basic requirements for human survival. Therefore, construction of house's was included as One of the major activities under the National Rural Employment programme which begun in 1980. Rural Landless Employment Guarantee Programme (RLEGP) begun in 1983. Indira Awaas Yojana (I AY) was launched during 1985-1986 as a sub scheme of RLEGP and thereafter it continued as a sub scheme of Jawahar Rozgar Yojana. From 1st January 1986 IAY was delinked from 'JRY and 'made an independent scheme. The Government of India in 1998, announced a National Housing and Habitat policy which aim at providing Housing for all and facilitating the construction of 20 Lakh additional housing units (13 lakh in rural areas and 7 in urban areas) with emphasis on standing benefit to the poor and the deprived. The intention is to reduce shelterlessness and ensure the conversion of all unserviceable kachcha houses pucca houses by the end of 11th plan period. The Action plan is being implemented through various programmes such as Indira Awaas Yojana (I AY), Credit cum Subsidy Scheme for Rural Housing, Innovative Scheme for rural Housing and Habitat Development, Rural Building Centres, Equity Contribution. by Ministry of Rural Development to HUDCO and National Mission for Rural housing and Habitat. The main features of this scheme are

1. A minimum of 60% of funds are to be utilized for construction of houses for the SC/ST people.
2. 3% of funds are reserved for the disabled persons living below the poverty line in rural areas.
3. The allocation of the house is done in the name of the female member of the benefited family or in the joint names of husband and wife
4. Sanitary latrine and smokeless chulhas are Integral to an IAY house
5. Assistance for constructions of new houses is provided at the rate of Rs 20,000 and Rs. 22,000 per unit' in the plains and hilly areas respectively
6. Main beneficiaries of the scheme are poorest people SC/ST non SC/ST living below poverty line, widow kin of defense personal killed in action etc.

Rural Landless Employment Programme (RLEGP)

This Programme was started in the rural areas on 15th August, 1983, with the aim of creating employment constructing the productive 'projects and improving the rural life But due to the lack of resources the guarantee part of this programme could not be implemented. Out of the total amount of expenditure 10% had been planned for SC/ST. Under this programme, the funds for social forestry India Awas Yojana and Million Wells Scheme were also allocated. Since e 1989-90 this programme was merged with Jawahar Rozgar Yojana.

Credit Cum Subsidy Scheme for Rural Housing

The Credit cum Subsidy scheme for rural housing has been conceived for rural households having annual income up to Rs: 32,000/. However preference will be given to rural households who are below poverty line. The objective is to enable/facilitate construction of houses for all rural households who have some repayment capacity. The scheme has been launched with effect from 1 April, 1999. Funds are shared by the Centre and State in the ratio of '75:25. The Implementing Agency for the Credit Cum Subsidy Scheme for Rural Housing may be the State Housing Board, State Housing Corporation, specified Scheduled Commercial Bank, Housing Finance Institution or the DRDA/ZP.

Rural Building Centres

A Scheme facilitating the setting up of a network of Rural Building centre (RBCs) through the length and breadth of the rural areas has been launched by the Ministry of Rural Development from 1st April, 1999. The scheme represents the spirit of the enabling strategy by which access to appropriate technologies and capacity building at the grassroots level is achieved for affordable housing. A Rural Building Centre can be setup by the State Government rural development agencies, credible NGOs, private entrepreneur's professional associations, autonomous institutions and corporate bodies including public sector agencies. Selection of agencies, individual's etc. found eligible to set up a Rural Building centre shall be done. by the Ministry of rural development. The primary objectives of the setting up the rural building centre are as follows:

- Technology, transfer and information dissemination
- Skill up gradation through trading
- Production of cost effective and environment friendly material materials components

In other words, a Building centre will be involved in transfer of technology from 'lab to land' production of cost effective building materials for sale and providing training

Rajiv Gandhi National Drinking Water Mission

Water quality in the rural Drinking water supply has emerged as a major issue. There was no proper emphasis on water quality till the end of the 6th Five Year plan and even in the Seventh Plan before launching the National Drinking water Mission 1986, which has been reamed as the Rajiv Gandhi National Drinking water Mission (RGNDWM). The primary objectives of the National Drinking water Mission was to improve the performance and cost effectiveness of the ongoing programmes in the field of rural drinking water supply and to ensure the availability of an adequate quantity of drinking water of acceptable quality on a long term basis. The primary objectives of the Mission included monitoring the quality of water after identification of problem's, tackling the same by the application of science and technology to ensure that the water available is of acceptable quality and ensure that the quantity and quality of water is sustainable on a long term basis by proper water management Technique and implementations of management information system. The secondary objectives of the Mission included survey of various kinds of water sources prevention of pollution of

drinking water; and educating the public of conservation of the quantity and quality of water through awareness campaign community participation and health education programmes.



Appropriate rural housing ensures shelter, sanitation and drinking water

Samagra Awaas Yojana (SAY)

Samagra Awaas Yojana is a comprehensive housing scheme launched in 1999/2000 with a view to ensuring integrated provision of Shelter, sanitation and drinking water. The basic objective of Samagra Awaas Yojana is to improve the quality of life of the people as well as overall habitats in the rural areas. The scheme specifically aims at providing activities that were till now separately run facilities and drinking water and ensure their suitable and sustainable induction of technology and innovative ideas. The Scheme in due course is proposed to be implemented in rural areas all over the country. However in the first phase the scheme is to be implemented in one block each of 25 districts in 24 states and one union Territory these block and district will be selected in consultation with the state government out of the 58 district earmarked for institutionalizing participation in rural water supply and sanitation. Intended beneficiaries under the scheme are the rural poor preferable those below the poverty line.

Salient Features of Samagra Awaas Yojana

To strengthen present rural housing schemes in target blocks and wherever possible in consultation with the State Governments and district administrations, higher allocation for these schemes will be provided. For encouraging cost effective and environmental friendly building materials, technologies designs etc., it is proposed to set up one Rural Building Centre in each of the selected blocks.

- With a view to improving the housing stock and availability of housing finance, Credit cum Subsidy. Scheme of the Ministry of Rural Development, Golden Jubilee Rural Housing Scheme of National Housing Bank rural housing

Schemes of HUDCO and State Rural Housing implemented on priority basis with regular Monitoring.

- Rajiv Gandhi National Drinking Water Mission has already selected these districts for accelerated provision of water supply and facilities with the peoples' participation
- Rajiv Gandhi National Drinking Water Mission has proposed to set up sanitary marts in these districts and this will convergence of drinking water and programmers
- Funds available under Jawahar Gram Samridhi Yojana and EAS will be dovetailed to ensure development of road draining etc. in an accelerated manner.
- For environmental improvement it is proposed to tap the existing resources of Departments of forest and horticulture of the state government for afforestation and popularization of kitchen gardens.
- It is proposed to specially encourage the use of biogas and solar energy in these selected blocks with the existing Schemes of Department of Non Conventional Energy resources.
- Special Training Programmers for the skill upgradation for the sector professionals through the organization like NIRD HUDCO etc. are proposed to be organized

Rural Water Supply Programme (RWSP).

Over the decades, Government of India has allocated massive, financial and technical inputs to rural water supply (RWS) and sanitation programmers, and has achieved considerable success in meeting the needs of the rural population. Yet, the results have not been commensurate with the huge investments made in this sector. As a result, water scarcity still persists. Despite good strides, improvement in RWS lagged behind. The Government has realized that increased investments are not enough as projects are failing to sustain themselves. People are not aware of the technology aspects or given the choice between different technologies they do not even know the details of expenditure on the project.

In order to face these challenges, Government started Sector reform project on pilot basis and have been scaled up throughout the country in the form of Swajaldhara.

Swajaldhara

Reforms in the rural drinking water sector were adopted in 1999 through sector Reform Project (SRP) on pilot basis and have been scaled up throughout the country in the form of Swajaldhara launched on 25 Dec. 2002. The fundamental reform principles in Swajaldhara are adhered to by the state Governments and the implementing agencies in term of adoption of a demand responsive approach with community participation it is based on empowerment of villagers to ensure their full participation in the project through a decision making role in the choice implementation, control of finance, management arrangement including full ownership of drinking water assets.



Water is the elixir of life

Accelerated Rural Water Supply Programme (ARWSP)

The Accelerated Rural water supply Programme (ARWSP) was introduced in 1972/73 by the government of India to assist the States and Union Territories (UTs) to accelerate the pace of coverage of drinking water supply. The entire programme was given a mission approach with the launch of the Technology Mission on Drinking water and related water Management in 1986. Later in 1999 department of Drinking Water Supply was formed to give more emphasis on rural water Supply programme. The National Agenda of Governance has set an objective to achieve universal coverage of all rural villages with drinking water supply by March 2004. To attain this objective, allocation under Accelerated Rural Water Supply Programme (ARWSP) has increased substantially from Rs 1,715 crore in 1999/2000 to 2,900 crore in the year 2004/05.

Haryali

Haryali is a nationwide Watershed Development Programme. By villagers, can take up many small works to conserve water for drinking fisheries and afforestation Which, to him, would not only add rural landscape but also create new employment opportunities programme is to be implemented by Panchayati Raj. Institution (PRIs) which is a part of a new trend under which the center is giving Panchayats the responsibility for implementation of scheme.

The launch of Haryali further affirms that participatory watershed development through the PRIs is now an accepted national strategy. However an agreed common approach to it remains to be worked out Watershed Programme today are being carried out by different Union Minister with different approaches and differing Institutional mechanisms

Sub Mission Project for safe water to rural India

For fulfilling the mission's objective of providing safe water to rural India exclusive Sub Mission were constituted for initiating both preventive and remedial measure

for water quality problems for ensuring safe drinking water to quality affected habitations. The government of India supported all quality based Sub mission project to extent of 75% of the cost leaving the balance 25% to be borne by the state Governments. A number of projects were sanctioned from the mission between 1992-93 and 1994-1998. The following SubMission were initiated

(i) Eradication of Guinea worm

Guinea worm is a waterborne disease caused by dracunculiasis medinensis. Efforts to control this disease were started in early eighties. India has been certificated as free from Guinea worm disease in the meeting of International commission for certification of Drancunclasis (ICCDE) held at World Health Organization, Geneva, during 15th 1 '7th February, 2000.

(ii) Control of Brackishness

Excess brackishness causes the problem of taste and has laxative. effects. Control measures include either providing alternate sources free from brackishness or supply of water with total dissolved solids within permissible limit of 1500 ppm (parts per million) by treating brackish water with the help of treatment processes like reverse osmosis, electro dialysis etc.

(iii) Removal of Excess Iron

Excess iron in the drinking water is prevalent in. the North Eastern state Consumption of water with excess iron causes constipation accompanied of by other physiological disorders. Control' measures include providing alternate sources free form iron or treating iron contaminated water to within permissible limit 1ppm With the help of iron removal plants

(iv) Control of Fluorosis

Excess fluoride in drinking water causes dental and skeletal Fluorosis. The problem is prevalent in 150 district of 17 state of country. Control measures include providing alternate sources free form fluoride or treating fluoride contaminated water (to within permissible limit 1.5ppm) with the help of treatment process such as nalgonda technique or activated aluminium process.

(v) Control of Arsenic

Contamination of ground water with Arsenic was first noticed in 8 district of West Bengal. in the early 80s. The first attempt to tackle the problem was made by the Govt. of India in 1988 by sanctioning an investigation Project Thereafter the Government of India has sanctioned several R & D Project as well as field oriented projects in the arsenic affected areas. Among the various techniques in vogue for removal of arsenic, two methods, viz.

(i) Coprecipitation technique and (ii) Absorption technique, are the most common with effect from 1.4.1998, powers have been delegated 'to the States t plan, sanction and implement SubMission Projects. No separate allocations are made to the States for this purpose.

Total Sanitation Campaign Programme

Total Sanitation Campaign is a comprehensive programme to ensure sanitation facilities in rural areas with broader goal to eradicate the practice of open defecation. TSC as a part of reform principles was initiated in 1999 when Central Rural Sanitation Programme was restructured making it demand driven and people centered. It follows a principle of low to no subsidy in where a nominal subsidy in the form of incentive is given to rural poor household for construction of toilets. TSC gives strong emphasis on Information Education and Communication (IEC), Capacity Building and Hygiene Education for effective behavior change with involvement of PRIs, CBO and NGO etc. The key intervention areas are Individual household latrines (IHL) School Sanitation and Hygiene Education. (SSHE), Community Sanitary Complex Anganwadi toilets supported by Rural Sanitary Marts and Production centre (PCs) The main goal of the GOI is to eradicate the practice open definition by 2010. To give fillip to this endeavour, GOI has launched Nirmal Gram Puraskar to recognize the efforts: in terms of cash award for fully covered PRIs and those individuals and institutions who have contributed significantly in ensuring full sanitation coverage in their area of operation. The Project is Being Implemented in rural areas taking district as a unit implementation.

Integrated Wasteland Development Project Scheme

Development of wasteland mainly in non forest area aimed at checking land degradation putting such wastelands of the country to sustainable use & increasing bio mass availability especially that the fuel wood, fodder, fruits, fibre & small timber Government of India is taking up this colossal task through its integrated wasteland development project scheme (IWDP) by revitalizing & reviving village level institutions & enlisting people's participation. It is people's own programme which aims at giving them actual decision making powers in implementation & fund disbursement.

The basic objective of this scheme is an integrated wastelands development based on village/micro watershed plans these plans are prepared after taking into consideration the land capability, site condition and local needs of the people.

The scheme also aims at rural employment besides enhancing the contents of people's participation in the wastelands development programmers at all stages, which is ensured by providing modalities for equitable and sustainable sharing of benefits and usufructs arising from such projects. The major activities taken up under the scheme are:

- In situ soil and moisture conservation measures.
- Planting and sowing of multipurpose trees; shrubs, grasses legumes
- Pasture land development.
- Encouraging natural regeneration
- Promotion of agroforestry & horticulture
- Wood substitution and fuel wood conservation measures
- Awareness raising, training & extension

- Encouraging people's participation through community organization and Capacity building.
- Drainage Line treatment by vegetative and engineers structures.
- Afforestation of degraded forest and non forest wasteland
- Development of small water Harvesting Structure

Watershed Development

Watershed Development refer to the conservation, regeneration and t regeneration and the use of all resources natural (like land; water plants, animals) and human within the watershed area Watershed Management tries to bring about the post possible balance in the environment between natural resources on the one side and man and animals on the other. Since it is the man. which is primarily only be possible by promoting awakening and participation among the people who inhabit the watershed

National Social Assistance Programme (NSAP)

The National. Social Assistance Programme (NSAP) comprises three separate schemes, namely, National Old Age Pension Scheme (NOAPS), National Family Benefit Scheme (NFBS) and National Maternity Benefit Scheme (NMBS). The programme introduces a National policy for social security assistance to the poor families. The NSAP is a Centrally Sponsored. Programme to extend 100 per cent Central assistance to the. States/UTs to provide the benefits under it in accordance with the norms and guidelines laid down by the Central Government. In providing social assistance benefits to poor households in the case of old the age death of the breadwinner and maternity, the NSAP aims at ensuring minimum national standards, in addition to the benefits that the state are currently providing or might provide in future. The intention in providing 100 per cent Central assistance is, to ensure that social protection to the beneficiaries everywhere in the country is uniformly without interruption.

National Old Age Pension Scheme (NOAP): Under National Old age Pension Scheme, Central Assistance is available on fulfillment of the following criteria:

- (i) The age of the applicant (male or female) should be 65 years or more.
- (ii) The applicant must be a destitute in the sense that he she has no regular means of subsistence from his/her own source of income or through financial support from daily member or other sources.

The amount of old age pension is Rs 75 per month. This scheme is implemented in the state and union Territories through Panchayats Municipalities.

National Family Benefit Scheme (NFBS):

NFBS is for households below the poverty' line on the death of the primary' breadwinner. The primary breadwinner has been member of the family whose earnings contribute substantially to the total household income. The amount of assistance is Rs 10000/,

National Maternity benefit Scheme (NMBS): NMBS is for pregnant households living below the poverty line upto the first two live births. A lump sum cash assistance of Rs 500 to the pregnant woman of the household living below the poverty line is given provided she is 19 years of age or above.

Annapurna

Annapurna Yojana was initiated by the Government of India of 19th March, 1999. Initially this scheme provides 10 kg food grains to senior citizens who were eligible for old age pension but could not get it due to one reason or the other. Later this scheme has also been extended to cover those people who get old age pensions.

Drought Prone Areas Programme (DPAP)

DPAP was launched in 1973/74 to tackle the special problem faced by those areas constantly affected by severe drought conditions. Based on the recommendations of the Hanumantha Rao Committee (1994); the programme has been under implementation on a watershed basis since 1995. The responsibility for planning, executing and maintaining the watershed projects is entrusted to local peoples' Organisation specially constituted for the purpose.

Objectives

- To minimize the adverse effect of draught on the production of crops, livestock and productivity, of land water and human resources for drought proofing of the affected area.
- To promote the overall economic development and improve the socio economic condition of the resources poor and disadvantaged sections inhabiting the programme area.
- To take up development work by watershed approach for land development water resources development and a forestation pasture development.

Coverage

Personality 746 million hectares of area spread in 972 blocks of 182 districts in 16 states. The most recent identification of DPAP Blocks was made by the Hanumantha Rao Committee in 1994/95 adopting scientific criteria based on 'Moisture Index Rainfall and Evapotranspiration'.

Desert Development Programme (DDP)

On the recommendations of the National Commission on Agriculture, in its Interim Report (1974), and the Final Report (1976), the Desert Development Programme (DDP) was started in the year 1977/78. The programme was started both in the hotdesert areas of Rajasthan, Gujarat and Haryana, and the colddesert areas of Jammu & Kashmir and Himachal Pradesh. From 1995/96, the coverage has been extended to a few districts in Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka. The programme is being implemented through Watershed Approach under the Guidelines for Watershed Development w.e.f. 1.4.95.

Objectives

- To mitigate the adverse effects of desertification and adverse climatic conditions on crops, human and livestock population combating desertification.
- The restore ecological balance by harnessing conserving and developing natural resources i.e. land, water, vegetative cover and rising land productivity.
- To implement developmental works through the watershed approach for land development water recourses development and Afforestation / Pasture Development

National Rural Health Mission (NRHM)

The mission was launched on April 12, 2005 in order to meet the key objectives of National Population Policy 2000 and to provide the common man with adequate health care facility the key goal of the mission are reduction of infant mortality rate material morality rate prevention and control of diseases etc.



Logo of NRHM

The Mission adopts a synergistic approach by relating health to determinants of good health viz segments of nutrition's sanitation, hygiene and safe drinking water. It also aims at mainstreaming the Indian system of medicine to facilitate health care the plan of action includes increasing public expenditure on health, reducing regional imbalance in health infrastructure, pooling resources, of integration organisational structures, optimization of health manpower decentralization and district management of health programme community participation and ownership of assets, induction of management and financial personnel into district health System, and operationalising community health centres into functional hospitals, meeting Indian Public Health Standards in each Block of the Country The NRHM seeks to provide effective healthcare to rural population throughout the country with special focus on 18 states which have weak public healthin Indicators and/or weak infrastructure These 18 states are Uttar' Pradesh, Uttaranchal,. Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Orissa, Rajasthan, Himachal Pradesh,. Jammu and Kashmir, Assam Arunachal Pradesh, Manipur, Meghalaya, Nagaland, Mizoram, Sikkim and Tripura.

It has as its key components provision of a female health activities in village; a village health plan prepared through a local team headed by the health & Sanitation Committee of the Panchayat; strengthen in of the rural hospital for effective curative care and made measurable and accountable to the community through Indian Public Health Standards (IPHS); an & Family Welfare Programmers and Funds for infrastructure and strengthening delivery of primary health care. Every Village large habitat will have a female Accredited Social health Activist (ASHA) chosen by and accountable to the. Panchayat act as the interface between the community and the public health system.

The States will be free to choose state specific models As part of the measure to strengthen sub centers each sub centers will have an United Fund for account of the local action @ Rs 10, 000 premium This fund will be deposited in a joint Bank. account of the ANM & Sarpanch and operated by the ANM, in consolation with the Village Health Committee there will be supply to essential drugs both allopathic and AYUSH to the Sub Centers. The Government has provided the mission with a budget of Rs. 6510 Crores. The Mission will have a steering group chaired by the prime minister and will be located in the Ministry of Health and Family welfare Minister of related minister . The Deputy Chairman of the planning commission and public health activities from civil society will be member of the mission.

Rural Electrification Programme

The Rural Electrification Corporation (REC) is the nodal agency implementing the programme consisting of rural electrification. REC was established in July 1969. By now, more than 85% of the 580,000 villages in the country are reported to have been electrified. However, the rural electrification programme places emphasis mainly on the agricultural sector as a result of which only 31 % of rural household have electricity compared to 76% of urban households. One of the major reasons for this is the unaffordability for a majority of the people. In order to deal with the cost constraints, various State electricity Boards (SEBs) have launched Kutir Jyoti schemes in which single point (one bulb) connections are provided to economically weaker household.

Remote Village Electrification: The Ministry of Non Conventional Energy Sources is implementing a programme since 200102 for electrification of remote villages through renewable energy means more than 24,500/ villagers hamlets were tentatively identified for this purpose As on 31 March 2004, 15663 remote villages and 316 remote hamlets were electrified the project are implemented through various Governmental as well as Non Governmental organizations.

Area based rural energy programme Apart from the technology based programme the government has also been promoting some area based programme (IREP) which was earlier implemented by the Planning Commission but subsequently transfer to the ministry of Nonconventional Energy source envisages energy planning at the block level, and 860 blocks have already been covered by March 1998. The other major programme is the Urjagram, run by the MNES which aims to make individual village self sufficient in their energy needs by using a combination of renewable energy technology. So far 241 Urjagrams have been

created with another 171 nearing completion. In addition more than 1400 large sized community biogas plants have been set up cater to cluster of families at the village level.



Electricity benefits all sections of rural society and speeds up development

Kutir Jyoti Scheme

This Programme started in 1988 for improving the living standards of the scheduled caste and tribal families, including the rural families who live below the poverty line. Under this programme a government assistance of Rs 400 is provided to the below poverty line families for providing single point electricity connection in their houses. Under Kutir Jyoti Scheme over 48.5 lakh single point connections were released at a cost of about Rs 317 crore to the rural households of families below poverty line by March 2002.

Info Village project

Info Village project, which started in 1998 in Pondicherry Connect 10 villages through a hybrid wired and wireless network consisting of PCs, very high frequency (VHF) duplex radio devices, and related equipment of facilitate both voice and data transfer. The project creates content for villagers to obtain the information they could use to make improvement in their living Conditions The Info Village concept, which is funded by organization Development Research Centre and the Canadian International Development Agency, is the brainchild of M S Swaminathan, Chairman, MSSRF. In his words The entire project is based on a pro poor pro women and pro nature orientation to development, and community ownership of technological tools as distinct from personal or family ownership. The project which has won two International awards, the Motorola Dispatch Solution Gold Award 1999 and the Stockholm Challenge Award 2001 under the global village Category work with a bottom up approach. it involves local volunteers who gather the Information feed it into an intranet in the local Language and provide access

through nodes in villages. With help from Honda Informatics Division of MSSRF value addition of raw information is done and the data is presented in a multimedia form for the unlettered users

National Rural Employment Guarantee Bill, 2004

The International rural Employment Guarantee Bill 2004 Promises wage. employment to every rural household in which adult members volunteer to do unskilled manual works Through this bill the government aims to removing poverty by assuring at least 100 days employment. The Original Bills had laid down that it would be applicable only to families living Below the Poverty Line. The Scheme is to be selfselecting in the sense that those among the poor who need work at the minimum wage would report for work under the scheme.

Salient Features

- State Government, Panchayati Raj Institutions as well as NonGovernment Organizations would be involved in implementing the law.
- Jean Dreze, a Belgian economist, who is currently with the Delhi School of Economics, is the chief author of the scheme.
- The minimum daily wage had been pegged at Rs 60.
- The National Rural Employment Guarantee Act will (Rs 400 billion) crore annually.
- To begin with, as many as 200 districts, including 150 district under the food for Work Programme, Would be covered under the bill it would be extended to all the 600 districts in the country within 5 years
- The Bill also provides for unemployment allowances if the job, under the scheme, is not provided in the rural household
- Sampoorna Grameen Rozgar Yojana (SGRY) and National Food for work Programme to be subsumed within the scheme once the act is in force
- Central Employment Guarantee Council to be constituted to discharge various functions and duties. assigned to the council Every State Government to also constitute a State council for this purpose
- Panchayat at the district level to constitute Standing Committee of its members to supervise, monitor and oversee the implementation of the Scheme within the District
- For every Block Governments to appoint a Programme Officer for implementing the scheme.
- Gram Panchayat to be responsible for identification of the projects as per the recommendation of the Gram Sabha and for executing and supervising such works.
- Central Government to establish a National Employment Guarantee Fund end State Governments to establish State Employment Guarantee Funds for Implementation of the Scheme.

Demerits of the Bill

- The decision to provide Rs 60 per day for a guaranteed 100 days rural employment translated to only Rs 500 a month,, which is not sufficient to run a family.
- The law could lead to friction within a family over selection of the member to be provided the job.
- It is feared that in the process women and physically challenged could be left out
- The decision to make the state government's finance 10 per cent of the scheme could lead to financial problems because of the poor financial conditions of some state.

GREEN REVOLUTION & SOCIAL CHANGE

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 refer to green field of the country side and revolution indicated a substantial change

The availability of adequate food grains has been a serious problem in the country till recently. Food grains had to be imported from the developed countries to feed the vast population shortage of food was mainly was caused by low productivity of land, overdependence on monsoon and the outmoded agrarian structure Under these condition achieving self conditions achieving self sufficiency in food grains become the top priority of our National effort we have already seen how various scheme under the five year pans land reforms and commodity development programs have all been directed toward achieving this goal. However, these efforts could not initially succeed in increasing agricultural production. Consequently a new agriculture strategy was adopted in the early sixties to accelerate the process of agriculture development.

The new agricultural strategy was based on the thinking that intensive application of science and technology in apiculture would bear fruits in the form of massive increase in food grain production. Under this strategy, adopted early sixties, agricultural development programme were revised to meet the needs of the farmers. Major programme under taken 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 agriculture production This experiment of 'intensive agriculture yielded significant result. Production of Foodgrains remarkably increased and the programme was extended to cover larger areas. It resulted in giving rise to a new programme called the Intensive Agricultural Areas Programme (IAAP).

Encouraged by the unprecedented success of this programme some other schemes were introduced in late sixties They Include High Yielding Varieties Programme, Small Farm Development Agencies (SFDA) and the Marginal Farmers and



Green Revolution modernized Indian agriculture

Agriculture Labourers Development Scheme (MFALDS). All these schemes were supplemented by the assured supply of Inputs like fertilizers, Institutional credit and increased irrigational facility. Among All these programs the (HYVP), made spectacular impact the progressive increase in food grain production also started increasing. The Progressive under Maize, Jowar and Bajara 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 begun with wheat Revolution but subsequently rice surpassed it. Other crops like pulses, Jowar, Bajara and Maize also did not remain too far. It was widespread as it continued its journey Punjab to other regions of the country Now we are not only selfsufficient in Foodgrains but also have started exporting it. Our view in this regard is amply supported by the latest Foodgrains statics available to us.

The overall production of food grains for 19992000 at 20887 million tonnes is 5.26 million tonnes more than the last year. The production of rice during this period was 89.48 million tonnes as against the production of 86:00 million tonnes during 199899. The production of wheat was 75.57 million tonnes during 1999 2000 as against the production level of 70.78 million tonnes daring 199899. However, during this period the production of coarse cereals (jowar, bajra, maize etc.) is estimated at 30.47 million tonnes as against the production of 31.35 million tonnes, during 19981999. Being dependent entirely on rainfall, coarse cereals shows considerable variation over the years

Socioeconomic Consequences of Green Revolution

Green Revolution has certainly improved the food situation in the country has solved the problem of hunger and has given a storage 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 technology innovation 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. what we wish to point out here in the green Revolution has brought destabilizing impact on the socio economic condition of small and poor peasants share croppers and landless agriculture labourers

The new technology and the other inputs such improved seeds fertilisers pesticides, water etc. are beyond the reach of all small and marginal farmer Naturally Some regions with large landholdings like Punjab have performs better than other like Bihar and Orissa were marginal and poor farmers are plenty and institutional credit is not easily available. This is widened the between the small and the rich farmers.

Secondly, the affluent farmers are enjoying the fruits of increased profit from land but the real wage rate for agriculture labourers has been declining in most places. most of the share croppers are now joining the rank of landless labourless because small holding are not available for leasing out to these share croppers.

Thirdly economic inequality in agrarian sector has widened resulting in increased agrarian unrest in rural areas. During the late sixties and the earlier seventies numerous cases of conflicts were reported particularly from the green evolution belts. The situation became serious and the Ministry of Home Affairs of the Government of India studied the causes and nature of agrariantensions and admitted the sociopolitical 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 agricultural Workers. Analysing this problem, P.C Joshi and argues 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 agriculture strategy and the green Revolution.

The Poor parents share croppers and landless agriculture labourers have not been able to share profitable in the general prosperity which came in the wake of the green revolution in the context T.K Oommen shows that green revolution as such does not lead to the welfare of the agrarian poor unless substantial alternations in the prevalent socio economic and political structure and effected at the grass roots

Finally increased agriculture production has been visible mainly in area 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. Like was a new classes of capitalist farmers has emerged in the green revolution belt. Another Important trend suggested that the Agriculture production has increased but the social Index has not changed in the same proportion. For Example the gender ration in those areas where agriculture

prosperity has been achieved is still undoubtedly paved the way for faster economic growth and corresponding social change.

CHANGING MODES OF PRODUCTION IN INDIAN AGRICULTURE

Trends of change in Indian society show the emergence and consolidation of new groups and classes. This is visible not only in the rural areas but also in the urban and industrial, settings. However, in the absence of systematic sociological studies on the nature and size of these groups and classes, it is a difficult task to give conclusive statements about them. We have therefore selected only a few groups to illustrate this trend.

Gentleman Farmer

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 was not fully developed. But this situation has changed now. The restricting of agrarian system has set in as a result of the land reforms and the Green Revolution. The introduction of new technology in agriculture has transformed the mode of agriculture 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 this fashion, a new class, of farmers is emerging consisting of person with different skills and experience they no longer belong to the traditional landowning upper castes there are the people who have retired from the civil and military service and have invested their saving in agriculture farms

This is the story behind the emergence of Gentleman Farmers

This group now attached the people who are educated and wish to make agriculture their vocation the increase profitability of agriculture is primary reason behind it. These agricultural farms are run like business firm with all features of modern organization it is respect there is a respect is a substantial difference between the traditional agricultural system and the emerging system.

Capitalist Farmers

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.

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 transition from the peasant family farms to the commercial capitalist

A powerful class of rich peasants, undoubtedly, existed even they could not be characterised 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, improved implements, irrigation as 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 latter 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 gap 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.

Dominant Middle Caste Peasantry

The impact of the land reforms and the Green Revolution has not been uniform throughout the country. In certain regions, some sections have benefited more than the others. While the owners of large landholdings have pocketed the maximum profits in every region, the share of benefits to the small peasants has been limited almost everywhere. However, it is the middle peasants who have been the real beneficiary all over the country. A natural question is why has this been so.

The answer to this question lies in the very nature and composition of the middle peasantry in the Indian countryside. Middle peasants ordinarily belong to the middle caste groups. Though there is no all India hierarchy of castes it is yet possible to locate certain layers that may be characterized as middle. All those castes, which are below the upper castes but above the lower and Scheduled Castes, constitute the category of middle castes. It is not a homogenous category but as these castes possess some common features, they may be included under a single category. Some of the major features of the middle castes are mentioned below.

In the first place, they occupy a higher position in local caste hierarchy. No social disabilities such as untouchability and discrimination are imposed on them. Secondly, most of the castes included in this category are traditionally peasant castes. They have been self cultivating owners of medium size landholdings. Thirdly, unlike the upper castes, they have been directly involved in agricultural operations. Finally population wise they are predominant at the local level. In fact, the middle castes are like the dominant castes according to the formulation of M. N. Srinivas. Most of the features of these two categories are similar but they are different in terms of their location in the caste hierarchy. While a dominant caste may belong either to the upper or the middle caste group, it is not so in the case of a middle caste.

It is the middle castes, which have emerged as the dominant middle peasantry. They have derived maximum advantages from the land reforms and the Green Revolution. At the time of abolition of intermediaries like Zamindari, the Jagirdari etc. large scale land transfer took place. The members of these castes purchased most of these lands. Secondly, when the upper caste village dwellers started migration to the urban areas in large numbers, the members of the middle caste bought their land. Finally; new programmes of agricultural development further helped the middle castes to improve their economic condition. Their peasant background provided them with an added advantage. Middle castes have, thus, achieved economic affluence within a short time.

The growing economic prosperity of middle castes was also instrumental in extending their influence to the political domain. Here, again, their numerical strength, contributed towards gaining political dominance. The phenomenal rise of castes such as the Yadav (Ahir) and the Kurmi in Bihar and Uttar Pradesh, Vokkaliga in Karnataka, Kamma and Reddy in Andhra Pradesh is a pointer to this trend. Thus, the emergence of the dominant middle caste peasants reflects the changing reality of the Indian countryside.

PROBLEMS OF RURAL LABOUR, BONDAGE AND MIGRATION

Problem of bonded labour which is haunting the Indian society is one of the problems of the socioeconomic importance. Bonded labour has existed in India for centuries. In fact, the practice of one man keeping another man in perpetual bondage for his selfish and personal whims and fancies – seems to be a global phenomenon. It has been in existence for thousands of years, right from the Biblical days to the present era. The system of bonded labour as prevalent in India, appears as a relic of feudal hierarchical society. Social workers, social scientists and the government have evidence a great interest in this phenomenon during the recent years. The magnitude of the problem of bonded labour is also highly distressing for the lakhs of people including men, women and children are condemned to servitude under its yoke.

Definition of Bonded Labour

1. The National Commission on Labour defines the term bonded labour as labour which remains in bondage for a specific for the debt incurred.
2. The Commission for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes defines the bonded labour in the 24th report of the Commission as persons who are forced to work for the creditors for the loan incurred either without wage or for nominal wages.
3. The Bonded Labour Abolition Act, 1976 defines bonded labour as the system of forced labour under which a debtor enters, into an agreement with the creditor that he would render service to him either, by himself or through any member of his family or any person dependent on him, for a specified or unspecified period, either without wages or for nominal wages, in consideration of loan or any other economic consideration obtained by him or any of his ascendants, or in pursuance of any social obligation or in pursuance of any obligation devolving on him by succession'.



Bonded labourers at work in a brick kiln in the outskirts of Delhi

Different Names of Bonded Labourers

Bonded labourers are known by various names in various parts of the country. For example, they are known as Jeethadalu in Karnataka, Jeethams in Andhra Pradesh, Pandiyals' in Tamil Nadu; Adiyas, Kattunaikens in Kerala, Koltas,, Sevaks and Haris in Uttar Pradesh, Halis in Gujarat, Harwabas" and Halis in Madhya Pradesh, Kamias or Kamiantis in Bihar, Gothees in Orissa, and so on.

Main Features of Bonded Labour

Two main features are associated with bonded labour are (i) indebtedness, and (ii) forced labour.

(i) Indebtedness: The poor economic conditions of some rural people especially those belonging to the lowest castes, force them to borrow money from the landlords or other money lenders. The inability to pay back the borrowed money compel them to bind themselves to work for their landlord or moneylenders for a certain number of years at fixed or unfixed wages in order to repay the money borrowed.

(ii) Force Labour: sometimes bonded labourers are forced to work throughout their lives or even for generations. Forced labour can hereditarily descend from father to son or be passed on' for generations together. What is important here is, during the

period of bondage the debtor or the bonded labourer cannot seek employment with any other person. Speaking in economic terms, this means that he cannot sell his labour in the market at market value'.

The bonded labour system as we understand it, is mostly found among agricultural labourers in villages. However, it is often extended to labourers working in various other fields such as beedi factories, glass factories, brick kilns, stone quarries, detergent, carpet and other factories.

Extent of Bonded Labour

There are no reliable statistics relating to the extent of bonded labour in India even though the system has been in existence for centuries. However, Gandhi Peace foundation [GPF] and National Labour Institute [NLI] conducted a survey of bonded labour for ten major states of India for the year 1978-79. The major findings of the survey of these two institutes can be mentioned below.

1. The total number of bonded labourers in the ten states surveyed was estimated to be 26.17 lakhs.
2. For India as a whole, 5.7% of the total agricultural labourers, constituted bonded labourers.
3. Uttar Pradesh had the highest number of bonded labourers that is 5.5 lakhs followed by Madhya Pradesh [5.0 lakhs], Orissa [3.5 lakhs], and Andhra Pradesh [3.25 lakhs]. These four states accounted for 17.25 lakhs of bonded labourers, that is, about 66% of the total bonded labourers in the country.
4. The most significant aspect of the survey is that about 87% of the bonded labourers for belonged to Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes.

Another estimate of the number of the bonded labourers for the 12 states was conducted in March 1990 by the State governments and the total number of bonded labourers was estimated at 2.45 lakhs.

The International Labour Organisation [I.L.O.] also has given an estimate. According to its estimation there are about 150 lakhs bonded labourers in our country out of which 50 lakhs are children.

Causes of Bonded Labour

Various causes have contributed to the system of bonded labour. These can be grouped into three:

- (i) Economic Causes, (ii) Social Causes, and (iii) Religious Causes.

Economic Causes The economic factors are the main causes of bonded labour. They include various factors such as extreme poverty of people, heightened unemployment, poor material resources to fall back upon in times of economic crises, lack of alternative small scale loans for the rural and urban poor, extremes of natural calamities such as famines and floods, destruction of men and animals, drying away of wells, soaring prices and inflation, government's inability to rehabilitate the poor whenever they are afflicted with problems, and so on.

(ii) Social Causes: Social practices, customs and beliefs of the people also contribute to the problem of bonded labour. The social factors include casteism, caste based discrimination, high expenses on occasions like marriage, religious programmes, feasts, birth of a child, death ceremonies heavy debts, lack of comprehensive social security measure against all kinds of hazards, noncompulsory and unequal educational system, corruption in governmental machinery, irresponsibility and indifferent attitude of the bureaucrats, and so on.

(iii) Religious Causes: Religious factors are also adding to the problem of bonded labour. The illiterate, ignorant and religious minded lower caste people are often made to believe that they have the religious obligation to serve people of high castes. Lack of knowledge, poor living conditions and fear of oppression at the hands of higher caste people make the ignorant people to accept their depressed lot.

It is clear from the above description that the problem of bonded labour originates mainly from economic constraints social pressure and religious commitments.

Misery and Sufferings of the Bonded Labour

Bonded Labourers have been existing in India for the past several centuries. It is a peculiar phenomenon of our agricultural economy. The system grew out of extreme poverty and helplessness of the unprivileged sections of the Indian rural populace such as the Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and semitribal people, who depended upon wage income which they received only for a part of year. When they needed foodgrains or when they, needed money for any kind of an emergency they, had to borrow the same at the hands of landlords or money lenders. Since they had no security to offer in the form of land, jewellery or any other property, they pledged themselves. The moneylenders and the high caste landlords took advantage of their helplessness and ignorance and entered into, repressive contracts. The wages were so low and the rate of interest so high often 25% to 50% that the total loan got accumulated with the passage of time. The total burden of the loan became so huge that it could not be repaid evenwith the labour of many generations of the debtor's family. Once a landless labourer borrowed money, he and his descendants were doomed to perpetual slavery.

It has been observed that majority of the bonded labourers work as agricultural labourers in villages and belong to the outcaste or tribal communities. Of the total labour force in the rural areas, about 33 agricultural labourers, 48% belong to SCs and 33% to STs. There labourers are unskilled and unorganised and are forced to sell their personal labour of their livelihood. The bonded agricultural labourers occupy the lowest rung of the rural social ladder. Bonded labourers live in pitiable and miserable conditions. They are socially exploited and made to work sometimes 12 to 14 hours a day, and forced to live, with cows and buffaloes in shed. If they fall ill, they may be given medicine collected from the local quacks depending upon the mercy of the employer. In all the possible ways, they are cheated by their employers and maximum labour is extracted from minimum remuneration.

Abolition of Bonded Labour The bonded labour system was abolished throughout the country during the Emergency period 25th October 1975 under the

Bonded Labour System [Abolished] Act, 1976. For the first time, the government took swift action against money lender, others building contractors, quarryowners and others who have been found practising some form of bonded and / or contract labour. The government also took some measures to rehabilitate bonded labourers thus freed.

During the Sixth Plan [1980-85], the maximum cost of rehabilitating a bonded labourer was limited to Rs. 4,000/= out of which the state governments were given 50% matching grants. The assistance was given to the freed bonded labourers to Help themselves to eke out their livelihood.

As per information available with the Ministry of Labour from the State Governments, as many as 2,51,424 bonded labourers were identified and released upto 30th March 1995. Of those freed bonded labourers, 2,27,404 were fully rehabilitated. It implies that nearly 90% of the bound labourers identified, were rehabilitated. This appears to be encouraging. The government further raises the financial assistance to Rs. 10,000/= per bonded labourer with effect from August 1994. It is now known that the total number of bonded labourers released between May 1978 and September 2001 is 2,82,013.

However, it is highly exaggerative on the part of the Ministry of Labour to stake that there are only 5,700 bonded labourers who need to be rehabilitated. A general observation of the Indian rural set up gives us an impression that the exact number of the bonded labourers cannot with nongovernmental organisations such as the Gandhi Peace Foundation. Since the bonded labourers have not been organised as a pressure group they are not able to assert themselves.

Problems Involved in the Effective Rehabilitation of Bonded Labour

The Bonded Labour System [Abolition] Act has not been practically effective in all the places particularly because of the lack of enforcement machinery. Enactment of any legislation requires dedication and commitment. Mere enactment of legislation becomes only a political activity. But its enforcement requires strong will and determination. But this factor has been unfortunately lacking in our country. That is why the system of bonded labour still continues to survive. Some deficiencies are involved in the effective implementation of the legislation and also in the rehabilitation of the bonded labourers.

1. The rehabilitation programme has been dealt with separately. This has often led to its failure. Instead of that it should become a part of rural development programme and there should be a proper coordination between the rehabilitation programmes and other programmes.
2. The development departments are overburdened with various schemes like IRDP JRY, TRYSEM, etc. that they do not find sufficient time and efforts to spare for the rehabilitation programmes.
3. Lack of qualified and committed staff has also contributed to the failure these programmes.

4. Middlemen are still operating like the parasites and take away the fruits and benefits of the rehabilitation to their advantage. Hence rehabilitation programmes are to be carefully and rationally formulated so as to avoid the interference of the middlemen.

5. The freed bonded labourers who come from the lowest strata society are not given freedom to select a scheme of rehabilitation but are forced to accept a particular scheme assigned to them by the bureaucrats. It is necessary that the freedom of choice of particular scheme must be provided to these people.

6. Finally, the attitude of the former bonded labour keepers and employers has not completely changed towards the bonded labourers. They take every chance to suppress the efforts of the freed bonded labours to move towards progress. Hence, it is the need of the hour that the landlord and other employer change their attitude towards the bonded labourers in view of the changed socioeconomic conditions.

IAS GURUKUL

INDUSTRIALISATION AND URBANIZATION IN INDIA

EVOLUTION OF MODERN INDUSTRY IN INDIA



Industrialization in India picked up mainly after independence

An important development in second half of the 19th century was the establishment of large scale machine based industries in India. The machine age in India began when cotton textile, jute and coalmining industries were started in the 1850s. The first textile mill was started in Bombay by Cowasjee Nanabhoy in 1853 and the first jute mill in Rishra (Bengal) in 1855. These industries expanded slowly but continuously. In 1879 there were 56 cotton textile mills in India employing nearly 43,000 persons. In 1882 there were 20 jute mills, most of them in Bengal, employing nearly 20,000 persons. By 1905, India had 206 cotton mills employing nearly 196,000 persons. In 1901 there were over 36 jute mills employing nearly 115,000 persons. The coalmining industry employed nearly one lakh of persons in 1906. Other mechanical industries which developed during the second half of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th centuries were cotton gins and presses, rice, flour and timber mills, leather tanneries, woollen textiles, sugar mills, iron and steel works, and such mineral industries as salt, mica and saltpetre. Cement, paper, matches, sugar and glass industries developed during the 1930s. But all, these industries had a very stunted growth.

Most of the modern Indian industries were owned or controlled by British capital. Foreign capitalists were attracted to Indian industry by the prospects of high profits. Labour was extremely cheap; raw materials were readily and cheaply available; and for many goods, India and its neighbours provided a ready market. For many Indian products, such as tea, jute, and manganese, there was ready demand the world over. On the other hand, profitable investment opportunities at

home were getting fewer. At the same time the colonial government and officials were willing to provide all help and show all favours.

Foreign capital easily overwhelmed Indian capital in many of the industries. Only in the cotton textile industry did Indians have a large share from the beginning, and in the 1930s, the sugar industry was developed by Indians. Indian capitalists had also to struggle from the beginning against the power of British managing agencies and British banks. To enter a field of enterprise, Indian businessmen had to bend before British managing agencies dominating that field. In many cases even Indian owned companies were controlled by foreign owned or controlled managing agencies. Indian also found it difficult to get credit from banks most of which were dominated by British financiers Even when they could get loans they had to pay high interest rates while foreigners could borrow on much easier terms. Of course, gradually Indians began to develop their own banks and insurance companies. In 1914 foreign banks held over 70 percent of all bank deposits in India; by 1937 their share had decreased to 57 percent..

British enterprises in India also took advantage of its close connections with British suppliers of machinery and equipment, shipping, insurance companies, marketing agencies, government officials, and political leaders to maintain its dominant position in Indian economic life, Moreover, the Government followed a conscious policy of favouring foreign capital as against Indian capital.

The railway policy of the Government also discriminated against Indian enterprise; railway freight rates encouraged foreign imports at the cost of trade in domestic products. It was more difficult and costlier to distribute Indian goods than to distribute imported goods.

Another serious weakness of Indian industrial effort was the almost complete absence of heavy or capital goods industries, without which there can be no rapid and independent development of industries. India had no big plants to produce iron and steel or to manufacture machinery. A few petty repair workshops represented engineering industries and a few iron and brass foundries represented metallurgical industries. The first steel in India was produced only in 1913. Thus India lacked such basic industries as steel, metallurgy, machine, chemical and oil. India also lagged behind in the development of electric power.

Apart from machinebased industries, the 19th century also witnessed the growth of plantation industries such as indigo, tea and coffee. They were almost exclusively European in ownership. Indigo was used as a dye in textile manufacture. Indigo manufacture was introduced into India at the end of the 18th century and flourished in Bengal and Bihar. Indigo planters gained notoriety for their oppression over the peasants who were compelled by them to cultivate indigo. This oppression was vividly portrayed by the famous Bengali writer Dinbandhu Mitra in his play Neel Darpan in 1860. The invention of a synthetic dye gave a big blow to the indigo industry and it gradually declined. The tea industry developed in Assam, Bengal, south India, and the hills of Himachal Pradesh after 1850. Being foreign owned, it was helped by the Government with grants of rent free land and other facilities. In time, the use of tea spread all over India, and it also became an

important item of export. Coffee plantations developed during this period in south India.

The plantation and other foreignowned industries were of hardly any advantage to the Indian people. Their profits went out of the country. A large part of their salary bill was spent on highly paid foreign staff. They purchased most of their equipment abroad. Most of their technical staff was foreign. Most of their products were sold in foreign markets and the foreign exchange so earned was utilised by Britain. The only advantage that Indians got out of these industries was the creation of unskilled jobs. Most of the workers in these enterprises were, however, extremely low paid, and they worked under extremely harsh conditions for very long hours. Moreover, conditions of nearslavery prevailed in the plantations.

On the whole, industrial progress in India was exceeding slow and painful. It was mostly confined to cotton and jute industries and tea plantations in the 19th century, and to sugar and cement in the 1930s. As late as 1946, cotton and jute textiles accounted for 40 percent of all workers employed in factories. In terms of production as well as employment, the modern industrial development of India was paltry compared with the economic development of other countries or with India's economic needs. It did not in, fact, compensate even for the displacement of the indigenous handicrafts; it had little effect on the problems of poverty and overcrowding of land. The paltriness of Indian industrialisation is brought out by the fact that out of a population of 357 million in 1951 only about 2.3 million were employed in modern industrial enterprises. Furthermore, the decay and decline of the urban and rural handicraft industries continued unabated after 1858. The Indian Planning Commission has calculated that the number of persons engaged in processing and manufacturing fell from 10.3 million in 1901 to 8.8 million in 1951 even though the population increased by nearly 40 percent. The government make no effort to protect, rehabilitate, reorganize, and modernize these old indigenous industries.

Moreover, even the modern industries had to develop without government help and often in opposition to British policy. British manufacturers looked upon Indian textile and other industries as their rivals and put pressure on the Government of India not to encourage but rather to actively discourage industrial development in India. Thus British policy artificially restricted and slowed down the growth of Indian Industries

Furthermore, Indian industries, still in a period of infancy, needed protection. They developed at a time when Britain, France, Germany and the United States had already established powerful industries and could not therefore compete with them. In fact, all other countries, including Britain, had protected their infant industries by imposing heavy customs duties on the import of foreign manufacturers But India was not a free country. Its policies were determined in Britain and in the interests of British industrialists who forced a policy of Free Trade upon their colony. For the same reason the Government of India refused to give any financial or other help to the newly founded Indian industries as was being done at the time by the governments of Europe and Japan for their own infant industries. It would not even make adequate arrangements for technical education which remained extremely backward until 1951 and further contributed to industrial

backwardness. In 1939 there were only 7 engineering colleges with 2217 students in the country. Many Indian projects, for example, those concerning the construction of ships, locomotives, cars, and aeroplanes, could not get started because of the Government's refusal to give any help.

Finally, in the 1920s and 1930s under the pressure of the rising nationalist movement and the Indian capitalist class, the government of India was forced to grant some tariff protection to Indian industries. But, once again, the Government discriminated against Indian-owned industries. The Indian-owned industries such as cement, iron and steel, and glass were denied protection or given inadequate protection. On the other hand, foreign-dominated industry, such as the match industry, were given the protection they desired. Moreover, British imports were given special privileges under the system of imperial preferences' even though Indian protested vehemently.

Another feature of Indian industrial development was that it was extremely lopsided regionally. Indian industries were concentrated only in a few regions and cities of the country. Large parts of the country remained totally underdeveloped. This unequal regional economic development not only led to wide regional disparities in income, but, also affected the level of national integration. It made the task of creating a unified Indian nation more difficult.

An important social consequence of even the limited industrial development of the country was the birth and growth of two new social classes in Indian society: the industrial capitalist class and the modern working class. These two classes were entirely new in Indian history because modern mines, industries, and means of transport were new. Even though these classes formed a very small part of the Indian population, they represented new technology, a new system of economic organisation, new social relations, new ideas and a new outlook. They were not weighed down by the burden of old traditions, customs and styles of life. Most of all, they possessed an all-India outlook. Moreover, both of them were vitally interested in the industrial development of the country. Their economic and political importance and roles were, therefore, out of all proportion to their numbers.

GROWTH OF URBAN SETTLEMENTS IN INDIA

India is a country of villages about 75 percent of its population lives in rural areas depending on agriculture for their livelihood. The predominant rural form of life often overshadows the growing proportion of her population residing in urban areas as well. The total urban population in India (excluding Jammu and Kashmir) was 20 million in 1901, 108 million in 1971, and is now reported to be about 200 million approximately 25% of the total population according to 1991 Census.

The most striking feature of India's urbanization is its long tradition. The emergence of early urban life here is associated with the evolution of the Indus valley civilization around 2500 B.C.

Archaeologists and historians have pointed out that around 2000 B.C. Urbanisation in the Harappan culture exhibited signs of high watermark in brick technology, geometry, agriculture and irrigation practices.



Mumbai skyline: India's financial capital is one of the most expensive cities in the world to live in.

Another phase of urbanization had begun in India around 600 B.C. culminating in the formation of early historical cities. During ancient and medieval periods of Indian history, the kings established various capital regions which developed into towns. For example, Pataliputra and Vaishali developed as towns during the Mughal rule around 300 B.C. Kannauj was the capital town of Harshabardhana in Uttar Pradesh in 700 A.D. Muhammad Tughlaq is noted for shifting his capital from Delhi to Daulatabad in the Southern region in 1300 A.D.

With the advent of the East India Company, the process of urbanization entered upon a new phase. Cities grew up in the coastal areas as ports cum trading centres. In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, European trading ports were established initially for trading purposes. As the British power grew in the 19th century, Calcutta, Bombay and Madras became the political centres too.

The new process of urbanization which began with the advent of the British received a momentum at the beginning of the twentieth century.

Since 1901 till present day, the census of India shows an increase in urban population though not at the same rate as of the United States, the United Kingdom, and other western countries. Hence, urbanization of India follows a pattern similar to that of Latin America.

Petrov (1985/201) indicates a four-phase periodisation of India's urbanization; pre feudal (from early times to 1000 A.D.) feudal (1000 to 1757 A.D.), early colonial and late colonial (1857 to 1947). During prefeudal phase towns originated as exchange centre of surplus agricultural produce and also as centres of culture. The feudal town was an administrative centre, a military head quarters, and a magnet for artisans. The early colonial phase witnessed some deurbanization associated with deindustrialization. This was a sequel to the flooding of the factory manufactured goods, by the British. During the middle of 19th century the complexion of urban population started changing. Urban employment sector had an increasing number of people on manufacturing, government jobs, general services, trade and transport. The port cities grew in number and became the

centre place of urbanization. The post independence era was noted for some changes in the contours of urbanisation.

Taking causative factor as a standard, Ramchandran (1989:123) observed that during the prehistoric period, urbanization was synonymous with the origin and rise of civilization itself hence a cultural process; from ancient period to the British period, it was related to the rise and fall of kingdoms and dynamics, hence an economic process.

In spite of its long history spanning over nearly five millennia, India remains one of the less urbanized countries of the world. When it entered the present century it was onetenth urban. It was around onesixth urban at the time of independence in 1947. The 1991 census recorded, 25.7 per cent or about onefourth of its population as urban. The corresponding figure for the world as a whole in 1990 was 45 per cent (United Nations, 1991: 107), The less developed countries as a group were 37 per cent urban, in absolute numbers, however, the urban population of India, 217 million in 1991, is the world's largest after that of China, it is projected to grow to about 320 million in the year 2001. It is ironical that India was assessed as over urbanized even in the fifties. The basic contentions were that (i) India, at a comparable level of urbanization, is much less industrialized than developed countries in past; (ii) the process of urbanization is costly and impinges upon the rate of economic growth and (iii) the existing urban infrastructure and services, such as power, water supply, and local transport, are too inadequate to meet the large and fast growing urban population.

India's urban growth is described as explosive by many scholars. Its urban population increased from 62 million in 1951 to 217 million in 1991 giving an average annual growth rate of 3.2. This can be seen from Table 1.1.

Census	No of town urban agglomerations	Urban Population (In millions)	Urban Population as percent to the total population	Annual Growth rate of urban population
1951	2.845	62.4	17.3	
1961	2.365	78.9	18.0	2.3
1971	2.590	109.1	19.9	3.2
1981	3.378	159.05	23.3	3.8
1991	3.768	217.2	25.7	3.1

Source: Census of India 1991.

Likewise, the urbanization structure of India is not distorted. The population of the biggest city as a percentage of the total urban population is not high. Mumbai, the biggest city with a population of 12.6 million in 1991 counted for only 5.8 per cent of India's urban population. The world average is about 14 per cent.

So far as, regional differences in urbanization level are concerned among 452 districts of the country, excluding 14 districts of Jammu and Kashmir, 6 are entirely urban and 10 entirely rural. In one fourth of the total districts, urbanization level is less than 10 per cent, and in nearly threefourth, less than 25 per cent.

Relatively speaking South India is more urbanized than its northern counterpart. In North India, of course, Punjab and West Bengal are more urbanized than the national average.

India's level of urbanization is lower than some of the developing countries of Asia and Africa such as Pakistan 32 per cent, China 53 percent, Nigeria 3.5 per cent and Zambia 49 per cent.

There is a great deal of variation in the level of urbanization between the states. A high level of urbanization above the national average is observed in Mizoram, Goa, Maharashtra, Gujarat, Chennai and Karnataka while low levels of urbanization of less than 15 per cent characterize Himachal Pradesh, Sikkim, Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Bihar and Orissa.

Another important aspect of urbanization in India is the tendency towards concentration of population in larger urban centres. According to 1991 census, class I cities having one lakh or more urban centres. According to 1991 census, the total urban centres and over 65 percent of the country's urban population lives in these centres.

The definition of urban area in the India context varies from time to time. According to the 1981 census definition, a human settlement is called urban if it possesses the following qualifications:

- (a) All statutory towns i.e. all places with a municipal corporation, municipal board, cantonment board or notified town area etc.
- (b) All other places which satisfy the following criteria:
 - (i) A minimum population of 5000
 - (ii) Seventy five percent of the male working population engaged in non-agricultural (and allied) activity, and
 - (iii) Density of population of at least 400 per sp. Km. (1000 per sq. mile)

A town with the population of one hundred thousand and above is treated as a city.

The figure presented in table 1.2 shows that the per cent of urban population is increasing more in big cities in comparison to small cities. During the postcolonial period, the concentration of population in class I cities is increasing while the population in class V and VI cities is decreasing rapidly.

Table No. 1.2: Growth of Population in cities (in per cent)

Classification of Cities	1901	1941	1951	1961	1971	1981	1981
Class I	22.9	35.4	41.8	48.4	56.21	60.4	64.89
Class II	11.8	11.8	11.1	11.9	11.4	11.7	10.96
Class III	16.5	17.7	16.7	18.5	16.5	14.4	13.33
Class IV	22.1	16.3	14.0	13.0	11.3	9.5	7.89
Class V	20.4	15.4	13.2	7.2	4.7	3.6	2.61
Class VI	6.3	3.5	3.2	1.0	0.5	0.5	0.31

A notable feature of urban development in India has been the rapid growth of cities exceeding 100000 people. In 1931, there were 31 such cities in undivided India, by 1951 the India Union alone had 71 such cities and 1961 the numbers increased to 109. By 1971 it rose to 142 and the number reached 215 by 1981 and by 1991 the number of such cities was about 300

Growth of 1,00,000 plus cities India 1901-1991

Year	No.	Population in Million	Percentage to Urban population	Percentage to total population
1901	24	6.5	23.0	2.7
1911	23	6.9	24.2	2.7
1921	28	7.9	25.3	3.2
1931	31	9.6	27.4	3.4
1941	46	15.7	36.0	5.0
1951	71	25.8	41.7	7.2
1961	109	36.0	48.4	8.3
1971	142	57.0	52.4	10.0
1981	215	95.1	60.0	14.0
1991	300	139.7	65.0	16.0

Source: 1991 Census of India

The available statistics have also shown that the metropolitan cities, having a population over ten lakhs, have grown at a faster rate both in number and size. In 1981, there were 12 metropolitan cities and this number went up to 24 in 1991. Mumbai with a population of 12.57 million persons, is the biggest among persons, is the smallest. These 24 metropolitan cities account for 51 per cent of the class I cities in India. In brief, the demographic trends reveal that although, the proportion of urban population in India is less, yet in terms of absolute numbers, India's urban population is more than the total population of several developed countries. It is projected that at the beginning of the twentyfirst century as many as 32 Crores of people will be living in urban centres in India.

WORKING CLASS: STRUCTURE, GROWTH AND CLASS MOBILIZATION

India has a multi structural economy where a number of precapitalist relations of production coexist with capitalist relations of production. Correspondingly, here a differentiated working class structure exists 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 productions through which working people have been and continues to be divided, there exists a group of people denoted as 'working class'. Then, it becomes pertinent to analyse the growth of working class in India. This is particularly so, when one considers two fact. First, in India prior to 19th century there were vast number of working people not working class. Second, the

growth of capitalist mode of production along with industrialization was imposed by the colonial masters.



Working class in India reflects the heterogeneity of Indian society

Growth of Working Class in India

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.

Traditional Indian economy and encounter with colonialists

In India, as mentioned above, till the middle of the 19th century, there were working people but not the working class. In other words, Indian economy was characterized by what Marx termed as '...small and extremely ancient Indian communities... are based on the possession in common land, on the blending of agriculture and handicrafts, and on the unadulterated division of labour, which serves, wherever a new community is started...'. The colonial rule and exploitation of British Imperialists completely ruined the system of production of these traditional and self-sufficient societies. Though the process started with victory in the battle of Plassey in 1757, the process was fastened with forced introduction of British capital, wherein the old economic system and division of labour was completely shattered. The surplus generated through the old system fell into the hands of the colonialists who then started direct plundering and exporting of the wealth of India to England. Simultaneously, the English capitalists felt the need of

marketing in India the industrial products of England. Hence from 1813 onwards the door of free trade with India was opened not only for East India Company but for other British companies also. This was coupled with the imposition of heavy import duty ranging from 70 to 80 per cent on the cost of imported Indian textile and silk products in England. The combined result of these was that Indian economy suffered doubly that is, not only was the textile industry ruined, but also the artisans were forced to starve. The same scenario existed in Indian metallurgical and other industries. Moreover, Indian raw material was an indispensable item for the development of British manufacturing industry. Hence, colonialists followed the trading policy whereby they not only flooded the Indian market with British industrial products but maintained the constant supply of Indian raw materials and agricultural products to England. In a word, as Sukomal Sen (1997) puts, India was transformed into an agrarian and raw material adjunct of capitalist Britain, simultaneously preserving feudal methods of exploitation. The result of this process was that 'Indian craftsmen were forced out from their age long profession. The ancient integrating element of the unity of industrial and agricultural production unique in the traditional economy was shattered and the structure of Indian society disintegrated' (Sukomal Sen 1997).

(i) The formative Period

The forced intrusion of British capital in India devastated the old economy but did not transplant it by forces of modern capital economy. So, traditional cottage industry and weavers famed for their skill through the centuries were robbed of their means of livelihood and were uprooted throughout India. This loss of the old world with no new gains led to extreme impoverishment of the people. The millions of ruined artisans and craftsmen, spinners, weavers, potters, smelters and smiths from the town and the village alike, had no alternative but to crowd into agriculture, leading to deadly pressure on the land. Subsequently, with the introduction of railways and sporadic growth of some industries, a section of these very people at the lowest rung of Indian society who had been plodding through immense sufferings and impoverishment in village life entered the modern industries as workers. The first generation of factory workers, it appears, came from this distressed and dispossessed section the village people. In the words of Buchanan, the factory working group surely comes from the hungry half of the agricultural population, indeed almost wholly from the hungriest quarter or eighth of it. The factory commission of 1890 reports that most of the factory workers in jute, cotton, bone and paper mills, sugar works, gun and shell factories belonged to the lower castes like Bagdi, Teli, Mochi, Kaibarta, Bairagi and Sankara. They also belonged to the caste of Tanti or weavers. In coal mines the largest single group were Bauris, a caste of very low social rank, the majority of whom were under ryots or landless labourers. The next largest group in coal mining were the Santhals, a tribe of crude agriculturists. The remaining sections of miners were recruited from similar groups and also from displaced labourers and menials from villages. Among the immigrant labourers in the coalfields, such castes as Pasis, Lodhs, Kurmis, Ahirs, Koeris Chamars and lower caste Muslims were also there.

However, other studies point out different patterns of migration of workers from the village: The early working class was not the poorest of the poor. Buchanan's views

were based on deduction. The studies of Monis and Chandavarkar show the lowest castes did not join the industries. Kalpana Ram's study of mine workers also shows something similar. There were 2 reasons for this. The wages were very low and it was not possible for the poor to migrate work to the city with their families and work in factories. It would be, difficult to maintain a family on low wages. Hence both Monis and Ram note that initially middle castes those with some land migrated. Their families stayed behind and the worker would send small amounts of money to supplement the family earning/subsistence from land. Dalits/lower castes did not migrate, or they could not migrate, as they were required to do the unclean activities in the village. Secondly, being landless, they could not subsist on those meagre earnings. Migration of lower castes took place later (after 3040 years) due to two reasons. The factories (jute and cotton) faced labour shortage, hence wages were increased. Secondly, there was pressure from the British Govt. on the village community to allow untouchables to migrate outside the village.

The view expressed earlier in this unit is Buchanan's and also Max Weber's who had written that industrialisation in India attracted the low castes and the dregs of society.

(ii) Emergence of working class

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 enterprises 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 that they had similar experiences and shared interests and react in similar fashion. In other words, the principal factors underlying the growth and formation of the working mass as a class in India in the latter half of the 19th century, and at the beginning of 20th century, it 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 reaction 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 the working class. Typical working class actions 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 Charnadani 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. However, the process of class formation among workers in India was marked by fundamental differences as opposed to their European counterparts. It had far reaching consequences on the growth of the Indian working class. These differences were

(a) Though in Europe also the artisans and craftsmen were dispossessed profession, they were not forced out of towns to crowd the village economy. They found employment in the 'large industries as soon as they were dispossessed

of their old professions. In India, after the destruction of traditional handicraft and cottage industry, modern industry did not grow up in its place. The dispossessed artisans and craftsmen were compelled to depend on the village economy and earn livelihood as landless peasants and agricultural labourers.

(b) The gap between destruction of traditional cottage industry and its partial replacement by modern industries was about two to three generations. The dispossessed artisans and craftsmen lost their age old technical skill and when they entered the modern industries, they did so without any initial skills.

(c) When the workers, after long and close association with agricultural life, entered the modern industries and got transformed into modern workers, they did it in with the full inheritance of the legacy and various superstitions, habits and customs of agricultural life. There was no opportunity for these men to get out of casteism, racialism and religious superstition of Indian social life and harmful influence of medieval idea. They were born as an Indian working class deeply imbued with obscurantist ideas and backward trends. However, this feature they shared with some of their European counterparts, as well, such as British working class who too had suffered similar problems.

These peculiarities accompanying the birth of Indian workers acted as hindrances to the development of their modern outlook and class consciousness. In fact the Indian workers were not the only workers characterised by these peculiarities, rather these were general characteristics of the working class of the colonies and sub colonies.

(iii) Consolidation of the working class

The end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th was marked by the organized national movements and consolidation of the working class. The national movement, especially in Bengal and Maharashtra had already assigned a developed from which exerted a great impact on the later national awakening of the entire country. The 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 a higher pitch. The period from the beginning of the century, till the outbreak of the first World War was marked with widespread and dogged struggles of the workers which were not only economic struggles, but political struggles also. That is, these struggles led to the laying of the foundation of the first trade unions of the country. Moreover, the turn of the century was also marked by the advance in industrialization with concomitant swelling of the working class in numerical strength.

On the eve of the First World War, the capitalist development in India got accelerated. There was increase in the number of joint stock company i.e. in 1900 the number of joint stock firms was 1360, which in 1907 rose to 2166. It marked the further increase at the beginning of the first world war when the when the number of registered firms stood at 2553. However, with the outbreak of war the war the colonial exploitation of India assumed horrible proportions. The government widely used the country's industrial potential for the needs of war. In

all these wars Indian bourgeoisie got opportunities to prosper. The main advantage accruing to Indian bourgeoisie during war were less competition from major imperialist powers, a large market for country made goods inside and outside the country, war contracts, relatively cheaper raw agricultural materials, lower real wages and higher process of manufactured goods. But for the working class it was a 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 higher food prices. The expansion of industrialization saw swelling of numbers of factory workers. In 1919, the large scale industries of the country employed 13,67,000 workers. Of this 306,300 were employed in 277 cotton spinning and weaving mills; 140,800 in 1940 cotton ginning factories and 276,100 in jute factories and presses. The railway shops employed 1236,100 workers.

The October socialist revolution and subsequent sweeping mass and working class struggles 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, the success of the October revolution and the first general crisis of capitalism added new strength to the antiimperialist struggle of India.

The working class too did not fail to occupy its own place in the antiimperialist struggle. In this regard it is important to note that the background of political struggle during 1905-18 is the unprecedented dimension, of class struggle waged by the Indian working class in the national and international setup of the post war period against capitalist exploitation bore more significance from the point of view of workers classconsciousness. Then the birth of the central class organisation 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 shook the Indian economy. Though the World War I provided a number of industries with some temporary advantages or opportunities to expand and saw limited growth of some industries, in a real sense India's industrialisation was absolutely of a sprawling character and without any basic consolidation. The mill owners attempted to reduce wages of the workers. It is the particular misfortune of the Indian working class that they ultimately had to fall victim to the intense rivalry between imperialists and native capitalists. The workers did not lie low before that onslaught, but resisted. So, in order to safeguard its' position, the working class of India had to proceed through a path of bitter struggle. The economic offensive reduced the standard of living of the workers. The investigation conducted by the Bombay Labour Office into the working class budget of 1921-23 revealed that the quantity of daily food consumed by the Bombay workers was less than what was available to the prison inmates. An enquiry conducted by the Madras labour department also revealed a similarly shameful state of affairs.

The following years were an eventful phase of the working class struggle. During this phase the Indian communist movement stood on a firm

foundation poised for advance. Communist influence on the working class movement was felt to be very strong. Large scale strikes were conducted during these years Although the government tried to dub these strikes as 'communist conspiracies', these struggles, led by the communists in many cases were in fact, a sharp manifestation of the simmering discontent of a working class afflicted with crushing problems. Sharpening of struggles, side by side, acted to further widen the outlook of the working class and this was borne out by the very nature of its activities at both national and international levels. The government response tried to root out the militant section of the working class movement by unleashing draconian measures. With a view to keeping the speeding working class movement under safe control, they on one hand introduced the 'Trade Union Act 1926' and on the other passed 'The Trade Disputed Act.' and 'Public Safety Act' for tightening up their suppressive designs. The government every tried to incite the public opinion against them.

The world economic crisis of 1931-36 was the most profound and destructive of all economic crises capitalism has ever known. It dealt a shattering blow to the economy, the political foundation and ideology of bourgeoisie and in total effect it further aggravated the general crisis of capitalism. In India the repercussion of this crisis was more fatal. India's economy, where 80 percent of the people were dependent on agriculture came to a breaking point due to a fall in agricultural prices. The plight of the peasantry was beyond all imaginations, their purchasing power came down to an all time low. In all industries there was mass retrenchment and wages were slashed. In other words, workers of all categories were hit. It is during these times the building up stiff resistance against the world crisis and its effect upon the working class were drastic. In spite of organisational disunity prevailing at that time, the working class waged economic struggle. However, due to the large scale involvement of the working class also in the anti imperialist movement of the period, the political dimension of the struggle got precedence over the economic struggle.

World war II broke out on 3rd September 1939, the Viceroy of India proclaimed India to be belligerent. This had a devastating effect on the Indian economy and working class in particular. The colonial government reoriented the economy, whereby the industrial units introduced double to triple shifts of work and leave e facilities were curtailed. This was done to cater to the war needs of England. As far as workers were concerned, their economic conditions were miserable in the prewar period, and the new war made the situation much worse. This was because of the steady fall in the wage rates across the industry. Though there was a reversal in the trends of wage rate from 1936 onwards, the abnormal rise in prices had not only offset the rise in wages, the wages of the workers in real terms had gone down. In such a situation the working class of India had to wage a 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, Digboi of Assam or in a word throughout the entire county. Moreover, the greatest working class action in India was the antiwar strike which was organized in Bombay on 2nd October 1939 and was joined by 90,000 workers. This event along with other struggles indicates that during this period the outlook of the Indian working class did not remain confined

solely to the economic demands. The working class rather fully kept pace with the national and international political developments and played a key role in the political struggles. In Such an event the imperialist government directed severe attacks to forestall the struggle of the working class.

The defeat of fascism and end of the World War II saw the emergence of the Indian working class as a highly organized, class conscious and uncompromising force against the colonialist. The upsurge of world democratic national liberation forces that followed had its impact in India too. An unprecedented and irresponsible struggle for national liberation and democratic advance engulfed the country. Side by side the working class had to engage in sharp economic struggles. The reason was that after the war there was large scale retrenchment of the wartime recruits and reduction of wages. Against all this, the working class resolutely started the struggle. The phenomenal rise in 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. To suppress these, the government took recourse to extreme measures such as police firing and several other repressive measures. In this many workers had to lay down their lives while upholding their cause.

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. Moreover, it was a broad political front against imperialism where everybody from the national bourgeoisie to the working class rallied with one common objective. But with Independence began a new political dynamics, where power was in the hands of capitalists and landlords. Their economic interests were directly counter to those of the working class. With this, the objective of the struggle of the working class also saw a change i.e. to end the rule of the capitalist and establish socialism in the real sense of the term. This was thought to be the precondition for growth class consciousness, which the majority of the working class of India had not yet realized.

Though the achievement of Independence, roused immense hopes and aspirations among all sections of the society, it was accompanied by a 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 its wake immense hardships and suffering to the toiling masses which generated powerful resistance of the working class to all over the country.

Nature and Structure of the Working Class Today

Given such an eventful history and evolution of the working class in India, it is worthwhile to examine the nature and structure of the working class in the present circumstances. As mentioned above, due to the existence of multistructural economy and effects of primordial affiliations, a variety of forms of the working class exists in India. On top of all, the difference 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 the wage of the worker

should be sufficient to maintain not only the individual but also the worker's family.) They are mostly employed in the public sector enterprises and modern sectors of petrochemicals, pharmaceutical, chemicals and engineering. Second, there is a large arid 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 refuse to accept the norm of family wage for an individual worker. Third, there is a section of the working class at the bottom of the wage scale – 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 ragpicking. They are generally engaged in the informal sector and carry on for the want of sufficient survival wage. The existence of a majority of workers, who are not paid family wage means that either the worker gets some form of supplement from other noncapitalist sectors 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. As Das Gupta (1986) mentions 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 the plantation workers are 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 precapitalist relations of production are a tribute to the capitalist sector.

Not only is there wage differential among the working class, there is also variation in the terms of working conditions. Hence, better paid labour has also greater job security. However the workers on the lower end of the wage scale have not only job security but also 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 classes 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 firms. A study by Deshpande (1979) of Bombay labour found the reverse to be true. That is, around 87 per cent of the regular employees, who had changed their jobs had started as regular employees and only 13 per cent had started as casual labour. In this regard Harriss (1982), who conducted a 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 unorganised into unorganised sector had the requisite skills; experience and education for factory jobs. But they lack the right connections or to



Labour Unrest in Gurgaon-Manesar Industrial Complex near Delhi

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 in Ahmadabad by Subramaniam and Papola (1973) found that 91 percent 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 a substantial portion of the vacancies are filled through employment exchange, it does not in any way mean that the casual, contract or other disadvantaged groups have equal access.

Social Background of Indian Working Class

Indian working class 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 reduced but they do persist nonetheless. In this regard, the Ahmadabad study (1973), 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 percent 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 out the role of kinship ties in getting employment (Gore 1970). Kinship ties not only play a significant role in securing employment, but also in the placement in the wage scale. 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 (Sharma 1970). The dominant position of the workers from upper caste was also brought out in a study of Kerala. This study points 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 castes, schedule castes and tribes is not up to their proportion in the 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 plants 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 (1979) points out, of pre labour market characteristic' such as education and land holding. So those who possessed more land and education ended up in a higher wage sector. But then if upper and lower caste people own comparable levels of landholdings and education, the upper caste worker will get into a higher segment of wage than the lower caste worker. This is because of the continuing importance of caste ties in recruitment. Caste also serves the function of ensuring the supply of cheap labour 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 work at the mere subsistence level (Nathan 1987). Hence, caste on one hand plays a role in keeping the lower section of the society in 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 the 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 these relations of production.

The working class at the conceptual level seems to be fairly simple, but if one tries 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. Another 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 the working class is shrinking in size of everybody except a few at the top are 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 relation of production, and (c) never ending

identification of working mass with primordial features such as caste; religion and other ethnic divisions of the society.

The coming into being and consolidation of the 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 & CHILD LABOUR

Informal sector is sector of economy in which work is performed by the workers in an unplanned manner. Government doesn't plan it. Rather it is planned by the workers themselves.

Informal sector theory is the dominant paradigm in use for explaining poverty and inequality in Third World cities. There have been many versions since its first formulation in 1971, but most focus on differences in productivity and earnings associated with large and small scale enterprises. Employment in large scale (formal) enterprises is associated with high wages, high skill levels, modern technology, unionization, and social security protection, while small scale (informal) enterprises lack these characteristics.

The term 'formal' is often taken to mean waged and salaried labour, while 'informal' refers to self employment, one person enterprises, artisanal production, and domestic services. Note, however, that in this literature both terms refer to paid, officially registered employment, although in advanced industrial societies 'informal' work has been taken to mean work that is not declared to official censors or the tax system, and may even include unpaid labour in the household.

Child labour constitutes one of the biggest informal sectors of Indian economy children are looked upon by Indian as the gifts of God and they constitute about 36 per cent of the Indian population. However, it is a national shame that a considerable number of them still suffer from malnutrition, poverty, disease, cruel exploitation through forced labour and worst of all, illiteracy. Large sums of money are allocated and spend every year in India and at international seminars and conferences that focus on the plight of children, but many of them continue to lead a miserable life.

The worst yet widespread form of child exploitation is child labour. The economically backward classes believe that more hands bring in more resources. Thus they give birth to four to five children who eventually remain illiterate and they may even take to evil ways. In this way exploitation of child labour is perpetrated indirectly by the parents themselves.

Now let us consider some statistical data regarding the extent of child labour in India. Of the 30 million street children of the world, 11 million inhabit the streets of India. The International Labour Organisation has given us some figures of the composition of child labourers of different age groups, but with a rider that figures may be underestimations. One third of the children who are less than 16 years of age in our country are engaged in child labour. About 73 million children who

comprise about 13 percent of the child population in the age group of 10-14 years are also engaged in child labour all over the world.



Child Labour is one of the gravest social problems facing modern India

Poor children in India, in both the rural and the urban areas work at a time when they are supposed to be in the schools laying foundation of their careers. Poverty, illiteracy and social backwardness of parents, an incompetent educational system and other compelling factors force them to carry a heavy burden on their frail and tender shoulders.

In Article: 24 of the Indian Constitution, it is provided that no child below the age of 14 years shall be employed to work in any factory or mine or any other hazardous work place. For this reason and the adoption of various ILO conventions, child labour is nearly absent in the organised sectors such as matchbox factories, firework industries, handwoven carpet industries, glass industries etc. In spite of several laws forbidding the employment of children below a certain age, the evil of child labour still thrives.

Of the total child labourers, about 87 percent are in the rural areas working in farms, plantations, fisheries and cottage industry. Primarily education is free and compulsory but the children do not go to school as they have to work. This deprives them of the opportunity to attend school or acquire the type of human capital which allows them to have a fair chance in the labour market. Child labour, as it is unskilled, fails to create a competent labour force for the future of the country. Another effect of this is that the abundant supply of the child labour reduces the bargaining power of all workers, thereby depressing the wage rates of adults. However, the physical effect of long hours of work in the unhygienic and hazardous conditions on the one hand and the lack of proper nutrition and health care on the

other leads them to contract various diseases resulting in the untimely death of the child. The employer is however, only concerned with his own profit. He employs children since they are docile and willing to do monotonous jobs. Besides they are more trustworthy and less truant and do not form trade unions.

However efforts are being made to increase awareness among people and to alleviate some of the evils of child exploitation. The boycott of products which employ child labour in their production, by the western countries has moved us to ban child labour. Mention in this respect may be made of the carpet Industry. In 1995, Indian carpet manufacturers, exporters and NGO's created a brand known as Rugmark which certifies that no child was involved in carpet making. Also, under the auspices of the National, Child Labour Project (NCLP), we have established special schools to provide nonformal education, vocational training, supplementary nutrition, etc., to the children withdrawn from employment. However the number of working children covered under different programmes is nothing compared to the total strength of the work force.

With the universalization of elementary education there is a ray of hope. It will help us tackle the chronic, problem of child labour. However, awareness and strict adherence to the two child family norm is essential for the success of any governmental efforts. Another factor that is of great importance is that academic education, even up to graduation level does not ensure employment. The need of the hour is vocational and technical education right from the primary stage so that poor students 'earn' and 'learn' simultaneously. However in view of overpopulation, unemployment and poverty there is no harm in allowing children after a certain level of education, to take to their family vocation provided it is not hazardous to their health and they receive guidance from their parents. We also hope that education in general would also make them aware of their plight and they would gradually be able to choose other ways of earning their livelihood and not be exploited for money.

SLUMS AND DEPRIVATION IN URBAN AREAS

Growth of slums is a problem peculiar to the urban areas and they come up near industrial areas, railway lines, ports, platforms, river banks, large drains and around wholesale markets. Their extent is the maximum in metropolitan cities and in the million plus cities. In metropolitan cities, more than 25 per cent of the population lives in slums.



Dharavi slum in Mumbai is the largest in Asia

The houses in slums are mostly kachcha houses made of bricks, Mud, tin sheets, bamboo, tarpaulin sheets, etc. The living area is not more than ten square meters, which is used mainly for storage of household items, whereas cooking, bathing and sleeping are mainly in the open. There are common water taps and public conveniences. An open space, shaded by trees, may be used as the community space. Slums are often prone to floods, water logging, fire, etc. There is no proper drainage and sewerage and this leads to recurrence of waterborne diseases like cholera, gastroenteritis and jaundice.

The slum dwellers are mostly rural migrants who live near their work places, since they cannot afford high transportation costs. Generally, workers from the same community or those of the same origin and working at the same place, live together. The slum dwellers also include the self employed, petty traders, household servants, vendors and hawkers.

Efforts by various governments for resettlement of slum not been successful because the resettlement colonies are usually on the outskirts far away from the workplace. Also, the closed, multi storeyed environment is not conducive to the

kind of life style to which the slum dwellers are accustomed. Removal of shims has never been a practical solution to the problem because as one slum is removed another one crops up. Also, the attempts at removal of slums give rise to social tension. Keeping this in mind, the government policy has been to focus on improvement of living conditions in slums.

POLITICS AND SOCIETY

NATION, DEMOCRACY AND CITIZENSHIP

The Independent Indian state, which emerged from the freedom movement, inherited two rather contradictory legacies. Some of its institutions were shaped by the needs of colonial rule. Though the British introduced certain liberal elements like the rule of law and a relatively independent judiciary, the political institutions created by them were governed by the principles prompted by the demands of colonial power. The structures of the army, bureaucracy, the police, the administrative rules and their aloofness from the common people were obviously the consequences of this legacy. At the same time, the nation of Independent India is also the product of a national movement, and is committed to the transformation of some of these colonial structures in the interests of the common people. The Independent state is trying to decolonise the nature and functions of the political institutions inherited by it from the British Raj by making them responsive to needs and aspirations of India and rendering them accountable to the people.

Sovereign, Socialist, Secular, Democratic Republic of India

India adopted its new Constitution after Independence, on 26 November 1949. It became effective, from January 26, 1950. A Constitution contains the fundamental principles of a state, which determine the powers and duties of the Government; and guarantee certain rights to the people and which together constitute the organic law of the land.

The preamble to the Constitution declares its spirit and broad objectives. According to it, the state of Independent India is sovereign i.e., it has supreme power to decide its own course of action relating to the people and territory of India. It is a democratic state where power is exercised by the representatives of the people who are directly or indirectly chosen by them. It is a republic where the head of the Government is a president elected by the people (through their representatives)

Independent India has chosen the form of parliamentary democracy. It ensures the people's control over the government (the Council of Ministers) by making irresponsible to the popularly elected legislature and by ensuring periodic elections to the House of the people at the centre and legislative assemblies in the 'provincial states' on the basis of adult suffrage. No person shall be denied the right to vote in these elections on grounds of religion, race, caste and sex. These provisions of the Constitution (Articles 325 and 326) have brought far reaching changes in a society which has been traditionally marked by caste hierarchy, serious economic disparities and gender inequalities. Politics in India is not confined to a small aristocracy. India is today the largest democracy and one of the most intensely

political societies of the world. Mass participation in politics of modern India the legitimacy of the political system and strengthens its effectiveness.

The success of Indian democracy was facilitated by a political process which aimed at modernization, democratization and economic development. This political process was controlled by the parliament, the council of ministers as well as the bureaucracy. The bureaucracy, members of which are recruited through open competitive public examinations, implements the policies framed by selected representatives of the people. The members of this bureaucracy are chosen not on the basis of birth, caste, creed, race, religion or gender but on the basis of rational criteria such as merit.

The colonial power divided India on the basis of religion and several communal riots accompanied partition. Independent India chose, therefore, the path of Secularism, which means that the state will have no official religion of its own and it will not favour or interfere with any religion. From the very beginning the independent state in India has shown equal respect for all religions. Holding of public offices and employment in government services do not depend on the religious affiliation of an individual (Articles 15 & 16). The adoption of socialist pattern of society, in order to curb or reduce inequalities, constitutes another attempt of the Indian polity towards democratic nationbuilding.

Justice, Liberty and Equality

The constitution secures social and economic justice through the guarantee of fundamental rights. Part III of the constitution secures six groups of rights of the individual's. They are:

- (1) Right to Equality.
- (2) Right to Freedom
- (3) Right to Freedom of Religion.
- (4) Cultural and Educational Rights.
- (5) Right to Constitutional Remedies.

The Constitution had also guaranteed the Right to Property which has been modified through later amendments in response to the demands for social and economic justice. An independent judiciary protects these rights and freedoms. The guarantee of these rights by the constitution is a bold attempt by the state of independent India to remove the inequalities and disabilities of caste, gender, religion, region or race, suffered traditionally by different sections of the people of India in various situations. It thus, guarantees the dignity of the 'individual' which is the hallmark of the modern society. The Constitution has abolished, for example, the scourge of untouchability. By ensuring the liberties of the individual, the Constitution seeks to curb the exercise of arbitrary power by any individual within the government or outside it.

The Humanistic and democratic idealism expressed in the preamble to the Indian Constitution is further strengthened in the directive principles of the state policy in Part IV of the Constitution. They offer elaborate agenda of what the state should do to promote the welfare of the people and secure a just social order for them. They exhort the state to ensure the equitable distribution of ownership of the means; of production and protection of the health and the strength of certain specific groups and individual viz. women, worker, and the children who are usually far less privileged than the other sections of the society. Although no citizen can move the court to compel the state to enforce the rights promised in the directive principles, nevertheless these principles provide a means for evaluating the performance of the Government in promoting welfare of the people. The judiciary increasingly functions as the custodian of the people's rights enshrined in the Constitution.

The Federal Structure

Soon after Independence, India faced a number of problems, including the territorial and administrative integration of the princely states, the communal riots that accompanied partition, the rehabilitation of refugees who had migrated from Pakistan, and insurgency. Besides, there were other long standing problems like poverty. The national movement played a pivotal role in welding India together politically and emotionally into a nation and integrating it into 'a common framework of political identity and loyalty.' The political leaders faced the problem of integration of the princely states with the rest of India. In deference to the linguistic, cultural and regional diversities and the need for integration, the Constitution made provisions, for a federal structure with a strong centre as well as a great deal of autonomy for the States or Units. There is a division of powers between the Union Government at the centre and governments of different regional units called States in the Indian Constitution. The Supreme court functions as the custodian of the autonomy of the states in India. Of course, to prevent the fissiparous tendencies and to preserve the unity of the nation, the Union Government has been given a large amount of power. Services ensure uniformity in administration throughout the country. Many states and regions are however, dissatisfied with the amount of power and autonomy granted to them. It is not unexpected in a country like India which is the home of many diverse groups of people with differing cultural identities and political interests. Caste, language, tribal identities, immigration, unequal development of different sectors challenges for the Indian polity. The Indian nation state is striving hard to meet the challenges by balancing the competing demands of different segments constituting the Indian polity.

CITIZENSHIP

Citizenship constitutes the indispensable foundational principle of democratic polity. It involves the individual's full political membership in the State, his permanent allegiance to the state and the official recognition by the State of his integration into the political system. Citizenship brings certain rights, duties, privileges and obligations that do not belong to aliens. All public offices are open to a citizen; he is eligible for recruitment to all public services. The right to vote and certain fundamental rights are available only to citizens and citizens have

obligations like paying taxes, defending the nation etc. Citizenship may also be viewed as the legal relationship between the individual and the state under which the individual pledges his 'loyalty to the State and state officers its protection to the individual. This relationship is regulated by national law and recognized by international law.

There existed no concept of Indian citizenship before 26 November 1949 when the Constituent Assembly adopted the Constitution and at once brought into force articles 5 to 9 relating to citizenship. Until then, those of us who lived in British India were under the Crown and as such British subjects governed by the British Nationality Acts and those who came from any of the princely States had the status of British protected persons.

The partition of India and massive migrations created stupendous problems for citizenship determination. Citizenship provisions in the Constitution articles 5 to 11 gave the Constitution Drafting Committee the maximum headache and took a large number of drafts and more than two years to be finalized. Even then, the Constitution only laid down the law in regard to who would be citizens of India at the time of the commencement of the Constitution. It did not provide for the mode of acquisition and termination of citizenship. Article 11 said that Parliament could regulate the right of citizenship by law. The Indian Citizenship Act passed in 1955 laid down the law for acquisition and termination of Citizenship.

Article 58 conferred citizenship on 'every person' who was converted under one of the following categories at the time of the commencement of the Constitution

1. Domiciled in India and born in India these formed the bulk of the population of the Union of India;
2. Domiciled, not born in India but either of whose parents was born in India.
3. Domiciled, not born in India but ordinarily resident for more than five years;
4. Resident in India but who migrated to Pakistan before 1 March 1947 and later returned to India on resettlement permits;
5. Resident in Pakistan but who migrated to India before 19 July 1948 or who came after that date but had resided in India for more than six months and got registered in the prescribed manner;
6. Resident outside India but who or either of whose parents or grand Parents were born in India.

Thus Citizenship at the commencement of the Constitution included provisions for Citizenship (i) by domicile (ii) of migrants from and to Pakistan, and (iii) of Indians residing in foreign countries.

It is important to remember in regard to the citizenship provisions in the Constitution and the law that it was in keeping with the aim of building an integrated Indian nation and a united fraternity that the constitutionmakers decided to provide for a single Indian Citizenship. All citizens irrespective of the State in which they were born have the same rights and duties all over the country

without any discrimination subject only to a few special protections in case of Jammu & Kashmir, tribal areas etc. and the power of Parliament under article 16 to prescribe residence within a State or Union Territory as necessary qualification for certain classes of employment under that State or Union Territory.

POLITICAL PARTIES AND PRESSURE GROUPS

Political parties are indispensable for the working of a democratic government. They are organised groups of citizens who have common views on public issues and, acting as political units, seek to obtain control of the government in order to implement the programme and policy which they profess. The Indian constitution has recognised the right to the freedom of speech and the freedom of forming associations and also guaranteed periodic elections of their representatives by the people to the legislatures on the basis of Universal adult franchise, India has adopted a multiparty system. The multiparty system offers enough political choice and interaction, especially for minorities and marginal groups. However, the predominance of all India parties in India indicates the extent to which political unity is firmly established. In contemporary political scenario, the growth of regional political parties and the experiment of coalition government reflect the articulation of regional and sectional interests.

From 1947 to 1977; Congress was the only ruling party at the all India level. After 1977, the Congress has been replaced by successful coalitions between different political parties both at the national and state levels. Today we have two broad coalitions of political parties one led by the BJP and the other led by the Congress. At one time, the Janata Party held the centre stage. Today, the leftist parties and many regional parties also claim all India status. In the subsequent decades after Independence, the political parties were dominated by professional groups such as lawyers. This dominance is declining and their place is being taken over by farmers and agriculturists.

The Party System, Politics of Caste and Voting Behaviour in India

Initially, Indian polity was characterized by one party dominance. By virtue of its presence over a long duration and through sustained organizational penetration, the Congress had given a unified leadership to the whole nation. Historically the Congress had developed as a movement for social regeneration and national Independence.

The real contribution of the party system to political development lies in its role of being a catalyst of government performance at various levels. These parties represent people's interests and compete for power. They turn the political process —both as a resource for the government and as a critic of its performance.

To achieve power, political parties often exploit elements like caste and religion, which have a bearing on human sentiments. Rajni Kothari points out that by drawing the caste system into their web of organisation, political parties find scope for mobilisation of mass support. In making politics its sphere of activity, a caste asserts its identity and strives for positions of power. Politicians mobilise caste

groupings and identities in order to consolidate their power. The democratic polity based on elections has led to the involvement of the traditional structure of the caste system in politics.



*Congress Party under the leadership of Nehru-Gandhi family dominated Indian polity for much of independent India's history.
Above: 3 Indian Prime Ministers Nehru, Indira & Rajiv Gandhi*

The voting behaviour over the years has shown the linkages between the traditional structure of caste and the modern polity in India. The nature of democratic state in India is different from the states in other democratic states with the institutions of Indian society. For example, the caste system and the processes of democratic participation in politics have successfully accommodated each other. Caste has responded to the constraints and opportunities offered by modern electoral politics. It has given rise to unexpected forms of caste mobilization around caste, region and communities (i.e., casteism, regionalism and communalism), remain the greatest obstacles in the realisation of political goals enshrined in Indian Constitution.

The politics of caste is also related with the long term logic of the policy of protective discrimination, popularly known as the reservation policy, which has given an opportunity to the Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, Other Backward Classes and the religious to gain an advantage from the huge resources of the state directed economic system. Political changes in the caste based society have been caused by deliberate and intended results of state policies.

In rural India, the patterns of loyalties and interests and the power structures which prevail at the village or neighbourhood level are often the most important elements of political action. In urban areas, the role of class factor has been found to be more important in voting behavior.

Studies of voting behavior reveal that debate over issues of public policy plays a negligible role in election campaigns and presumably in affecting the ways in which individuals vote. To a large extent, Indian voters are still oriented towards particular ties or their specific interests rather, than to policy or ideological issues. It is possible for parties and candidates to make emotional and irrational appeals to voters on the basis of primordial attachment to caste and religion.

Reports from the rural areas suggest that neither the large landowners nor landless labourers play a decisive role in the outcome of the elections, the former because their power has been limited by recent legislation and the latter because they are often economically dependent upon others. The class of owner cultivators (middle level castes) have a keen and decisive interest in the elections. However, even voters belonging to low caste and economically backward sections can't be ignored if only because their numbers are high.

SOCIAL AND POLITICAL ELITE

The new political elite in India emerged through the process of the establishment of Indian nationhood and consolidation of its political freedom. A plurality of structural background characterized the nature of these elite from the outset, although the elite of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries were functionally diffuse. They led not only political but also social and cultural movements. Career politics, giving rise to functionally specific political elite came into being probably after independence. The important structural phenomenon which influenced the nature of political elite before independence was the multiplicity of ethnic and cultural traditions, of Islam, Hinduism, Christianity and other minority traditions. The major political consequence of this plurality of historical experiences and structural demands was partition of the country through polarization of the ideologies. The process of this polarization has been complex but it could be related with the growing sense of loss and scepticism of the Muslim elite in India ever since the fall of the Mughal empire and establishment of the British regime, and the fact that they could benefit least from modernizing institutions and services that the British established in India. The conflict was not only ideological but also structural.

Structurally, the political elite before independence came from the upper rung of social stratification, irrespective of the variations in their ideologies and ethnicreligious backgrounds. Ideologically, however, there was no such uniformity except that most of them shared a broad modernization ideology. This modernization ideology, of which political ideology formed an important part, was divided into various shades based on whether the elite professed the Western rationalist ideology or where for a synthesis between the Western and the Indian tradition. It is indeed difficult to draw a sharp line between these two divisions, yet relatively speaking a distinction, on these two lines can be maintained. Both these ideological shades had many subvariations. For instance, the rationalistic ideology had its manifestation in the Marxist and liberaldemocratic ideologies and the synthetic ideology reflected itself into both secular and revivalistic forms. These divisions the of elite on ideological grounds did lead to significant segmentation in the elite structure on the lines of political parties, but more importantly, the process of segmentation in India due to the predominant role played by the Indian

National Congress was from within this party. For instance, the Congress was led both by Gandhi, a proponent of synthesis ideology and Nehru, a rationalist liberal; the socialist ideologies could also be found to have been represented in the Congress party which led to various stages of segmentation in its form.

The Indian National Congress, therefore, in a way represents the plurality of most types of ideological traditions of the Indian political elite. It also fully represents the structural background, recruitment and socialization processes of these elite. Structurally, the Congress like most other political ideological parties in its initial form was composed of the 'new elite' of the urban educated middle classes.

Of the total of 13,839 delegates who attended the various annual sessions [of the Congress] between 1892 and 1909, as many as 5,442, or nearly 40 per cent, were members of the legal profession. The other important groups were those of the landed gentry with 2,629 delegates, and of the commercial classes with 2,091. The rest of the total was made up of journalists, doctors, and teachers. (Misra, 1961)

The predominance of urban sections in the Congress is revealed by its membership composition and leadership of the active members of the Congress. In 1958, only 28.1 per cent were agriculturist; in the AICC during 1956 only 20.6 per cent were agriculturists; and the Working Committee of 194654 had to representation from the agricultural occupation, whereas 72.5 percent membership was from the professions (see Kochanek 1968: 34758). The background of members of Indian professional groups, which we have analysed below, being mainly upper caste and upper and middle class, the structural continuity of this elite structure with that of the past can be easily observed.

It is revealed by its members of the Congress Party during 1956 had 72.5 per cent (Chanek 1968: 34758). The groups, which we have analysed as middle class, the structural of the past can be easily observed.

Indeed, even political parties professing radical ideologies have most elite coming from the upper caste and class background. An analysis of the social origin of the Communist Party elite in West Bengal, Kerala and Andhra shows that the left wing Communist leadership in the three states is made up to a much greater extent of individuals of lower class and caste than is the rightwing leadership. In West Bengal all nine rightwing leaders are Brahmins, Kayasthas or Vaishyas, the three dominant castes in West Bengal, whereas none of the three

left wing leader about whom information is available belong to any of these castes. Two the leftwing leaders are Muslims. In Kerala, there are proportionately more Ezhavas than Nairs in the leftwing Communist leadership. The leftwing leaders in that state and in others tend to be lower class, less educated, and without a fluent command of English. The rightwing leaders are high class, much better educated and more fluent in English. It is symptomatic that almost all the English-educated Communist graduates of Cambridge, Oxford, and the London School of Economics belong to the right wing of the party. Many of these, who come from prosperous middle class and upper class families, are resented by their lower-class 'comrades'.

As one disgruntled Communist put it, 'You have to have a Cambridge degree, to get anywhere in the party'.

The process of fission of the Communist Party into right and left wings based on changes in the elite recruitment is also confirmed by changes in the composition of the Congress elite. The agrarian interest groups have gained more ground slowly in the subsequent compositions of Lok Sabha. The Lower classes in the first, second, third and fourth Lok Sabhas has been declining from 35 per cent to 30, 24.5 and 17.5 per cent respectively. While lawyers have been losing ground the agrarian classes have increased their representation in the first to fourth Lok Sabhas from 12.4 per cent to 31.1 percent. Structurally, the important changes that have taken place in the recruitment and social background of political elite following independence are, first, that there has been a regionalization and ruralisation of the elite structure secondly, greater differentiation has now taken place between the political elite and intellectual and professional elite since more and more of the agricultural groups have entered into this role; thirdly, among the agricultural groups that have found representation in the ranks of the political elite, the dominance has shifted from traditionally upper caste landlords to the intermediate caste, rich landed peasantry. The pattern does, however, differ from state to state. For instance, in Rajasthan it is reported that the former feudal lords, businessmen and large landholders of the districts dominate in the political elite role, even in the villages and districts (see Narain 1964). Similarly, studies in Maharashtra also reveal the dominance of the upper classes as rural political elite. V.M. Sirsikar concludes in his study of the rural elite that 'there is a perceptible trend toward concentration of socioeconomic and political power. The democratization of power involving democratic society has yet to take place.

The pluralistic character of Indian society and the feudal nature of the political system impinge upon the functioning of the political elite at all levels, national, state and village. There are consequently, both integrative or organic and divisive or segmental forces working that build themselves up as contradictory demands on the functioning of the Indian political elite. Irrespective of party affiliations, the political elite have to reconcile these two types of demands while performing their roles. The two contradictory demands provide scope for the political elite and those from tribes and the backward groups. Despite the narrower orientation of the objectives of the minority elite; an important feature of their functioning so far is their reconciliatory character. This is true of the movement led by the DMK regional political elite as much as of the Sikh and Scheduled caste and tribal elite in various parts of the country. The reconciliatory character of minority political elite as also of other elite in India is probably derived from their social background and their place in the social stratification. The Muslim elite, for instance, also come in higher also come in higher proportion from the upper classes; have typically higher educational level for their community (about 50 per cent of the elite have college education whereas only 23 per cent Muslim's are literate); originate from the medium size cities (here the process of ruralisation noted by Myron Weiner and others for the elite from other communities seem to operate); and most of them belong to the Congress party (see Wright 65). The tribal and Scheduled caste elite also come from relatively higher status groups from within their community

An important issue regarding the functional differentiation of the political elite is related to their professional institutionalization as a category. This question is linked with their professional socialization. Systematic studies have not been conducted in this area, but the indications are that particularistic loyalty rather than ideology commitment matters more in the growth of political affiliations and stances for most of our political elite. This attribute among the political elite became probably stronger since independence and assumed specially epidemic proportion in coalition governments in the states. This probably reflects the fact that the political elite in India, having been recruited to most political parties from a single type of social base, are not existentially committed to varying or alternative political ideologies. Interest groups thus do not in reality fully reflect themselves through political parties. Percival Spear (1970) associates this trait in the Indian political elite with the tradition of Khidmat or service rather than personal allegiance to a person, a tradition which has continued from the Mughal times. He writes:

Mughal rulers often took the supporters of a rival into service immediately after a decisive battle and it was common for such an event to lead to an avalanche of changed allegiances. It was Khidmat or service, which was honourable rather than allegiance... to a particular person. This tradition of Indian Public life may perhaps help to explain the epidemic of changing sides which has recently occurred in some Indian legislatures. It was no disgrace to join the winning side provided it really won.

Spear's interpretation tends entirely to be cultural that is perpetuation of the service norms in the elite role. He does not seem to recognize the significant structural feature of these elites, which is their essential homogeneity in term of recruitment irrespective of ideologies. The indeed is the factor that reinforce this type of cultural attitude. It also omits the more mundane or pragmatic considerations, rather than altruistic Khidmat value that the often motivating factors in change sides

To sum the important features of the political elite in India are their social structure homogeneous with a nascent tendency for differentiation; their essentially upper middle class background of requirement and political socialization; the tendency to constantly reconcile rather than mobilize the political demand and interest through various sets of networks through level of political echelons their progressive functional differentiation from other elite forms, but lack professionalization and finally their capacity for continual conversion of political interest into emotive symbols through which a path for political bargains and reconciliations is laid out.

REGIONALISM

As the term denotes, regionalism is associated with region. Let us, therefore, first define region. The term has several meanings. In the geographical sense, it means any more or less extensive part of the earth's surface. But in political science it has a distinct meaning. It means a part of nation state marked by homogeneity in respect of language, culture and community of economic and other interests.

Although regionalism is associated with territory, it is basically a psychological phenomenon. Regionalism grows when the people inhabiting a particular region inside a nation state feel that they are bound together by ties which are distinct from and stronger than the bonds which link them to other sections of the people living outside the region. In other words, regionalism is a tendency which makes



The powerful Telangana movement culminated in Telangana being carved out as the 29th state of the Indian Union in 2014

the people feel that their interests political, economic and cultural are distinct and separate from similar interests of the people outside that region.

Regionalism, thus, fosters among the people a sense of being a distinct territorial community with its own life and interests; and inculcates in them a desire to organize themselves into a distinct political unit for the protection and promotion of their interests.

Aspects of Regionalism

Regionalism has two aspects. On the one hand; it is a centrifugal tendency. It opposes loyalty to the region. In its extreme form it becomes a negation of national. It becomes antagonistic to and subversive of the national entity. It may aim at the dismemberment of the nation state with a view to achieving for the region the status of a sovereign state. In a milder form it mainly aims at securing for the region a greater measure of administrative autonomy. Regionalism is an integrative force. While fostering loyalty to the region, it opposes sub regional tendencies like casteism, communalism, and loyalty to other narrower entities within the region.

The Encyclopaedia of Social Sciences defines regionalism as follows: in a general way regionalism may be defined as a counter movement to any exaggerated or aggressive form of centralization. It must not, however, be considered solely from political point of view or government administration. Regionalist problems arise only when there is a combination of two or more such factors as geographical isolation, independent historical traditionalism, racial, ethnic or religious peculiarities and local and economic class interests.

Factors Responsible for Rise of Regionalism in India

1. Worldwide Phenomenon. Regionalism is not a peculiar feature of Indian politics; it is a worldwide phenomenon. Although most modern nation states have been formed on the basis of linguistic and cultural homogeneity, there is no nation state which is perfectly homogeneous in all respects. Almost in every state there are regional entities which have not been thoroughly assimilated into the body politic of the nation state. Scots in Britain, Tamils in Sri Lanka, Kurds in Iraq and in Turkey, Basques in Spain, Sindhis, Baluchis and Pakhtoons in Pakistan are some well known examples.

2. Regional Diversity. In India, regionalism is a product of her regional diversity. There are more than two dozen well defined homogeneous linguistic regions. Each one of them has not only a developed language but its distinct culture and historical traditions, and is highly conscious of its cultural identity and very sensitive about it. The linguistic factor gave rise to states linguistic regionalism and the movement for linguistic states. Out of this movement arose regional linguistic passions. Questions of interstate boundaries, allocation of river waters and location of development projects roused the passions of regional linguistic groups and developed into militant demands leading to bitterness and conflict. The anti Hindi movement and the demand for Dravidanad also arose out of this combination of regional linguistic factors.

3. Tribal Factor. In the northeast the tribal factor gave rise to regionalism. In that part of the country, there are several regions inhabited by tribes, each with its own language, culture and traditions. These tribes have through ages stood apart from the mainstream of national life and history. Besides, they are highly self respecting people and proud of their cultural traditions. It is not unnatural that they fear for the preservation of their culture and find it difficult to merge in the main stream of the nation's life.

4. Religious Factor. In the northwest the religious factor was responsible for the rise of regionalism and gave birth to the movement for the division of pre independence India into two states India and Pakistan. In the post independence period it has led to the slogan of the Sikh homeland or Khalistan.

5. Economic Cause. It should be noted that regionalism does not always express in combination of other factors; it arises independently of language, religion or tribalism. For instance, regionalism in Telangana, in Andhra Pradesh, in Vidarbha in Maharashtra should be traced to the uneven economic development of the respective regions. Some students of sociology overemphasize the role of the economic factor in the rise and growth of regionalism in the country. No doubt, the

economic factor is important. The economic and cultural development of the various regions of the country has been uneven. It is therefore, not surprising that conflicts develop between peoples and even governments of the various States, and within States between regions, on the questions of location of projects, distribution of water etc. But it is also a fact that in many cases regionalism has risen independently of the economic factor. An extreme form of regionalism arose in Madras in the fifties, but in the matter of regional development, Madras was a developed State. Similarly, Punjab is not an economically underdeveloped state, but it is there that a most virulent of regionalism has developed.

6. Political Ambition. Finally, ambitious politicians who fail to get into power at the State or national level seek to exploit regional sentiments to promote their personal interests.

Some Forms of Regionalism in India

- (1) Demand for secession from the Indian Union,
- (2) Demand for separate statehood,
- (3) Demand for full statehood by certain Union Territories,
- (4) Inter State disputes.

DECENTRALISATION OF POWER

The question of division, of power among institutions and individuals has been a matter of considerable debate among the people involved in governance. This need has been specially emphasised as democracy as a form of government has gained acceptance in the modern world. Decentralisation means sharing of decision making authority with the lower levels in institutions and organisations. It is called democratic as this sharing is, based on the basic principle of democracy and democratisation. There are different forms of decentralisation political, administrative and financial.

It is argued that decentralisation is essential for the functioning of a democratic system at different levels. It helps to empower social group which traditionally have been weak and deprived. Decentralisation 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 and economy. Thus, the geographical and social complexities require decentralization for the purposes of planning and administration.

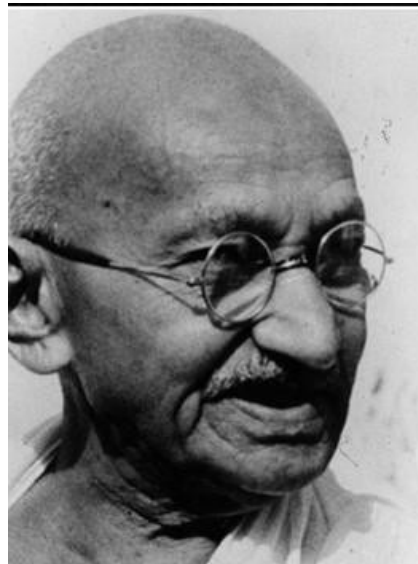
The need for decentralisation in India has long been realized and attempts have been made to achieve it. Decentralisation became particularly, important after Independence to achieve goals of democracy and development.

In the section that follows we will discuss the Panchayati Raj institutions as forms and institutional schemes for achieving democratic decentralization.

PANCHAYATI RAJ INSTITUTIONS

Background

The history of Panchayat in India goes back to hundreds of years. The term panch is ordinarily used for a group of persons (panch = five) who take decisions on collective affairs of the village. The people repose so much confidence in panch that they are called panch parmeshwar (God speaks through the five). The system of taking collective decision through panch is known as Panchayat. It is, largely, a self governing institution.



When the panchayat raj is established, public opinion will do what violence can never do.

— Mahatma Gandhi —

The growth of Panchayat in India as a selfgoverning institution has not been steady in the course of its long history. However, the ideals of Panchayat were revived when Mahatma Gandhi arrived on the national political scene. Gandhiji asserted that the village panchayats would now be a living force in a special way, and India would almost be enjoying selfgovernment suited to its requirements. Accordingly, the idea of Panchayat as a system of local government remained an important issue in India's freedom struggle. But when the country became independent the Panchayat of Gandhi's vision did not acquire a central place in the Indian Constitution. It was merely included in Article 40 under the Directive Principles of the State Policy. Article 40 says, the State shall take step to organise village panchayats and endow them with such powers and authority as may be necessary to enable them to function as units of local self government.

Nonetheless, it is interesting' to point out that, although the Directive Principles of the Constitution are only suggestive in nature, the significance of Panchayati Raj institutions was recognised by all States. Immediately after the Independence an ambitious development programme for rural areas was launched. The programme, known as the Community Development Programme (CDP), covered almost all activities of rural development. But it could not fully achieve its goals. In order to review the causes of its limited success, the Government of India appointed a Study Team. It was headed by Balwantrai Mehta, the then Member of Parliament. The Study Team came to the conclusion that the CDP had failed to achieve its targets because of the absence of the people's participation in the programme. In view of this, it recommended the creation of certain institutions based on the principle of democratic decentralization for facilitating people's participation in development programmes. The formation of three tier Panchayati Raj institutions in the country was the result of the above recommendations. All the States in India passed

Panchayat Acts by 1959. Accordingly, panchayats were established at village (Village Panchayat), block (Panchayat Samiti) and District (Zila Parishad) levels. Another committee, popularly called the Ashok Mehta Committee, also reviewed the functioning of the Panchayati Raj structure. This Committee proposed a two-tier system for grass root governance. But the Government did not accept this recommendation and we continued to follow the three-tier system proposed by the Balwantraji Mehta Committee report.

This set up of panchayats continued for almost more than two decades. Though the basic objectives of these institutions were uniform in various states but their powers, functions and modes of elections differed considerably. Under these circumstances, the 'performance of these institutions widely varied from State to State. In some States; they effectively contributed to development activities, but in other States panchayats they merely generated conflicts and rivalries among various caste groups for controlling power in these institutions. Panchayati Raj institutions failed in benefiting the weaker sections of rural society.

Moreover, the organisational structure of these institutions to panchayats weak. In the absence of any legal binding, no regular elections to panchayats were held. No financial power was given to these Panchayati bodies. Government officials continued to maintain wide ranging command over Panchayat representatives. Such bureaucratic control killed initiative and interests of the people in the Panchayati Raj structures. The stagnation and decline of Panchayati Raj institutions continued till the early nineties when steps were undertaken to revitalize them.

Recent Efforts

As stated before, except a marginal reference in the Directive Principles of the State Policy, Panchayat had no constitutional status. But the position radically changed was passed in 1993, when the 73rd Amendment to the Constitution was passed in the Parliament and received the assent of the President of India. The Amendment is based on the principle of power to the people and provides constitutional guarantee to panchayats. The salient features of the Act are given below:

- (a) It recognizes panchayats as 'institutions of self government'.
- (b) It entrusts panchayats the power and responsibilities of prepare a plan for economic development and social justice.
- (c) It provides for the establishment of uniform three tier system of strong panchayats at village, intermediate (block/Taluka) and district levels for all states having a population of over twenty lakh.
- (d) It gives guidelines for the structure, powers and functions, finance and elections, and reservations of seats for the weaker sections at various levels of panchayats.

The Constitution (73rd Amendment) Act has been hailed as a revolutionary step towards establishing grass root democracy. The blueprint provided by the Amendment has now become a reality. All the States have passed legislation in conformity with the provisions of the Amendment. Thus, for the first time in the history of Panchayati Raj system, a high degree of uniformity has been achieved on panchayats.

Another Act has been passed for the tribal areas of some States. The provisions of the Panchayats (Extension to the Scheduled Areas) Act, 1996 extends panchayats to the tribal areas of Andhra Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Gujarat, Himachal Pradesh, Jharkhand, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Orissa and Rajasthan. This has come into effect on 24 December 1996. All states have passed laws to give effect to the provisions contained in the act 40 of 1996.

Against the above background we now move on to discuss various aspects of Panchayati Raj Institutions in terms of structure, composition, power and function.

Structure and Composition

Panchayats are term intermediate because it exists at intermediate level. We proceed on to discuss various aspects of structure, composition, power. Panchayats are constituted at the village, intermediate and district levels. The term intermediates has been used for Community Development Block because it exists between a village and a district. However, panchayats at the intermediate level may not be constituted if the population of a state does not exceed twenty lakhs.



A Panchayat meeting in progress

Gram Sabha is a body consisting of all persons registered in the electoral rolls to a village comprised within the area of Gram Panchayat. Gram Sabha is regarded as the soul of Panchayati Raj. Since all the registered voters of a village Panchayat are included in a Gram Sabha, it acts as a general body of the village pauchayat. It provides a forum for the people to ensure transparency and accountability in the system. Allstate Panchayat Acts, have provision for the constitution of Gram Sabha. The Sabha has to meet at least once in six months.

All the seats in a Panchayat are filled by persons chosen by direct election from territorial constituencies in the Panchayat area. Each Panchayat area is divided into territorial constituencies for this purpose.

The chairperson of a Panchayat at the village level is elected ordinarily by the voters of the concerned Panchayat. But the Chairperson of Panchayat at the intermediate level or a district level is elected by and from amongst the elected members.

Reservation of Seats

In every Panchayat seats are reserved for the Scheduled caste and the Scheduled Tribes in proportion to their population in the Panchayat area. Depending upon the decision of a State, provision for reservation of seats may be provided in favour of the Other Backward Classes of citizen.

Not less than onethird of the total number of seats, to be filled by direct election is reserved for women. This includes seats reserved for women belonging to the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes.

The posts of the Chairperson in Panchayats at the different levels are also reserved for the Schedule Castes, Scheduled Tribes and women. The number of such reserved posts for the first two categories depends on their population. But in the case of women the number of reserved posts of chairpersons has to be not less than onethird of the total number of posts at eachlevel.

Finally, the State has also been given power to make any provision for reservation of seats and post at any level for the Other Backward Classes.

Duration of Panchayats

Every Panchayat shall have the duration of five years from the date of its first meeting. An election to constitute a Panchayat has to be held before the expiry of its duration.

However, the State government has been given power to dissolve a Panchayat even before its duration of five years. But in such a case an election to constitute as Panchayat has to be completed before a period of six months from the date of its dissolution.

Powers and Responsibilities of Panchayats

Panchayats have been given power and authority to enable them to function as institutions of selfgovernment. There are two major areas which have been identified for this purpose. They are:

- (i) The preparation of plans for economic development and social justice; and
- (b) The implementation of schemes for economic development and social justice;

The Eleventh Schedule of the Constitution has listed some subjects concerning the above schemes that may be undertaken by panchayats at different levels. Some major subjects are:

1. Agriculture
2. Land improvement, implementation of land reforms, land consolidation
3. Minor irrigation, watershed development
4. Animal husbandry
5. Fisheries

6. Social forestry
7. Small scale industries
8. Khadi, village and cottage industries
9. Drinking water
10. Rural housing
11. Roads, culverts, bridges etc.
12. Rural electrification
13. Poverty alleviation programmes
14. Education including primary and secondary schools
15. Cultural activities
16. Health and sanitation.

Other Major Constitutional Provisions

In addition to the above provisions, the Constitution has made some other provisions to strengthen Panchayati Raj institutions.

- (a) Panchayats have been authorised to levy, collect and appropriate taxes and fees.
- (b) A Finance Commission has to be constituted by every state to review the financial position of the panchayats.
- (c) A State Election Commission consisting of a State Election Commissioner has to be appointed in every, state. It will conduct all elections to the panchayats.

NAGARA PALIKA AND THE 74TH AMENDMENT

Panchayats in Urban Areas

A provision has also been made to constitute Panchayat in some urban areas. In order to provide a common framework for urban local bodies as effective democratic unit of selfgovernment, Parliament enacted the Constitution (74th Amendment) Acts in 1992 relating to municipalities. The Act received the assent of the President on 20 April 1993. The Act provides constitution of three types of Municipalities:

- (a) Nagar Panchayats for areas in transition from a rural area to urban area,
- (b) Municipal smaller urban areas, and
- (c) Municipal Corporation for large urban areas.

Like rural Panchayats, the Act has made provisions for making these bodies effective and strong. These provisions include fixed duration of municipalities, appointment of State Election Commission, appointment of State Finance Commission and constitution of metropolitan and district planning committees. All the States have implemented these provisions.

The 74th Amendment Act of the Indian constitution added the 12th Schedules to the Constitution which is given below:

TWELFTH SCHEDULE [ARTICLE 243W]

1. Urban planning including town planning.
2. Regulation of land use and construction of buildings.
3. Planning for economic and social development.
4. Roads and bridges.
5. Water supply for domestic, industrial and commercial purposes.
7. Fire services.
8. Urban forestry, protection of the environment and promotion of ecological aspects.
9. Safeguarding the interests of weaker sections of society, including the handicapped and mentally retarded.
10. Slum improvement and upgradation.
11. Urban poverty alleviation.
12. Provision of urban amenities and facilities such as parks, gardens, playgrounds
13. Promotion of cultural, educational and aesthetic aspects.
14. Burials and burial ground; cremation grounds and electric cremation.
15. Cattle ponds; prevention of cruelty to animals.
16. Vital statistics including registration of births and deaths.
17. Public amenities including street lighting, parking lots, bus stops and public conveniences.
18. Regulation of slaughter houses and tanneries.

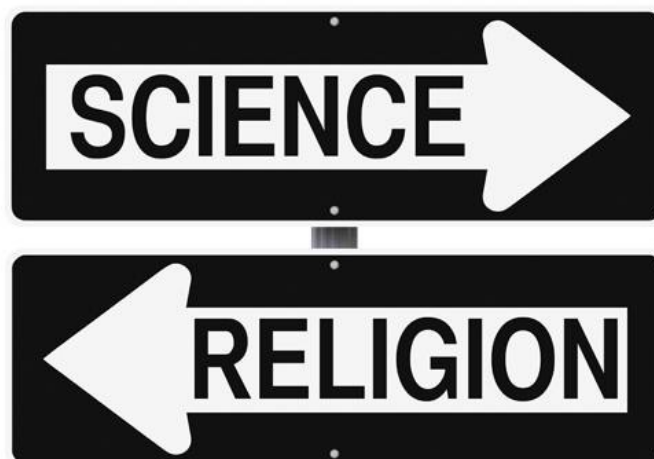
SECULARISATION

Secularization is another significant process of social change occurring in modern India. This is not unique as western countries, too are undergoing the same. The term secularization was first used in Europe in 1648 to refer to the process of transfer of Church properties to the control of the princes. Secularization implies the steadily diminishing influence of religion on all areas of social life. Bryan Wilson (1966) defines secularization as the process whereby religious thinking, practice and institutions lose social significance. Peter Berger (1973:113) employed the term secularization to refer to the process by which sectors of society and culture are removed from the domination of religious institutions and symbols. O Dea (1966: 8186) defined secularization as the process by which religion loses influence within groups and societies. Srinivas (1995:126) writes the term secularization implies that what was previously regarded as religious is now ceasing to be such and it also implies the process of differentiation which results in the various aspects of socioeconomic, political, legal and moral becoming increasingly discrete to each other. Y. Singh (1991: 115) considers secularization to be a sub process of modernization. Larry Shenner (1971) has stated that there is lack of agreement of what secularization is. Surveying contemporary literature, Shenner has brought into light the following five different ways, in which the term 'secularization' has been defined. They are (a) the tendency to conform to worldly ways, (b) the process of separation between religion and state, (c) the process of disengagement of society from religion, (d) the process of transposition of religious norms and orientation so that their content though preserved to certain extent comes to be regarded as purely human creation, (e) the process of individualization of religion. Taken together these mean that secularization is a process of decline in the hold of the church or any such centralized body managing affairs of a religion.

In the light of the foregoing definitions, the salient characteristics of secularization can be noted down in the following manner.

1. Decline of religiosity: Secularization has been characterized as a process involving the decline of religiosity. As society proceeds from sacred to secular, the influence of religion on social life tends to fall at a diminishing rate. The very term 'secular' denotes lack of faith in religious beliefs and practices. There is a decline in the direct control of priests over the ideas and actions of individuals. Bellah, however, argues that this change does not necessarily mean that there is a decline in religious belief and commitment at the individual level. The collective form of religion has given way to individualism of religion. Religion today is increasingly becoming an individual quest for meaning.
2. Rationalism: The element of rationalism hold supreme in the process of secularization. David Martin defines secularization as an exclusively rationalistic or empiricist framework of thought. Rationalism involves replacement of traditional beliefs and ideas by modern knowledge. Rationalism may be understood as a

comprehensive expression applied to various theoretical and practical tendencies which aim to regulate the individual and social life in accordance with the principles of reason and try to eliminate, as far as possible everything irrational.' A secular man is no more directed by faith or sentiment but by logical thinking. It enhances a social life based on scientific outlook and scoffs at anything religious. Faith is substituted by reason and instead of taking everything for granted a secular man tries to enquire into the cause and effect relationships of happenings. Rationalism is the conquest of reason over emotion.



3. Scientific Outlook: Another important characteristic of secularization is scientific worldview. Individuals try to analyse on the basis of cause and effect rather than the fate of inevitability. Thus, every social event is analysed on a scientific basis. As science develops, secularism also develops. The development of science may make religious faith redundant. 'Mysteries' can now be understood as red as manageable problems dealt with by the precision of scientific method rather than, the fervour of religious prayer.

4 Process of differentiation: Secularization increases the process of differentiation between various aspects of social life. Traditionally religion was intricably intertwined with economic, political, legal and ethical aspects of life but with the spread of secularization these are becoming increasingly separated from each other. They have nothing to do with religion. The religious bond over other fields of life is breaking. The distinction between church and state and Indian concept of a secular, state, both assume the existence of such differentiation.

Thus, secularization is a subprocess of the grand process of modernization by which certain sectors of society and culture are removed from the domination of religious institutions and symbols. Secularization has two aspects: structural institutional and cultural symbolic aspects. Examples of the former are to be found in such processes as the appropriation of church or temple land by the state or removal of educational institutions from ecclesiastical Control. Examples of the latter are found in the decline of religious content in art, philosophy and literature. Thus, along with secularization of society, secularization of consciousness is encouraged for which man increasingly looks upon life without the, benefit of religious interpretations. The individual comes to view nature as an object rather than something charged with any mysterious power. He ceases appealing to an

imaginary force called divine and tries to master and harness nature for fulfilling his own needs. The secular man is man centric rather than God centric.

Process of Secularization in India

In India the process of secularization started largely due to the British influence. Indian social and cultural life deeply rooted in the religious beliefs and traditions started changing during the British rule. Growth of towns and cities, development of communication, increased geographical mobility and spread of education facilitated the development of secularist outlook.

During the 19th century there was a movement to reinterpret the orthodox Hinduism and its obsession with pollution and ritualism. An attempt was made to emphasize the essence of Hinduism. Ritualism and pollution were considered to the spread of secularism. In this regard Mahatma Gandhi's role was highly significant. The secularistic ideals espoused by him and other leaders later formed the basis of Indian constitution. India has been declared a secular state. Equal voting rights are given to all adult members of society without regard for religion, sex and caste. Similarly programmes of planned development are launched to benefit all the sections of society.

The government, too, is playing an important role in secularizing Hinduism through legislation. For example, the government have, formed laws against untouchability. The law also intervenes in the administration of Hindu temples and monasteries. The Commissioners of districts have been empowered to see that the large amounts of money collected by way of Dan / Dakshina (donation) are not misused.

Causes of Secularization in India

The following causes are responsible for the spread of secularization in India.

Modern education based fully on western culture, literature, thoughts etc. has weighed heavily on the outlook and philosophy of the Indian youth. As a result educated men and women are losing faith in religious rituals and ceremonies so that gradually secularization is gaining ground.

Social reform movements launched by the Arya Samaj, the Brahmo Samaj, The Prarthana Samaj, the Ramakrishna Mission, the Theosophical Society of India, Sarvodaya, etc. have strained every nerve to do away with untouchability, casteism, child marriages, sati system from Hindu society. Hence they have given a new direction to social life. But in doing so they shaken religious faith and religious dogmas and, it has gone a long way in secularizing the country.

Development of the means of transport and communication is another contributory factor of secularization of India. The circle of social contact has expanded as a result of the development of the means of transport and communication. Consequently the Indian outlook has turned more liberal and this has accelerated. Secularization.

Social laws enacted for social reform have, to a very great extent, influenced religious beliefs and traditions and have encouraged secularization. The Hindu marriage act, the divorce act, the removal of untouchability act, the prohibition of dowry act and the prohibition of sati system have done a lot to encourage secularization.



Popular movies like PK & Oh My God! question blind faith and mock Godmen

In centers of large scale industries, workers of different religions have to work at one place. As a result, they come in contact with each other and exchange their thoughts and cultures. And such contact reduces religious narrowness and encourages secularization.

As a result of urbanization, people lose contact with their family and the orthodox society. Through modern education they come into contact with western culture. In big cities people are so busy that they have no time for religious duties. Therefore religious rituals and ceremonies have got weakened and secularization has speeded up.

Increasing influence of western culture has encouraged materialism, individualism, logicity, liberalism etc. so that Secularism has been strengthened.

There is lack of religious organisation among Hindus as they cling to different sects and different faiths. There are smaller religious groups too. The four Hindu temples at Badrinath, Dwarka, Rameswaram and Jagannathdham have different religious beliefs. They are an attempt to achieve national integration rather than orthodox religious faith. All this has speeded up the process of secularization among the Hindus.

Indian culture is no more religion oriented. Under the changed perspective several cultural activities are organised on democratic, scientific and worldly grounds encouraging secularization.

Occupations have ceased to be based on birth. Now there is freedom of occupation on the basis of ability and efficiency. The economic aspect that gets the greatest importance in this matter also creates an atmosphere in favour of

secularization. A number of states in traditional India patronized religions in their states. Consequently religion got political backing. Now the government of India is secular and there is no state to patronize any religion. In the absence of political support, the influence and activities of religious organizations are decreasing. The government has also reduced the power of religious chiefs.

Obstacles to Secularization



*Hindutva is the core of the BJP's ideology:
Prime Minister Modi at a Ram Leela*

Religion has made an inroad into political field to a large extent. The fundamentalists have transformed themselves into political groups whose sole aim is to perpetuate their religion and the interests of their community. The political parties like the Hindu Mahasabha, the RSS and the BJP have been championing Hinduism. Recently there have been attempts by Hindu fundamentalists to have a national level organization of the Hindus known as the Vishwa Hindu Parishad due to the upsurge of fundamentalism of the minority religions. Similarly the Muslim fundamentalists have their own political parties Like the JamateIslami and the Sikhs have a number of political groups that are factions of the Akali Dal, which are essentially fundamentalist in their outlook. The Christians too have meddled in politics. Only the Buddhist and the Jains have kept themselves aloof from politics. Thus, we find that in India, inspite of secular ideals and attempts to reduce the influence of traditional grouping based on caste and religion, religion continues to be significant in the political arena.

The mass media like films, radio, books and news papers have helped propagate secular values, but they have also been used to popularize religious beliefs. For example, the recent T.V. serials on Zoroastrianism, The Ramayana, the Mahabharata and such others are helping revival of religious faith. And there is a constant attempt to reinterpret religion in terms of modern needs and modern issues. In view of these changes, it is difficult to say to what extent secularization is taking place in Indian society. Ayyub maintains that in a country like India where religion embraces almost every aspect of man's life from birth to death, in major religions like Hinduism and Islam it is impossible to suggest segregation between religion and the state. The essence of Islam is *rezi bariza* which means moral life according to the norms which please God and not those which please individual agents. Similarly in Hinduism, Varna ashram Dharma laid down rules for the Hindus. The Indian constitution guarantees freedom to profess, practice and propagate religion subject to public order, morality and health. This qualifying clause reserves for the Indian state considerable right to interfere with existing religious Practices. As a result, Hinduism has been modified to a great extent. In fact, as indicated earlier, the process had begun long ago before Independence. Today the ashram dharma has passed into the pages of ancient history. The Varnadharma came under attack by earlier medieval saints and Hindu social reformers in the 19th century and by political leaders today. Thus, the process of secularization has been most evident among the Hindus than any other religious group in India. Srinivas indicates that in Hinduism there have been crusades by reformers to remove untouchability though the concept of purity and pollution was central to Hinduism. Secondly, unlike other religious minorities, the Hindus lack any central, nationwide body: Thirdly, the traditional closed communities like joint family village and caste system contributed to the perpetuation of Hinduism. With the breakdown of these institutions, due to wide spread of economic, political conditions and growth of cities the collective practice of Hindu religious beliefs and rituals become difficult.

In pluralistic societies like India having multiple religions very often sectoral interests perpetuated by religious fundamentalism clash with the national interests. As a result religion degenerates into a disintegrating force rather than an integrating force. The state was separated from religion. And each individual or group of individuals was given freedom to profess any religion.

At the same time they were pressurized to safeguard the interest of the religious minorities in a predominantly Hindu India. Therefore, several concessions were given to religious minorities. For example, while polygamy was an offence under law, Muslims were allowed to have four wives under provisions of their customary law. Similarly their divorce law also continues to be governed by tradition.

In addition these religious organizations were permitted to run their own schools, hospitals and charitable institutions. They continue to own large properties and huge amount of money received as donations. This has come in the way of the spread of secularization in India. Religious beliefs are inculcated in the young minds much before they are of even understanding and appreciating the meaning behind them. Critical acceptance of religious beliefs or rejection for that matter is much better than uncritical acceptance of religious beliefs or rejection. The

children taught in religious institutions rarely enjoy this freedom as adults. Moreover by offering material rewards in various forms these institutions manage to support considerable clientele.

Moreover, due to modern influences mentioned earlier; there is a definite decline in the interference of religion in public issues. However, due to the revival of religious fundamentalism, renewed attempts to make issues of public concern a matter of religion surfaced. As such the fundamentalists have a strong grip over the public. A centralised body formed by them issue instruction to the public how to draw in a particular style, they are enjoined to stop drinking and smoking and to observe religious taboos. They are striving hard to revive some traditional ceremonies that had passed into the limbo of oblivion.

Not to be ignored are the large number of people educated in secular tradition who believe the religion is an individual's personal matter. They assert that in so far as it is kept at the individual level as a matter of private faith, there is no danger of collision between religious interests and national interests.

To sum up, it may be said that secularization became a cherished ideal just after independence and it spread fast. However, the recent spurt of religious fundamentalism has halted the process if not destroyed it completely.

Impact of Secularization on the Ideas of Purity and pollution

The Hindu social life is governed by the Ideas of purity and pollution. By purity, we mean Cleanliness and by pollution, uncleanness, defilement, impurity and sinfulness. Traditionally, caste ranking was done on the basis of purity and pollution. The castes that were considered ritually purer were ranked higher than those who were thought to be ritually impure. The higher castes in order to maintain superiority used to withhold contact from lower castes. They were observing the rules of purity and pollution in matters of occupations, food, drink, etc. As a result, occupations were classified as pure and impure. The manual occupations involving the handling of dirty object were regarded as impure and the castes doing those works were distanced from the higher castes. Meat egg, beg, wine, fish etc. were regarded as ritually impure. Today, the importance of these ideas of purity and pollution in the Hindu social life has considerably decreased. The idea of untouchability is almost extinct. Today the Brahmins and the Shudras working in the same, office, are mixing freely and are eating on the same table together without any sense of hatred or defilement. Urban living has compelled most of the higher caste men to give up the traditional caste norms and to conform to the norms of work mates and the neighbourhood group. Installation of tea shops, coffee houses curtailed the ideas of caste pollution to a great extent.

Impact of Secularization on Life Cycle Rituals

Traditionally, the Hindus used to observe a number of life cycle rituals or sanskars such as name giving, the first tonsure, the annual ritual or changing the sacred thread, etc. but at present, these rituals are either dropped or performed casually. Observance of the puberty ritual of girls has made shortcut. Similarly in South India the ritual of shaving the head of the Brahmin—widows has disappeared. The widow remarriage is no longer banned. Traditional wedding rituals have been cut

down to size. Many educated Brahmins have given up the practice of daily rituals like praying, fasting, performing sacrifice, etc. In fact, they may be said to be undergoing a process called deSanskritization.

Impact of Secularization on Monasteries

Secularization has adversely affected monasteries away the landed property at their disposal through land reform measures. Power of the abbot has been considerably reduced. The economic backbone of the monasteries has broken down leading to the loss of their religious autonomy. At present the abbots are found approaching their followers to raise funds for their subsistence. The worst thing noticed is that most of these monastic heads are the allies of the present day politicians.

Impact of Secularization on the Motives behind Pilgrimage

The devout Hindu used to think that he should go on a pilgrimage at least once in his life time to satisfy his religious aspiration. Such a religious motive is found no more today. Even though the number of times or going on pilgrimage has increased, the sole objective is not earning punya but sightseeing and marketing or making a pleasure tip.

Impact of Secularization on Caste

The age old, rigid, caste system has come under remarkable change due to secularization. The feeling of untouchability is gradually weakening, Caste is no more considered a determinant of oriels own position in the society. Rather in its place education, wealth, efficiency, ability etc. have emerged as the determinants. Caste restriction relating to drinking, eating and pattern of living are loosening. Traditional caste occupations are not being rigidly followed today.

Impact of Secularization on Village Life

The effects of secularization are visible in every aspect of the village community. They may be enumerated as; Caste Panchayats have lost their power. They are being used for political ends rather than social objectives. The importance of wealth has increased undermining the importance of religion: In village life rapid changes are occurring in food habits and standard and pattern of living. Observance of religious festivals has lost its religious fervour. People in villages are found more inclined to education. Their political consciousness has increased. The strangleholds of traditions and superstitions are breaking up.

Impact of Secularization on Family and Marriage

Significant changes have occurred in the Hindu family system. Nowadays a large number of villagers are seen migrating to urban and industrial areas to establish their families in a social and cultural environment entirely different from that of their native places. There are no elders who are traditionbound and who are well versed in the knowledge of the complex rituals to be performed at the festivals, and

occasions. Spread of education among women has created a situation in which young girls do not have time to learn rituals from their traditional culture from their mothers and grandmothers. Moreover, the educated mother has stock of traditional culture to pass on to the coming generation. The elite have articulated competitive values and accordingly have kept themselves busy building up the educational career of their children for which they have no time to engage in ritual practices. Educated women have cultivated an altogether different attitude towards the ideas and practice of pollution and purity. They hygiene and less from religious consideration.



Dowry has reached alarming proportions in recent years

The impact of secularization on the custom of marriage is becoming prominent. The provisions of divorce and civil contract have turned marriage from a religious bond to personal affair. Dowry, has increased in alarming proportions and has become a precondition to marriage and thereby turning marriage into an economic affair. The phenomenon of giving and taking dowry has percolated to the scheduled castes too. Thus, the spread of secularization in India has been spectacular and so also its impact. This does not mean secularization would result in the total disappearance of religion.

Secularism in India

Secularism is a word of western origin. It has come from the Latin root 'Saeculum' meaning the worldly or temporal. Secularism relates to mundane as distinguished from the sacred, to the state as distinguished from the church and to the profane or irreligious as distinguished from religious. The Concise Oxford Dictionary of Current English defines 'secular' as something concerned with the affairs of this world, worldly not sacred, not monastic, not ecclesiastical, temporal, profane, lay. It was George Jacob Stolyoke who first used the term secularism in 1851. In the west, secularism emerged as a doctrine of separation between the church and the state. It signifies the withdrawal of authority of religion from the spheres of public

policy. It relegated religion to the private sphere of one's life. But in India, secularism has acquired a different connotation. It means equal regards for all religions. In the west, secularism refers to negation of religious considerations in matters of public policy whereas in India it means the accommodation of religious sensibilities also implies particularly the minorities in public policy. Secularism also implies privatization of religion in the west but in our country it stands for restoring religion a pride of place in public matter. There are two models of



Secularism in India was born as an ideology to challenge communalism: Gandhi in an argument with Jinnah, spearhead of the communal Pakistan movement.

secularism. The first one is known as interventionist model which implies that there is state intervention of religious matters. The second model is referred to as non-discriminatory model which stands for the state's equidistance from all religions. The state can intervene on the grounds of public order and social justice. India has adopted the second model of secularism.

In the west, development of secularism was the outcome of the conflict between the church and the state, including the common People. But the Indian society does not have any record of such oppression by organised religious authority. In both Hinduism and Islam, neither the Brahmins nor the Muslim Ulema have ever been able to function as organised official clergy, and to wield effective power in the lives of the people. Thus, both during the pre Muslim and the Muslim period, there were

conflicts between the religious authority and the kind or the people. Secondly, even at the intergroup level, until modern times the Indian society generally has had a tradition of religious coexistence.

Even during the Muslim rule, Islam was neither proclaimed nor clamped as the official religion of the state. The Muslim, rulers had followed a policy of tolerance and coexistence. In course of time, Hindus had occupied various key positions in the administrative machinery and Muslim policy, on the whole, was one of live and let live. Subsequently when the British occupied India they too maintained an attitude of neutrality in so far as the religious life to the various communities was concerned. Further, the British also introduced the concept and practice of equality before the law whereby all citizens could enjoy equal rights, irrespective of caste and creed. The British introduced two elements namely State neutrality towards religion and equality before the law which served as forerunners of the modern secular state in India.

During freedom struggle, the national leaders wanted to make India a free secular country and their dream came true with the advent of India's independence. The decision to make India a secular country was influenced by several considerations. First, the freedom struggle operated in terms of the secular ideology of non religious nationalism. As the partition of India became inevitable leaders like Gandhi and Nehru were bent upon to follow non communalised nationalism.

Second, apart from ideological considerations, there was another important pragmatic consideration. India has been a sanctuary of multireligious communities and continued as such even after Independence. Because of the pluralistic nature of India, as secular society becomes supremely essential.

Above all, Gandhiji's assassination in 1948 made the people of India irrespective of religions feel that separation of politics from religion was the best safeguard of their hardwon freedom.

Thus, India's historical tradition as well as its immediate political exigencies following independence supported India's commitment to secularism. Also the Indian constitution contains some of the Articles supporting the principle of secularism a strong base to take recourse to secularism.

The word 'secularist' if came into use in India in 1950 when V.K.Krishna Menon suggested it as a substitute for the 'nationalism'. In fact, it conveys the idea of equity. Jawaharlal Nehru is considered the architect of Indian secularism. He expressed that the word 'secular' was adopted because of the lack of a better term. In Indian languages the term 'secularism' denotes Dharma Nirpekshata so far as the state and its institutions are concerned. This means detachment of state in matters of religion not the total separation between state and religion. Thus, in India the word 'secularism' has been used in the context of state and it enjoins that the state should not side with, anyone religion but equally friendly towards all religions. Secularism has a variety of connotation in India. As Madan (ed 1991 : 394412) notes, these dimensions are

(i) The separation of state from religion.

- (ii) The equal and impartial treatment of all communities by the states
- (iii) Approaching religious beliefs in a spirit of objective rationality.
- (iv) Ensuring a just standard of living for all people irrespective of community.

India is defined as a secular republic in the preamble of the constitution. According to the constitution the term 'secularism' means:

- (i) the state shall not espouse or establish or practice any religion.
- (ii) public revenue will not be used to promote any religion.
- (iii) the state shall have the power to regulate any economic financial or other secular activity associated with religious practices (Article 25 (2)) the state shall have the power..... of throwing open of Hindu religious institution of public character to all classes and sections of Hindu (Article 25(2)b).
- (iv) the practice of untouchability has been outlawed (Article 17)

The Supreme Court of India has said "Secularism is neither anti-god nor pro god. It treats alike the devout, the agnostic and the atheist. It eliminates god from matters of state and ensures that no one shall be discriminated against on the ground of religion."

However, the enactment of secular ideals in the constitution have not been translated into practice. Nehru had rightly written, our constitution lays down that we are a secular state, but it must be admitted that, it is not wholly reflected in our mass living and thinking. The reason may be some inconsistencies in the growth of secularism in India. First, the Hindu community right from the beginning of the British rule has been experiencing, tolerating and accepting many changes in their religious customs whereas the Muslims do not do so. Second, in spite of claims made for religious neutrality, the state has often interfered in religious matters especially in case of management of temples and religious institutions, such as monasteries and monastic heads. Third, in the political sphere, many political parties, and groups have continued to voice communal points or view on contemporary issues. Political parties like the Vishwa Hindu Parishad, the Mahasabha, the 'Bajrang Dal' the 'Ram Rajya Parishad', the 'Muslim League', which directly or indirectly have communal orientations are active in the political field of the country. Added to this, a religious practice like the Hindu Sadhus and religious leaders conducting violent mass movement against the killing of cows has worsened its impact. Politicians are found involved in casteism, regionalism, linguistic lines and such other particularistic considerations.

Although India professes secularism, a number of hurdles are seen in the path of secularism.

First, the problem of implementing uniform civil code Since India is a multi religious country, each religious group is governed by its personal laws. This is a stumbling block to the country's secularism. Hence, it was felt that uniform civil code should be introduced so as to bring about the integration of members of all religious communities into one bond of common citizenship. But this has not been

made till date. Contrarily, the Muslim Community of India compelled the government, in 1986 to enact law concerning maintenance of divorced women which it felt was closer to its personal law.



Muslim women protesting against Uniform Civil Code in India

Second, politics in India is mixed with religion so much that it is difficult to separate them. To worsen the matters, religious divisiveness is exploited for Political games. Often communal riots are engineered with political objectives in view. The existing political system is compelled to bend itself before the pressures exerted by religio-political forces. Under these circumstances a secular state remains a Utopia. Moreover, our leadership has, failed to appreciate genuine secularism for which separation of religion and politics in India has become a failure.

Third, cultural systems adopted by the Hindus, a majority community, create misunderstanding among the minority community. For instance, many public rituals and ceremonies, like Bhoomipujan, breaking of coconuts on inaugural or auspicious occasions, the performing of Aarti and applying Tilak to distinguished guests are misconceived by the non Hindus as manifestations of Hindu culture. Sometimes, Hindu cultural symbols are identified as Indian. The increasing emphasis on equating Hindu cultural symbols as national culture is said to be the expression of 'Hindu backlash' the result of rise in Hindu and Muslim fundamentalism,

Fourth, due to limited interpretation of secularism the religious identities and other subcultural differences of Indian citizens have continued to remain strong. Consequently groups and communities have remained distanced from one another.

Fifth, the psychological insecurity of the minority is such that they perceive themselves to be target of discrimination.

Lastly, secularism is facing a strong challenge from the emergence of communalism. Communal politics is gaining ground stealthily but surely. Recently Hindu revivalism known as Hindu backlash has become tantalising: It has raised the issue that the government has been following the policy of appeasement to please the minorities by gifting away all kinds of concessions. They decry the Govt's neglect of the majority of the population. This is a new idiom which is gaining currency in modern India at present. Some communalists even go on demanding that religion must be declared as state religion.

Unless these bottlenecks are removed, the process of national integration and nationbuilding will remain thwarted. Therefore, education is emphasized as a viable means which can lead the country in the direction of secularism, by fostering secular values and attitudes. However, mere education is not enough to promote secular attitude among the people if the society continues to be in the clutches of obscurantism, superstition and fundamentalism. Hence voluntary agencies are expected to take the lead and organise social movements and mobilise public opinion for secularization. A vigorous campaign should be launched at political level to fight the forces of communalism so that a healthy and secular democracy is made possible in India. What, in effect, is needed for such a strenuous task is waging an ideological battle in the minds of the people to drive away any kind of misconception about secularism.

Notwithstanding these difficulties, secularism has been accepted and practised as a national policy in India and we are optimistic about its creative role for a resurgent India.