M.A. SEMESTER III INDIAN POLITICS: ISSUES AND TRENDS COURSE NO. : POL-302

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SEMESTER III **COURSE NO. POL-302**

INDIAN POLITICS: ISSUES AND TRENDS

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M.A. POLITICAL SCIENCE SEMESTER-III

COURSE NO. : 302

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M.A. Political Science under Non-CBCS
(Semester-III)
December 2023, 2024 & 2025
Course Code: POL-302
(Indian Politics: Issues and Trends)

Credits: 6 (Six) **Max. Marks: 100**

Internal Assessment: 20 **Time: 3 Hours** **Semester Exam: 80**

Objectives of Course: The course is framed to familiarize the students about the issues cropped up in Indian Politics in the Post-Colonial era. It aims to broaden the horizon of learners about Indian politics by focusing on variety of issues ranging from old to new issues shaping contemporary Indian Politics. To elucidate the transition in Indian Politics from liberal to neo-liberal politics under the impact of neo- liberal economic reforms as a major trend is another vital objective of this course. The debates on secularism, nationalism, citizenship and transparency & accountability will familiarize the students about major discourses in Indian Politics. To explain the shift form socialist orientation to neoliberal orientation will be another objective of this course.

Learning Outcomes: This course will empower the learners to comprehend Indian politics beyond structural and constitutional perspectives. It will enable them to grasp Indian Politics in its entirety. The course will consolidate the knowledge base of the learners about the dynamism of Indian Politics. It will enable them to understand the dialectical relationship between the Indian politics and its social universe.

Course Contents

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1.1 Understanding Culture and Politics

1.2 Citizenship Debates: Issues of Migration and National Register for Citizenship (NRC)

1.3 Language in Indian Politics: Changing Nature and Impact

1.4 Class in Indian Politics: Nature and Implication

Unit-11 Ideologies and Indian Politics

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2.2 Communalism: Nature and Issues

2.3 Socialism: Evolving Trends

2.4 Communism: Parliamentary and Radical

Unit-III Politics of Economic Reforms

3.1 Pre-Reforms Indian Economy: Goals, Features and Structures

3.2 Politics of Economic Reforms: Impact on Industrial and Service Sectors

3.3 Economic Reforms: Impacts on Agriculture Sector

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3.4 Impact on Marginal Groups: Agrarian Distress. Organized and Unorganized Labour

Unit-IV Social Movements and Accountability

4.1 Transparency and Accountability: Lokpal, Lokayukt and Right to Information (RTI)

4.2 Minorities: Types, Status, Demands and State Response

4.3 Social Movements: Human Rights, Women's Movements and Environmental Movements

4.4 Tribes in Indian Politics: Aspirations, Issues and State's Response

Note for Paper Setter.

- The Question Paper shall be divided into two sections. The first section will carry eight short questions of which students will be required to attempt five questions. The upper words limit for the answer of each question will be 200 words. Each question carrying 4 marks.
- The second section will comprise eight questions of which students will have to attempt four questions on the basis of **'WITHIN UNIT** choice. The upper words limit for the answer of each question will be 850 to 1000 words. Each question will carry 15 marks.

Suggested Readings

Arun, C. Joe, Constructing Dalit Identity, New Delhi: Rawat Publication, 2007.

Bhambhri, C.P, The Indian State and Political Process, Delhi: Shipra Publications, 2007.

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1.1 UNDERSTANDING CULTURE AND POLITICS IN THE CONTEXT OF INDIA.

- Hima Bindu M

1.1.0 Objectives:

1.1.0 Objectives

After going through this lesson, you should be able to

- Explain the distinctive features of Indian Culture
- Know the social issues like caste, community, ethinicity and its influence on politics

- Infusion and integration of elements from other cultures
- Study the structures of power and dominance in society through regionalism and violence in addressing various issues, the process of governance, and its mechanisms in dealing with them.

1.1.1 Introduction

Socrates explained, 'man is a social animal', and being social for man is both natural and necessary. A man's social life is different and can be understood with the learning process and passing the experimented and experienced knowledge process with other members of the society. This characteristic binds all men together to behave in a similar way of life, and there is also a similarity in their behaviour and other activities. Herskovits, an Anthropologist, defined society as following an organised way of life given to them culturally.

Historical, social, cultural, and economic factors shape India's political culture. The country possessesa rich and diverse cultural landscape, but tensions between religious and ethnic communities often influence political behaviour. Learning about culture is a complex whole, including knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, customs, and any other habits acquired by the people who are members of the society. The behaviour of the members includes the language, values, and traditions, resulting in material artefacts to compose the ways of life. According to Ogburn and Nimkoff (1976), there are two types of cultures; one material culture is with artificial visible objects and comes as part of civilisation, like buildings, furniture, automobiles, roads and infrastructure, including the technical pieces of equipment like the printing press. The other non-material cultures, like customs, belief systems, value systems, religions, languages, symbolism, traditions, art, craft, music, educational and political systems, etc., influence the individual belonging to a particular area in leading life. The individual's social behaviour is a mixture of material and non-material culture. The material culture prompts the individual to compete and progress in society through economic means, and the non-material culture promotes safeguarding the belief system, the religious practices and the promotion of linguistic ideals.

In the context of Indian society, the culture and the practices gain much more importance and attachment in any part of the country, despite variations in the region,

language and religious practices. The association of family, community, and society is visible through the activities that uphold the cultural lineage of age-old rituals. Though the advent of modernisation diluted the spirit of bonding in Indian culture, it never let go of the ancient methods of the community. These factors impact the country's politics, from the local to the international level, by studying the institutions, their processes, functionings, mechanisms, and most importantly, the governance. The struggle was for identification, recognition, and reconciliation, walking through the spirit of unity in diversity.

The political culture is a mixture of a society's attitudes, beliefs, emotions and values concerning political issues, majorly influenced by historical, geographical and socio-economic factors. The political culture deals with various aspects like their view on the national political system, their opinion and belief about the same, the people's attitude towards the bureaucrats and their sense of duty. The political institutions represent symbols like the national anthem and national flag as its core elements and how the individuals with cultural influences reflect on the same. The political culture is an ever-changing process. Individuals and societies observe the patterns of governments closely and decide to choose their governments.

Since gaining independence from British rule, India has undergone significant political and economic changes, which have impacted the country's political landscape. Religion, caste, and social hierarchies have played an essential role in shaping Indian politics, with religious identity often being a crucial factor in determining voting patterns and political behaviour. Economic factors such as rapid economic growth, high levels of inequality and poverty, and a significant informal economy have also contributed to political movements to address issues such as income inequality and social injustice. Indian society experiences challenges in the political climate, impacting economic disparities, social nuances, and environmental issues. Addressing these challenges will require a concerted effort from all stakeholders, including the government, civil society, and the private sector. By understanding the historical, social, cultural, and economic factors that have shaped India's political culture, we can better understand its challenges and opportunities as it moves forward. India's political culture is a dynamic and evolving phenomenon that will continue to shape the country's political landscape in the future.

1.1.2 Understanding Culture and Politics

E. B. Taylor (1871) defined primitive culture as a complex phenomenon including beliefs, arts, morals, law, customs, knowledge, etc., achieved as part of the society. Culture is conceptualised as the unique expression of a community's belief systems, ideas and aesthetic terms, the source of its continuing identity, and the framework within which it can develop with authenticity. 'Protection of the essence and purity of the culture against alien influences later becomes a political project for the community'(Nandy, 1989). A strong structure of Indian democracy is associated with its varied cultural roots. Westernisation, national cultural transactions and popular culture significantly influence the culture that has seen significant changes in the dynamics of the society and politics in India.

Political culture is 'the set of attitudes, beliefs, and sentiments that give order and meaning to a political process and what provides the underlying assumptions and rules that govern behaviour in the political system'. Understanding the political culture is essential in dealing with political interaction and institutions, as Almond and Verba (1963) identified the dimensions of political culture. It goes with a sense of national identity, self-participation in political life, attitude towards one's fellow citizens and expectations regarding governmental output and performance, and knowledge about the political decision-making process.

The political culture needs to be understood from the pre and post-independent Indian politics.

The partition between the two nations made the Indian nation uphold the spirit of secular liberal democracy firmly. It started with the Nehruvian era, which focused on maintaining parliamentary traditions and the importance of opposition in a democracy. Promoting universal suffrage in the forties through the promise of the Constitution of India provided equal space to all the individuals in deciding the rulers. This aspect of equal participation expands the sense of tolerance for diversity. It necessarily respects the differences of religion, ethnic origin, language, gender and all other things that make the person different in the society. Some dominant communities traditionally continued to do so post-independence, stigmatising certain sections in the lower strata. This was a generational objective to develop and make visible in the society to be acceptable equally.

The multifaceted dynamics of the society have seen different dimensions in Indian politics. The spirit of nationalism, the influence of communism, the importance of traditional cultural practices, and the dynamics of Indian politics were shaped differently in the post-independence period. Contemporary politics in India had many influential factors that shaped the country's political culture. The dominant national political parties are the Indian National Congress (INC), the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), the Communist Party of India (Marxist) (CPI (M)) and other regional parties. The BJP formed the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) and became the first non-Congress government in 1998. INC with an alliance called United Progressive Alliance (UPA) in 2004. The Indian party system witnessed different phases, shifting froma one-party system (1952-67) to a two-party system, moving forward to the multi-party party system (1977) and having the coalition government (1989) to the current phase of a single dominant party or in other words, a rise of a new 'dominant party system' since 2014. These phases also show the importance of regional parties with the influence of ideologies aboutlanguage values.

1.1.3 Regionalism

Regionalism has been a persistent factor in Indian politics, with both positive and negative implications. The rise of coalition politics in India, which has become a dominant feature of the political system, can be traced back to regionalism. The increasing demand for separate states and separatist politics in India is also a result of the regionalisation of the political system. The diversity of India in terms of language, religion, culture, and social customs is the primary factor behind the growth of regionalism in the country. With over one billion people, twenty-eight states, and eight Union Territories, India is a complex and diverse nation with numerous tribes, languages, and religions. The probability of socio-cultural oneness in India is comparatively low due to this diversity. The differences between the northern, eastern, western, and southern states depict such regionalism. Long-term deprivation in terms of development has also contributed to the growth of regionalism in India. The consequences of regionalism in India have only sometimes been positive. While it has resulted in the grievances of the underdeveloped regions or sections of society being heard better, the growth of secessionist trends is rooted in it and cannot be

ignored. This has led to insurgency in many parts of the nation, with secessionists resorting to violence to secure their demands or make their grievances heard.

The roots of regionalism lie in India's manifold diversity of languages, cultures, ethnic groups, communities, religions, and so on. They are encouraged by the regional concentration of those identity markers and fuelled by regional deprivation. For many centuries, India has been a place of many lands, regions, cultures, and traditions. The east of India is further from the northeast of India, comprising seven constituent units of the Indian federation with the largest concentration of tribal people today. A comprehensive understanding of regionalism in India is crucial for policymakers and students to understand the political culture. This understanding can help in developing effective policies to address the challenges posed by regionalism in India. It is imperative to strike a balance between the demands of regionalism and the unity and integrity of the nation. The disturbances in the country started based on the features of region, religion, language, etc., disturbing the federal nature of the Indian polity. Secessionist movements like those in Khalistan and the northeast areas created some conflict in the Indian subcontinent.

The recent changes in the country, like the reorganisation of Jammu and Kashmir by making Ladakh a Union Territory out of J&K. The creation of new states has been seen in common in the nation, but the change of status of an erstwhile state to a Union Territory is happened for the first time. States are the building blocks of the nation, with an elected assembly and a government to legislate on administrative matters and to maintain law and order. The seventh schedule of the Constitution provides the power of the centre and the states in separate lists, namely the Union, State, and concurrent. The residual powers are in the hands of the centre. The Union territories, which the Union directly governs, are mentioned in Part VIII of the Constitution of India. Through the Reorganisation Bill 2019, which repealed the special status the state of J&K was having, 153 state acts were repealed, and 106 central acts are now applicable to the new Union territory. It was shown that the people of Ladakh welcomed the separation from J&K for various developmental reasons. Through this, the reservations for the scheduled castes and tribes are extending the national reservations and progressive amendments made applicable to the region.

1.1.4 Ethnicity and language

Ethnic groups are the category of people who are identified through their culture, religion, race or language. Language plays an essential role in establishingcohesiveness within a community. In India, it was noticed in the first linguistic census that a language changes every 20 miles. The nation witnessed the restructuring of the states based on linguistic and cultural homogeneity. Accordingly, the independent status was given to languages - Assamese, Bengali, Kannada, Kashmiri, Malayalam, Telugu and Tamil in 1956, Gujarati and Marathi in 1966, making the language a legitimate more of a reorganisation of states.

India has over a billion people and exhibitsincredible cultural diversity from its languages, geographic regions, religious traditions, and social diversities. It's important to note that it is impossible to describe every practice due to its vast demographic diversity. However, some common principles and themes contribute to the dominant society's values, attitudes, beliefs, and norms. Generally, Indians take great pride in the distinctiveness and diversity of their culture. The country's agricultural expansions and technological advancements in infrastructure, science, and engineering are all sources of pride. Moreover, Indians derive immense satisfaction from their rich artistic and cultural exports, such as music, fine arts, literature, and spirituality, particularly the practice of yoga.

India's national census does not officially recognise racial or ethnic categories, yet India remains one of the most ethnically diverse populations globally. The ethnicities of India can be broadly categorised into two main groups based on their linguistic backgrounds: Indo-Aryan and Dravidian. Indo-Aryan nationalities predominantly reside in the country's northern half and commonly speak Hindi, Gujarati, Bengali, Marathi, Urdu, Odia, and Punjabi. Meanwhile, Dravidian ethnicities generally live in the country's southern half and primarily speak Tamil, Kannada, Telugu, and Malayalam. These labels help categorise the origins of Indian ethnic diversity but do not necessarily reflect personal identity. It is rare for someone to describe themselves as 'Indo-Aryan' or 'Dravidian.' However, within these broad language groups is vast linguistic diversity, with 22 major languages and hundreds of regional or local languages spoken. Most Indians are bilingual or multilingual, speaking an official

language and their regional language(s). English is considered a subsidiary official language primarily used for governmental and commercial purposes; for those who do not share a common first or native language, Hindi or English is commonly used for communication. It is crucial to appreciate the linguistic diversity of India as many Indians consider their language, especially their regional or local language, to be a source of identity.

The differences that trigger the conflicts between the racial and linguistic groups are ethnic conflicts. There were movements like a. autonomy movements, b. secessionist activities, c. insurgency and d. violent clashes based on identity markers such as language, religion, tribe, caste, etc. The correlation between ethnic identity and territory has been experienced in autonomy, secessionist, and insurgency movements. Many different parts of the country have sought political independence. The demand for the creation of states based on language resulted in separation based on the State Reorganisation Commission. The division of Assam into seven new states in 1972, Punjab and Haryana in 1966, Uttarakhand, Jharkhand and Chhattisgarh in 2000 are the result of demands of ethnic groups.

The newly formed Telangana state has a different story. Andhra Pradesh separated from Madras presidency and formed as the first linguistically carved state in 1953. Telangana was added to the Andhra in 1956 with the recommendations of the State Reorganisation Commission (SRC), which recommends reorganising state boundaries. The formation of Telangana is the first of its kind to inform that language is not the mere factor binding the people. The demand for the state was based on something other than linguistic differences since the regions of Andhra and Telanaga speak the Telugu language. The discrimination of Telangana in government jobs, educational opportunities, cultural exclusiveness and allocation of public funds were some of the primary reasons behind the demand for separation from Andhra.

The Northeastern region's rich history, culture and heritage is called the 'paradise of India'. The region is famously called seven sisters, Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, and Tripura, with a brother state of Sikkim. The strong movements by the tribal groups made the union territories into separate

states based on tribal identity and ethnicity. The creation of new states, Chhattisgarh out of Madhya Pradesh, Jharkhand out of Bihar and Uttaranchal from Uttar Pradesh in 2000, has also shown the importance of ethnic identity.

1.1.5 National Identity

The concept of national identity in India has continuously evolved throughout history due to changing political and religious institutions. For instance, the British Raj brought about significant economic, political, and cultural transformations in the country. The partition of India and Pakistan in 1947 resulted in widespread violence that still affects many Muslims, Sikhs, and Hindus residing in the Punjab region. The complexity of Indian identity concerning religion is reflected in the partition.

Efforts have been made to establish a sense of nationhood and move beyond deep-seated inequalities. While tensions occasionally surface and result in violence, social legislation has sought to empower traditionally disadvantaged segments of society, such as 'Untouchable' castes, tribal populations, women, people with disabilities and gender equality through affirmative action programs. Rudolf and Rudolf (1987) explained the caste system within the discipline of political sociology. The work explained the modern political system and how the caste groupings became the political groupings, functioning as the interest groups within a more extensive political configuration. The advent of social pluralism and cultural diversity is visible from the electoral strength of various social groups.

Mahatma Gandhi considered nationalism as part of humanity's universal struggles for justice and equality. The understanding of nationalism is widely seen through the Western idea of nationalism, but the perspective of nationalism in India is seen because of the anti-imperial stand. Oommen (2002) discussed two essential trends in understanding nationalism: ' state-centred nationalism', which recognises the sovereign state as an essential nation-maker. The other is 'state renouncing nationalism', which fosters the demands for cultural and fiscal autonomy within the polity.

The spirit of nationalism is essential before the importance of regional spirit, language and religion. The nation is 'founded on the possession of commonness, close contacts

and feeling', and as a human group with the idea of a common government, the separateness through language, degree of familiar feeling, contact and closeness among members and with a defined common territory (Carr 1945). It is not about the space and the resources that a society belongs to, but the factors that bind the people together that identify the individuals and separate them from others. This belongingness fosters the identification of the nation. It ultimately binds the diverse population to respect others who are different regarding religion, region, language, culture, food habits, etc. Thus, the national identity, though understood differently by various thinkers in different periods, and the sense of belongingness that made the firm commitment towards the culture define the change in the politics in the Indian nation.

1.1.6 Social structure and stratification

Social stratification is grouping individuals under hierarchical positions based on economy, ethnicity, gender, and power. The similarity of positions develops a shared consciousness and identifies the similar problems that ultimately lead them to deal with the problems with acceptable solutions. In the Indian scenario, caste is more important than class disparities. The distribution of resources, welfare measures, and education depends on the individual's social position.

The caste system has highly influenced the social structure and stratification in India, and the defined superior-subordinate relationship between individuals based on the caste. This system is divided into two overlapping stratification systems- large-scale 'varna' and small-scale 'jati'.Some members of society viewed the varna system as the ideal social structure. Still, over time, it led to limited interactions between higher and lower castes, stigmatising the latter as 'less pure.' On the other hand, thejati system comprises over 2,000 categories that determine one's occupation or vocation based on their family of birth. Despite constitutional safeguards, modern India still struggles with caste prejudices, and inclusivity among marginalised sections remains a challenge.

It's interesting to learn that the caste system in India is no longer legally enforced, and discrimination based on caste has been outlawed. The Indian government's efforts to categorise jatis into four classes based on economic, social, and historical factors and establish affirmative action programs to address inequality among jatis are

commendable. It's also important to note that while many people in urban areas and large cities do not explicitly adhere to the caste system, social assumptions of the caste still have an impact on specific aspects of Indian life, such as arranged marriages. Rural areas seem to follow the caste system more strictly, with various jatistrying to alter the social order and challenge the system with the help of constitutional provisions to safeguard rights and modern education. It's also fascinating to learn how people from "lower" jatis have challenged the social structure and how some jatis emphasise that caste position should be determined by other factors such as economic status, land ownership, and political power.

The report submitted by Balwant Rai Mehta in 1957 recommended the establishment of the Panchayati Raj Institutions for 'democratic decentralisation'. It was accepted in 1958, leading to the establishment of new political institutions based on democratic principles. The studies by Beteille (1970), informed about the dominance of the Brahmins in social positions and non-Brahmin castes in the political realm, for example, the Yadavs in Northern India, Marathas in Western India, the Kammas and Reddys in Southern India. The importance of caste groups and alliances has actively engaged in the modern political system, extracting the benefits from the traditional caste system and modern democratic system. This existence of caste functions as the interest groups extended to the electoral process in India. Hence, it becomes inevitable to talk about the democratic polity without referring to the caste shaping the polity in India.

To follow the principles of equality and social justice, the framers of the Indian Constitution framed the provisionsto curb societal inequality so that disadvantaged groups get a fair chance to compete with others. Using this process, Galanter (1978) identified three preferences for providing the reservations. Firstly, reservations are provided to certain positions like legislatures, government jobs, and colleges. Secondly, the expenditure on scholarships and loans, and thirdly, the special protections to protect them from exploitation. Along with the scheduled castes (SCs), the other backward classes have the benefits of reservations, and they identify themselves as separate from the SCs. However, the provisions to safeguard those in need in the nation did not get a positive response from the rest of the society. There were anti-reservation movements due to the duplicity and need to identify certain disadvantaged groups

enjoying their rights. Due to the advent of modernisation, compulsory education, and intercaste marriages, the rigidity of the caste clusters has been reduced. However, accepting these disadvantaged groups into mainstream politics remains a more significant challenge to have a harmonious society.

1.1.7 Collectivism and Harmony

Social harmony is possible to define the perfect society with a bonding through communication, trust, peace, valuing the other individuals, respecting the ethnicity, colour, gender, race, age, occupation and many other factors that represent an individual in a collective society. The collectives and social harmony aspect establishes sustainable peace beyond wars, terror, poverty and insecurity. It identifies the diverse features and strive to include the empathy, tolerance, public spiritedness, sharing, caring, reasonableness among others.

Harmony and collectivism in Indian culture strongly emphasise maintaining unity and peace with others. This is often achieved through close ties with one's community and family, which can provide a reliable support system. Community groups are usuallyorganised by caste and in some rural areas, these groups have self-imposed regulations to maintain order and harmony. These regulations are considered necessary due to economic difficulties or the need for more official services. Interestingly, the rules are not always enforced by the upper caste - sometimes, lower caste members lead the community. For Indians, social ties are an essential source of support in many aspects of life. Isolation can be difficult, as group loyalty and a sense of being inseparable provide security and confidence. It is also common for Indians to be mindful of how their actions may reflect on their family or community. Many prioritise humility and the preservation of their reputation, dignity, and honour. For instance, Indians may avoid confrontation to maintain social harmony. Additionally, individuals are expected to fulfil their duties, responsibilities, and obligations. Even abroad, it is common for Indians to send remittances back to their families in India to provide financial support.

The aim of harmony and collectiveness is seen through institutions like families, governments, organisations and the community or the neighbourhood. Specific intermediate goals include cooperation and welfare, family care, protection of human

rights, community courts to deliver justice at the local level, etc., to reach the final goals of justice, love, truth, forgiveness, faithfulness and hope. Thus, from the family to the institutional level, it is essential to struggle to achieve the goals of harmony to have a peaceful society by bonding under the spirits of love and justice. Though it might sound like a utopian state of affairs, India strives towards a harmonious state in its vast, diversified society.

1.1.8 Understanding Polity in the Indian context

The Indian political system is shaped by many historical, social, economic, religious, philosophical, geographical, and other traditions, contributing to a diverse political structure in the world's largest democracy. The influence of traditional forces like religion, caste, and gender significantly shapes the political process and system. However, the diversities have yet to lead to the separation of society but have gathered support to bring issues into the mainstream through the strength of electoral politics. Language politics in India was prominent, with Hindustani and Hindi being the languages of plurality, and there is ongoing debate over the official language. The politics of the 'iron law' in Congress during the second regime of generational politics had the influence of the elite and middle-class educated population on the media. The politics played in the name of secularism was widely criticised, leading to a reaction against populism that made way for new political parties. The Indian political system operates within an extended socio-political and economic environment where diverse cultures and identities dominate the functioning of the political process and procedure. The ideology and identity of various sections of the people are represented through their contribution to politics. For example, V.P. Singh's secular politics through Janata Dal against the Congress, or All India Anna DravidaMunnetraKazhagam or Telugu Desam Party in the southern states of Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh (united) came up with a regional voice. Similarly, the All India Trinamool Congress of West Bengal or Samajwadi Party of Uttar Pradesh represents diverse identities and ideologies. Despite the challenges posed by diversity, the Indian political system is moving towards the true spirit of democracy by accommodating different perspectives and voices.

1.1.9 Democracy and Freedom

The culture of Indian politics can be seen as a unique case, or it can be seen as the epitome of the culture of democratic polities the world over. Each democracy is an act of faith in the sense that each represents, however imperfectly, a commitment to liberal values and a trust in the political judgment of the people. Democracy should not be confined to the sphere of government and state but should also be the principle governing collective life in society. The democratic process in India, despite the diverse traditional and multicultural spirit, needs to be considered unique. The democratic spirit is imbibed in the Constitutional provisions by providing safety measures to all such groups and communities who were discriminated against as part of the societal transitions. This protection aspect supplied safeguards to promote the platform for uplifting the underprivileged sections and educatingsociety towards an inclusive culture. The principle of equality and equality of opportunity entrusted through the Constitution of India promoted the true spirit of freedom from discriminatory practices under caste, sex, gender, race, language and region.

1.1.10 Let Us Sum up:

There seems to be a trend towards associating the state's secular-rational processes with a higher tolerance towards ethnic and cultural diversity. Many people believe that a solid Indian state is an essential indicator of how well minority cultures are integrated into the national mainstream and how ethnic conflicts are managed through the reduction of diversities. Additionally, scientific knowledge plays a crucial role in this process, leading to changes and political-cultural consequences that are constantly evolving. Some feel that politics and the democratic process have gone too far and empowered irrational elements within society. This has led to growing impatience with the democratic process and a desire to find technological and managerial solutions that can bypass politics entirely. As a result, we are seeing a decline in the social dominance of traditional elites and an increase in mass politics primarily driven by electoral politics. Studying and understanding the nature of the culture and politics of a democratic nation like India requires an inclusive method to learn and implement the processes for overall betterment and development. Political culture enables us to comprehend how citizens observe the law and how the citizens understand political

socialisation and helpus understand certain phenomena. Learning the political culture helps to know the causes of political decay, making political science more practical. Thus, studying the dynamics of culture and politics in the Indian context is essential to see a vibrant and inclusive nation.

1.1.11 Exercise

1. Define the political processes in Indian politics.
2. Explain how diverse the Indian Culture.
3. Discuss the society and social stratification in India.

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1.2 CITIZENSHIP DEBATES : ISSUES OF MIGRATION AND THE NATIONAL REGISTER OF CITIZENSHIP (NRC)

-Hima Bindu M.

1.2 Objectives

1.2.0 Objectives:

After going through the lecture, the students should be able to know

- The concept of citizenship in India.
- Understand the issues of migration.
- Constitutional provisions on citizenship

- Knowing the debates on migration and citizenship
- About the National Register of Citizenship

1.2.1 Introduction

The Indian Constitution elaborated on citizenship from Articles 5 to 11. The fundamental essence of the Indian Constitution is to maintain the spirit of secularism by providing the right to equality and equality of opportunity to all its people. A 'citizen' enjoys fundamental rights like voting, work, etc. Along with the rights, the citizen is bound to observe the duties of citizenship. The concept of citizenship returns to the origin of the idea of being a citizen, who are called citizens, and why the citizens need to be recognised. Nations are formed for various reasons, and the Indian state was formed based on secular notions, as some nations were formed based on religious importance. With certain agreements, the nations committed to protect the people who migrated from other nations.

Nevertheless, it is essential to know the Constitutional provisions in India, issues of migration and citizenship debates. The amendments in the Citizenship Act widened the scope for the migrants along with the importance of women's equality and accepting the diverse population who were considered illegal and provided the scope to live in a free country with dignity. These changes have brought certain discrepancies and unacceptance towards the illegal migrants with the fear of losing indigenous identity and violation of Article 14 of the Indian Constitution.

1.2.1.1 Conception of Citizenship

The city-states of Greece first gave rise to the concept of citizenship. A few privileged classes were allowed to participate actively in government affairs and were considered citizens. In the Roman Empire, citizenship took a different form, where even women were given citizenship but not equal rights like the right to vote or stand for public affairs, etc. Even states like America gave women citizenship rights in 1920, and the U.K. gave citizenship rights to women above 30 in 1918. Through its concept of 'Universal Adult Franchise', India gave citizenship rights to all the people through its constitution,whichwas implemented in 1951-52 (First general election).

What is Citizenship?

Citizenship, in simple words, means a member of a political community. It implies a relationship and commitment between the state and the individual on a mutual basis.

State (Democracy)	a)	Legal right to rule over the set of people.
	b)	Takes the responsibility of the economic, social and cultural welfare of the people. This provides legitimacy for the state to rule.
Individual (Citizenship)	a)	Identity of being a member of a political community.
	b)	Provides Political rights like right to vote, stand for election.
	c)	Provides economic, social and cultural rights.

Why do citizens need to be recognised?

Without citizens, a legitimate government cannot come into existence, neither can it rule legitimately. Moreover, citizenship helps the government in two ways:

1. To frame welfare programmes.
2. To provide national security.

Who can be citizens?

Every country recognises two kinds of people: a) Citizens and b) Aliens. Every government will have its own set of rules to identify who are citizens, and those people who cannot fulfil these rules are called aliens or illegal immigrants. Aliens are stripped of all the facilities which are provided to the citizens.

1.2.2 Citizenship Debates in India and Issues of Migration

Indian citizenship	→	A	Constitutional recognition of citizenship
	→	B	Citizenship Act 1955 and later amendments
	→	C	Citizenship Amendment Act 2019

1.2.2.1 Constitutional recognition of Citizenship

Part II, Article 5-11 discussescitizenship in India. Before going into the details, two things need to be mentioned here: (a) when the Indian constitution was framed, British-ruled India was being partitioned according to the Indian Independence Act of 1947 as India and Pakistan on religious lines. (b) Immediately after Independence, lakhs of people were killed in communal clashes, and lakhs of people migrated from Pakistan to India and India to Pakistan. Adding to this, 552 princely states were integrated with India.

Article 5 to 11 recognises four kinds of citizenship:

1) Domicile in India – Article 5 recognises the citizenship of:

a) A person born in India

b) Parents are born in India

c) A person is staying in India for five years before 26/01/1950

2) Persons who migrated from Pakistan – Article 6 makes a distinction of two kinds of people – (A) People who migrated to India before 19-07-1948 – (a) Persons/ parents/ grandparents who were born in India, (b) persons residing in India after migration.

(B) People who migrated to India after 19-07-1948 ('Permit System' was introduced today). This system provided that a person who is desiring to return to India to reside permanently was required to get a separate permit. Along with this, the person should fulfil the following conditions:

(1) Person/ parents/ grandparents were born in India.

(2) Returned to India under the permit system for resettlement

(3) The person resides in India for six months after migration.

(4) He had submitted an application for registration to the officer.

(5) The person is registered as a citizen by such an officer.

3) **Persons migrated to Pakistan** – Article 7 overrides power over articles 5 and 6. It says – (a) People who have migrated to Pakistan after 1st March 1947 are not deemed to be citizens of India; (b) Those people who migrated to Pakistan after 1st March 1947 but returned to India have to fulfil all the conditions mentioned in article 6 and the person will be considered as migrated to the territory of India after 19th July 1948.

4) Persons living abroad (not Pakistan) – Article 8 recognises the citizenship of (a) Personal parents/ grandparents who were born in undivided British India; (b) Registered as a citizen of India by the Diplomatic or Consular representative of India.

5) Article 9 – It discusses persons who are not citizens of India, and this article has an overriding effect on articles 5, 6, and 8. It says persons voluntarily acquiring citizenship of a foreign state will not be citizens of India.

6) Article 10:A person who has acquired citizenship under the above clauses will continue to be a citizen of India and will be subject to the provision of any law that the parliament may make.

7) Article 11: Article 5 to 11 has a cut of date of 26/01/1950. After this date, all citizenship-related issues will have to be decided by the parliament as per the power given in Article 11.

1.2.2.2 Citizenship Act of 1955: According to this act, there are four ways in which Indian citizenship can be acquired:

1) By Birth: a) Every person born in India or after 26.01.1950 but before 01.07.1987 is an Indian citizen irrespective of the nationality of the person's parents.

b) Every person born in India between 01.07.1987 and 02.12.2004 is a citizen of India, given that either of the person's parents was a citizen of India at the time of birth.

c) Every person born in India or after 03.12.2004 is a citizen of the country, given both his/her parents are Indians, or at least one parent is a citizen, and the other is not an illegal migrant at the time of birth.

2) **By Registration**: a) A person of Indian origin who has been a resident of India for seven years before applying for registration.

b) A person who is married to an Indian citizen and has been an ordinarily resident for seven years before applying for registration.

c) Minor children of persons who are citizens of India.

3) **By Descent**: a) A person born outside India shall be a citizen of India by descent- i) A person born on or after 26th January 1950, but before 10/12/1992, if his father is a citizen of India at the time of his birth.

ii) A person born on or after 10/12/1992, if either of his parents is a citizen of India at the time of his birth.

4) **By Naturalisation:** A person can acquire citizenship by naturalisation if he/she has been an ordinarily resident of India for 12 years (throughout 12 months preceding the date of application and 11 years in the aggregate) and fulfils all qualifications in the 3rd schedule.

The Central Government can grant a certificate of naturalisation citizenship to a person who has rendered distinguished service in science, philosophy, art, literature, world peace, etc. and waive all or any of the conditions to grant citizenship.

5) **Incorporation of territory**: If any territory becomes part of India, the Central Government, through gazette notification, shall recognise the citizenship.

1.2.2.3 Amendments to the Citizenship Act of 1955:

Amendment to the Citizenship Act 1986:

Consent: The influx of refugees in large numbers started in 1971 (because of the India – Pakistan war). These refugee numbers have soared to such a level that it threatens the local people's culture, economic and social life. As a result, in 1979, initially started as a student movement in Assam, became a major movement and a peace deal was struck in 1985. As a result, in 1986, clause 6(A) was added to the citizenship chapter.

a) All persons who came to Assam before 01.01.1966, including those whose names appear in the electoral roll of 1967, shall be citizens.

b) Persons who came after 01.01.1966 up to 24th March 1971 shall be detected as foreigners, but if they stay for 10 years, they will be recognised as citizens. During these 10 years, they will be issued a passport but not voting rights.

c) Persons who came after 24/03/1971 will be considered as illegal immigrants, and they will be deported.

d) The Supreme Court ordered the registration of residents in Assam. According to the order, the registration process of 3.29 crore people started. After the completion of the registration process, 19 lakh people were left out, and the list was published on 31 August 2019. It was decided that the excluded could approach foreign tribunals with proper documents.

1.2.3.4 Citizenship Amendment Act 2003:

It introduced a version of dual citizenship for persons of Indian origin by inserting the category of Overseas Citizens of India (OCI). OCI was a person of Indian origin and citizen of another country or was a citizen of India immediately before becoming a citizen of another country and got registered as OCI.

1.2.3.5 Citizenship Amendment Act 2019:

The amendment permits members of six communities- Hindus, Sikhs, Buddhists, Jains, Parsis and Christians from Pakistan, Bangladesh, and Afghanistan to enter India before or on 31/12/2014.

a) It reduces the required years of stay from 11 to 5 years (means 12 to 6 years)

b) The Passport Act and Foreigners Act are not applicable

c) This act will not apply to North-East (by and large) related issues:

1.2.4 National Register of Citizens:

The Government of India, along with the Citizenship Amendment Act 2019, decided to set up a National Registration authority for the registration of citizens. Some of the essential aspects of the National Registration process are:

1) Section 14A of the Citizenship Act (which was inserted in 2004) states that the Central Government may register every citizen of India and issue a national identity card to him. It may maintain the National Register of Indian Citizens (NRIC)

2) Register General of India shall act as the "National Registration Authority", but it should be notified in the gazette.

3) Those not registered will know that the local register of Indian citizens shall publish the data to invite objections, claims for inclusion and corrections-objections should be made in 30 days and disposed of within 90 days. After that, the entries in the local register will be transferred to the National Register.

4) Any person aggrieved by an exclusion order can appeal to the District Registrar within 30 days, and the appeal should be disposed off in 90 days. After this, it should be challenged in foreign tribunals or courts.

1.2.5 Let's Sum up

The Indian constitution recognises citizenship till 26/01/1950. After this date, the constitution assigns the responsibility of provisions for recognising citizenship to the parliament and provides the power of amendment to the Parliament itself. With this power, Parliament has amended the Citizenship Act of 1955 from time to time, keeping the necessity of the circumstances. The parliament has the authority to make the laws relating to Citizenship according to Article 11 of the Indian Constitution. The Citizenship (Amendment) Act 2019 (CAA) has attracted nationwide discussions. ' A citizen has rights and responsibilities within the jurisdiction of a sovereign state'. Marshall (1950) discusses three citizenship elements: civil, political and social. The objective of providing the citizenship based on religion is debatable in many circumstances.

The National Register of Citizens (NRC) in Assam shed new light on the debates on citizenship. The state of Assam showed the exclusion of almost two million people from the updated list. The inability to prove the citizenship with proper documentation has led to even suicides. In late 2019, the Indian government passed the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA) legislation that provided refugee status to different religious groups.

The Citizenship Amendment Bill 2019 grants Indian Citizenship to illegal migrants of Hindu, Jain, Buddhist, Sikh, Parsi and Christian Minorities from the neighbouring countries of Afghanistan, Pakistan, and Bangladesh. Illegal migrant means- a) any foreigner who has entered India without a valid passport or a travel document. b) Any foreigner who has entered India with a valid passport or travel document but stays beyond the permitted period. Who entered India on or before 31 December 2014. Opposition by Northeast India that it might change the demography of the region. By providing citizenship to the Bengali migrants in Assam, Tripura, and Meghalaya, they were worried about their domination and losing their jobs and other opportunities. They had a fear of losing their indigenous identity and claiming it as a discriminatory bill violates Article 14 of the Constitution.

1.2.6 Exercise

1. What is citizenship?
2. How to determine the citizenship in India?
3. Write about National Register of Citizens?

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1.3 LANGUAGE IN INDIAN POLITICS: CHANGING NATURE AND IMPACT

-Nirmal Singh

STRUCTURE

1.3.0 OBJECTIVES

After going through this lesson, you will be able to understand:

- How language the people speak can become an instrument for popular mobilization as it constitutes one of the important cultural market and opportunity for upward economic mobilization;
- The demands for linguistic based states before and after independence of India;
- Reasons for the linguistic reorganization of the states, the commissions constituted, the process in which the organization carried out and its implications for politics in India;

1.3.1 INTRODUCTION

India is a land of many languages and dialects. India is believed to have 1652 mother tongues. There are thirty three languages that are each spoken by at least 100,000 people. The officially recognized languages are 22. The 8th Schedule was added to the Constitution to indicate all regional languages statutorily recognized. The Schedule originally contained 15 languages as follows: Assamese, Bengali, Gujarati, Hindi, Kannada, Kashmiri, Malayalam, Marathi, Oriya, Punjabi, Sanskrit, Tamil, Telugu, Urdu, and Sindhi. By the 71st Amendment to the Constitution, Konkani, Manipuri and Nepali were added to the list in 1992. In 2003, four more languages were added: Bodo, Maithili, Dogri and Santhali. There are 29 States in India, with a wide range of languages, cultures and heritage. Besides traditional Indian languages, the Mughal developed Urdu language and during British period English was introduced and made the language of communication at higher level. So, in this period the development of native languages was hampered in higher education as well as administration. Even in the post-independence period English continued to get the prominent position,

Hindi declared as the official language and regional languages were kept confined to their respective states. Like caste and religion, the language also became a tool to be used for political matters. The language policy had been politicized by the national as well as regional political parties. The language policy of the central government is not appreciated by the supporters of regional languages. So, language over the time has become contradictory discourse for central and state governments. It has been observed that if anti English agitations were launched in Hindi speaking areas, anti-Hindi agitation were also launched by non-Hindi-speaking states in South India. It has been alleged sometimes that Hindi is being imposed forcefully in non-Hindi speaking areas and it is being promoted in education and administration at the cost of other native languages.

There were agitations and demands for declaring Urdu as the second language in certain states. In addition to these, there are many minority groups speaking different languages in one single state. On the other hand, at many point of time one single regional language is declared as official language of a state and consequently the speakers of that language are preferred in educational institutions and employment opportunities, denying the same for speakers of other languages in the same state.

1.3.2 ROLE OF THE LANGUAGE

The language plays very important role in the life of the human beings from birth to death. Following are the important dimensions to the language:

1. Language provides the means by which ideas and experiences are communicated from one individual to another. Much of a person's information is derived by hearing words from others.
2. Words can be used as tools to control the behaviour of other and other's behaviour.
3. Language helps in Encoding message meaningfully.
4. Language signifies Culture: Learning a language enables to acquire knowledge. Language implies intelligence of a group.
5. Language helps in socialization: Language can be considered as a instrument of socialization.

1.3.3 PRELUDE TO EMERGENCE OF LINGUISTIC STATES

Initially, India was divided into four categories of states i.e. A, B, C and D. The constitution of 1950 distinguished between four types of states:

1. A-Category States: There were nine states in this category which were the former governor's provinces of British India and were ruled by an elected governor and state legislature. Assam, Bihar, Bombay, Madhya Pradesh (formerly Central Provinces and Berar), Madras, Orissa, Punjab (formerly East Punjab), Uttar Pradesh (formerly the United Provinces), and West Bengal were in this category.

2. B-Category States: This category had eight states and they were former princely states or groups of princely states, governed by a rajpramukh and an elected legislature. The states were Hyderabad, Jammu and Kashmir, Madhya Bharat, Mysore, Patiala and East Punjab States Union (PEPSU), Rajasthan, Saurashtra, and Travancore-Cochin.

3. C-Category States: It included both the former chief commissioners' provinces and some princely states, and each was governed by a chief commissioner appointed by the President of India. The states in this category were Ajmer, Bhopal, Bilaspur, Coorg, Delhi, Himachal Pradesh, Kutch, Manipur, Tripura, and Vindhya Pradesh.

4. D-Category States: It had only Andaman and Nicobar Islands, which were administered by a lieutenant governor appointed by the central government.

5. But people believed that this division negated the principle of equal rights guaranteed to all citizens by the Constitution. The problem of administrative reorganisation was further complicated by the growing demand for formation of states on the basis of linguistic political pressure for establishing linguistic states. The government of India was compelled by the public opinion for division of states on linguistic basis. In the Telugu area communists set up the slogan "Andhra for Telugus". Similarly Marathi speaking people wanted a separate state. Gujaratis claimed a separate state for themselves. Sikhs demanded a state for themselves. Thus in order to meet the demands of public, the central government decided to reorganise states on the basis of language.

1.3.4 THE LINGUISTIC REORGANISATION OF STATES

Between 1947 and about 1950, the territories of the princely states were politically integrated into the Indian Union. Most were merged into existing provinces; others were organised into new provinces, such as Rajputana, Himachal Pradesh, Madhya Bharat, and Vindhya Pradesh, made up of multiple princely states; a few, including Mysore, Hyderabad, Bhopal, and Bilaspur, became separate provinces. The Government of India Act 1935 remained the constitutional law of India pending adoption of the new Constitution. The new Constitution of India, which came into force on 26 January 1950, made India a sovereign democratic republic.

1.3.4.1 Movements for Linguistic States before Independence

Demand of states on linguistic basis was developed even before independence of India under British rule. Following are the movements that took place before independence of the country:

1. Lokmanya Tilak was perhaps the first national leader to appreciate the diversity of languages and urge the Congress to commence working in vernacular languages; he also advocated reorganisation of the provinces on a linguistic basis. The decision of the All India Congress Committee of the Indian National Congress on April 8, 1917 to constitute a separate Congress Province (Andhra Provincial Congress Committee) from out of the Telugu speaking districts of the Madras Presidency strengthened the argument for the linguistic re-organization of British India provinces.
2. The first generation of freedom fighters realised the importance of linguistic states at the time of the partition of Bengal in 1905. British colonial rule skilfully crafted multilingual administrative territories in India. In pursuit of this policy, the then home secretary of India submitted a note to the Crown in December 1903, suggesting the division of Bengal, and then Lord Curzon did divide Bengal, a linguistically homogenous unit, into two religiously heterogeneous units, in order to stem the freedom movement. But this colonial administrative action helped the Bengali speaking people to learn to think in terms of linguistic unity. The movement for reunification of Bengal also

gave an impetus to a movement to reorganise the provinces on the basis of language in the eastern region of India. Ultimately, colonial administration was forced to undo the bifurcation of Bengal on religious basis, but at the same time it carved out Assam and Bihar as separate provinces in 1911 on a linguistic basis.

3. However, the acceptance of federalism by the Lucknow session of the Indian National Congress in 1916 inspired the demands for several such states. On April 8, 1917, on the basis of its Lucknow session's recommendation, the AICC demanded a Telugu-speaking state carved out of the Madras Presidency.

4. Subsequently, in its 1920 Nagpur session, the Congress accepted in principle the creation of linguistic states. With this spirit, first the Congress took initiatives to organise their provincial committees on linguistic basis

5. The process that started with the formation of a separate Linguistic Circle of the Indian National Congress for the Telugu-speaking territory became a basic principle for the recognition of the linguistic identity of various populations to carve out the administrative units in India.

6. In 1927, the Congress again declared that it was committed to the redistribution of provinces on a linguistic basis and reaffirmed its stance several times, including in the election manifesto of 1945-46.

7. The emerging idea of federalism forced the colonial administration in India to appoint a commission on linguistic reorganisation of provinces, headed by Sir John Simon, in 1927. It was in response to Simon Commission's observation that the Nehru Committee submitted its own report in 1928. Consisting of Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru, Sir Ali Imam, Subhash Chandra Bose etc and presided over by Motilal Nehru, this committee represented various trends in the freedom movement, and its report for the first time formally incorporated the demand for linguistic reorganisation of the provinces.

8. Odisha was the first Indian state formed on linguistic basis in the year 1936 due to the efforts of Madhusudan Das and became Orissa Province. In Odisha, linguistic movement had started in the year 1895 and intensified later years with the demand of separate province from Bihar and Orissa Province.

Meanwhile, at the ground level, aspirations for such states within the territory of India caught the people's imagination. This principle was subsequently officially adopted by the Congress and included in its election manifesto. On November 27, 1947, in the Constituent Assembly (Legislative) Prime Minister Nehru on behalf of the government of India accepted the principle underlying the demand for linguistic provinces. Though after independence, partition led to fear of further division on the basis of language and many leaders changed their views regarding language based states.

1.3.4.2 Language and Separate Statehood

It resulted in bitter conflicts among different groups within the same state. It is here reference can be made to the language movement of Assam in the 1960s. When the Assamese language was declared as the medium of instruction in Assam in the aftermath of the movement, many tribal groups like Khasi, Gharo, Jayantia etc. were reluctant to accept it and started agitation for demanding a separate state for these communities, and accordingly the state of Meghalaya came into being in 1972. The reorganization of states on the basis of language started its discourse immediately after independence. The first Prime Minister (PM) of independence India Pt. J.N. Nehru appointed the State Re- organization Commission (SRC) in August 1953 with the members like Justice Fazal Ali, K.M. Panikkar and Hridaynath Kunzru in the aftermath of the mass resistance for the demand of separation of Andhra from Madras Presidency for the Telugu speaking people. This led to the reorganization of states on the basis of language in 1956 and declared the formation of 14 states and 6 union territories on linguistic line. The North Eastern states also re organized through the North Eastern Reorganization Act 1971 and it came into effect from 1972 and the North East divided into seven states. The reorganization of states, in 1956, on linguistic basis has given a stable ground for continuation of this trend in future also. The politics of languages has raised unnecessary controversy in the country and hampered the process of national unity and integrity.

1.3.4.3JVP Cimmittee

In December, 1948, Congress appointed a committee under Jawaharlal Nehru, Vallabh bhai Patel and Pattabhi Sitaramayya (known as the JVP Committee) to examine the

issue afresh. The committee, in a report submitted in April, 1949, dismissed the idea of reorganization on a linguistic basis. However the committee stated that the problem may be re-examined in the light of public demand.

1.3.4.4 First Linguistic State

In 1953, the government was forced to create a separate state of Andhra Pradesh for Telugu-speaking people following the long-drawn agitation and death of Potti Sriramulu after a hunger strike for 56 days. Thus, the first linguistic state of Andhra Pradesh was created under pressure.

1.3.4.5 Fazl Commission

This led to the demand for creation of states on linguistic basis from other parts of country and on December 22, 1953, Jawaharlal Nehru announced the appointment of a commission under Fazl Ali to consider this demand. The other two members of the commission were K M Panikkar and HN Kunzru. The commission submitted its report after taking into account the wishes and claims of people in different regions. It recommended the reorganization of the whole country into sixteen states and three centrally administered areas. However, the government did not accept these recommendations in toto. While accepting Commission's recommendation to do away with the four-fold distribution of states as provided under the original Constitution, it divided the country into 14 states and 6 union territories under the States Reorganization Act 1956. The states were Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Bihar, Bombay, Jammu and Kashmir, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Madras, Mysore, Orissa, Punjab, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal. The six union territories were Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Delhi, Himachal Pradesh, Laccadive, Minicoy and Amindivi Islands, Manipur and Tripura. The Act was implemented in November, 1956.

1.3.4.6 Concept of Zonal Council

With a view to promoting cooperation among various states, the act provided for five zonal councils--for the northern, central, eastern, western and southern zone states, respectively. Each zonal council consisted of a union minister appointed by the President; the chief ministers of states in the zones, two ministers of each state in

the zone, one member from each union territory nominated by the President (if such a territory was included in the zone), and the advisor to the Governor of Assam in the case of the eastern zone. In addition, the zonal council was to have certain advisors.

Diversion of the State of Bombay: In 1960, as a result of agitation and violence, the states of Maharashtra and Gujarat were created by bifurcating the state of Bombay. With this the strength of the Indian states rose to 15.

Formation of Nagaland: In 1963, the state of Nagaland was formed to placate the Nagas. However, before providing it the status of a full-fledged state, it was placed under the control of the Governor of Assam in 1961. With this the strength of the Indian states rose to 16.

Territories from France and Portuguese: After the acquisition of Chandernagore, Mahe, Yaman and Karekal from France, and the territories of Goa, Daman and Diu from the Portuguese, these were either merged with the neighbouring states or given the status of union territories.

1.3.4.7 Shah Commission

In 1966, the Parliament passed the Punjab Reorganization Act after an agitation for the formation of Punjabi Subha. This step was taken on the recommendation of the Shah Commission appointed in April, 1966. As a result of this act, the Punjabi-speaking areas were constituted into the state of Haryana and the hilly areas were merged with the adjoining Union Territory of Himachal Pradesh. Chandigarh was made a Union Territory and was to serve as a common capital of Punjab and Haryana. The two states were also to have a common High Court, common university and joint arrangement for the management of the major components of the existing irrigation and power system. With the division of Punjab, the strength of states rose to 17.

1.3.4.8 Further Formation of States

1. In 1969, the state of Meghalaya was created out of the state of Assam. Initially, the state was given autonomous status within Assam, but subsequently it was made a full-fledged state. This raised the strength of Indian states to 18.
2. In 1971, with the elevation of the union territory of Himachal Pradesh to the status of a state, the strength of Indian states rose to 19 and then to 21 with the conversion of the Union Territories of Tripura and Manipur into states.

3. In 1975, Sikkim was admitted as a state of the Indian Union. Initially, Sikkim was given the status of an associate state but was subsequently made a full-fledged state.

4. In 1986 it was decided to give Mizoram, a Union Territory of India, the status of a full-fledged state. However, it actually acquired the status of a state in February 1987 and became the 23rd state of the Indian Union.

5. In February 1987 Arunachal Pradesh, another Union Territory of India, was also given the status of a state and became the twenty-fourth state of the Indian Union.

6. In May 1987 the state of Goa was created by separating the territory of Goa from the Union territory of Goa, Daman and Diu. While Daman and Diu continued to be a Union Territory, Goa became the 25th state of the Indian Union.

7. In August and September of 2000, the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) government of Prime Minister Vajpayee created three new states in Northern India. The hill regions of the state of Uttar Pradesh i.e. Gadhwal and Kumaon became the state of Uttaranchal; Jharkhand was carved out of South Bihar, and Chhattisgarh was separated from eastern Madhya Pradesh.

1.3.5 IMPLICATIONS OF REORGANISATION

The reorganisation in India during 1950s and 1960s led to following consequences in the national scene of the country:

1. Regionalism: Linguism has promoted local identity. It has created distinctiveness among people. The regional differences have come in the way of national integration. Extreme sense of regionalism has resulted in parochialism and ethno centricism.

2. Exploitation of people by Politicians: Language has evoked psychological and emotional feelings among people. Politicians are promoting the spread of only particular languages through monetary inducements. They exploit the sentiments of people at the time of election.

3. Erosion of national feeling: Linguistic loyalty has come in the way of national integration. People are much concerned about the regional gains, than the interest of the nation. Thus interstate boundary dispute, river dispute have become common. E.g. : Difference of opinion among people speaking Kannada and Marathi in Belgaum.

4. Emergence of regional Political Parties: Linguism has resulted in the formation of regional political parties. At the present juncture these regional parties are playing a crucial role in the formation of government at the centre and also at some states. This has caused the Problem of political instability in the country. It has even increased the cost of election.

5. Demand for separate states: Extreme sense of Linguism has caused linguistic conflicts. Such conflicts are quite often supported by politicians. For instance, Demand for a separate state by people of north Karnataka region.

6. Threat to sovereignty: Linguism is posing a severe threat to the integrity of the country. On the basis of language people have become more self-centred without thinking of the progress of the country. In Some states the regional language is being used even for administrative purposes, which causes a major problem to people who do not belong to that particular state.

7. Hindered Economic Cooperation between States: the creation of new stats over the time in India has led to disputes among states which have put obstacle in the economic cooperation between states or among states. Cauvery water issue between Karnataka and Tamil Nadu; and Satluj Yamuna Link (SYL) dispute between Punjab and Haryana are examples of disputes.

8. Developed an Antagonistic Attitude towards Neighbouring States: the states have developed hostile attitude towards their neighbouring states due to various issues such as wrongful transfer of wrong areas to that state. There is demand from states to transfer back to them those areas where majority of people speak language of their that language. The case of Punjab for return of Punjabi speaking areas can be cited here.

1.3.6 LANGUAGE ISSUES IN INDIA

The Language issues in India are the result of multilingual polity. Language problem is a very hot political question in India. India is divided into distinct linguistic regions. Naturally the person of every large linguistic region wants their language to be the national language or the lingua franca of India. During the British rule, English was used as the official language of India. English was also issued as the medium of instruction particularly for higher education. English also became the language of interstate communication in India. There were objections against the continued use of English. Even after the continuous use as official language for nearly two hundred years, English did not take firm roots in India. It remained restricted to small circle of elites. Not more than 1% of Indians knew English at the time of independence, Besides, English being a foreign language, continued use of English affronted the sense of national dignity of independent India. Thus, objections to the continued use of English in independent India were almost universal. But there was no unanimity or consensus as to what Indian language should replace English as official language, medium of instruction and as medium of interstate communication in India.

During the freedom movement, there was a consensus among, national leaders that English should be replaced by an Indian Language as the national language of the country. But there could not any unanimity as to what language should be national language. The Constituent Assembly, after a protracted debate resolved that Hindi in Devanagri script should be the official language of India. It should be noted that the Constituent Assembly was exactly equally divided into supporters and opponents of Hindi. Indeed it was only with the casting vote of the President of the Constituent Assembly, Dr. Rajendra Prasad, that Hindi was adopted as the official language of the country. But it is one thing to declare Hindi as the official language of the Union. It is a totally different proposition to make Hindi acceptable to the Indian people at large. Undoubtedly Hindi is spoken by the single largest group of Indians. But Hindi is certainly not the language of the majority Indians nor can it claim to be the richest among the Indian languages. There was wide spread resistance to the adoption of Hindi as the official language. The resistance was particularly sharp in the southern region. The South looked upon imposition of Hindi, as the imperialism of the North. The constitutional provision that English shall continue side by side with Hindi, somewhat pacified the south.

Hindi is the spoken language for North Indian people. But, most people residing in South Indian states do not speak or understand Hindi. This gives rise to communication problem. A South Indian and a North Indian person finds it very hard to talk and communicate with each other because they don't understand each other's language of communication. Educated people who can speak and understand English breaks the barrier of language problem and able to talk freely with each other. English language has been helpful in bridging the gap between the Hindi and non-Hindi speaking people. The constitution originally recognized 13 other languages besides Hindi as the national languages of India. Since the adoption of the constitution several other languages have come to be used as official languages in the states. Thus Nepali and Santhali are used in West Bengal besides Bengali. In Bihar, Urdu is also used besides Hindi. But as medium of instruction and as medium of interstate communication between non-Hindi speaking states or between non-Hindi speaking states and the centre, English still continues to be the predominant language. Even in courts particularly the higher courts such as the High Courts and the Supreme Court, English and not Hindi is used. Considering these circumstances, one may conclude that there is no possibility of English being abolished as official language, as medium of instruction for higher education as medium of interstate communication and as language of the courts, is deem indeed.

1.3.7 CURRENT CONCERNS

In the modern times, language alone can no longer be the basis for division of states. Rather more complex issues such as size of the state, governance, economic feasibility and recognition of new social, economic and political identities are vocal the demands for reorganisation of states. Social, economic and political context in which reorganisation took, place in decades of 1950s and 1960s is quite different than today. Demand for reorganisation at present stems from sphere of the processes of democratization, identity politics, globalization, regional disparities, and demands for equitable development, decline of the Congress system and the regionalization of the party system leading to coalitional governments.

1.3.8 LET US SUM UP

There are different strands in the demand for and emergence of new states. One main strand is the cultural/social affiliations. Another important reason is the strong perception that 'development'-in the sense of equitable share in resources, employment entrepreneurial opportunities and adequate voice in political decision-making-will never reach them in the bigger state and can be achieved only with a separate statehood for the aggrieved region. These demands would not emerge if socio-economic development is equitable and equality under the law were scrupulously observed. On a larger level, on the political stage the locus of power has moved from a Centre that was once dominant to one that is forced to share power with states. It is no longer a matter of accommodating some claims of the states but one of conceding their demands. Coalition politics has its own principles. To an extent, the demand for new states reflects this shift in the locus of power. For one thing, the growth in population is very high. The existent federal set up is probably not adequate enough to meet the rising aspirations of such large numbers. Furthermore, India's diversity implies a large number of communities, each one with a strong sense of identity. Now, with-the growth of democracy, there has also grown an assertive politics of communities that want at home of their own. There is also an awareness that one gets centre stage attention through community politics. So we have political parties-even the so-called national ones-associating themselves with these assertions of identity. Last but not least, there is the inequitable development process. Those who feel left out, or exploited or losing out in the economic process put up the demand for a new state believing they will be empowered to chart out a better future for themselves.

1.3.9 EXERCISE

1. How language can influence the body politic of a country?
2. Write a note on linguistic reorganization of the state.
3. Critically analyse the impact of language on politics of India.

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1.4 CLASS IN INDIAN POLITICS: NATURE AND IMPLICATIONS

-Mamta Sharma

STRUCTURE

1.4.0 OBJECTIVES

After going through this lesson, you will be able to:

- Know the relationship between caste, class and power and also understand the role of growing middle class after the liberlazing the Indian economy 1990s.
- Understand the political rose of Backward classes movements in the Indian politics and how it influences the Indian politics.

1.4.1 INTRODUCTION

The term class has been used in two different senses by Karl Marx and Max Weber.

While Marx define class in relation to the means of production, Weber describe class as a status group. Marx divide the society into two broad classes- the Capitalist, who are the owner of the means of production and Proletariat, the propertyless who posses only labour power and work for wage or salary. According to Marx though the workers form an essential part of the productive system yet he has no voice in the management of the factory where he works. The worker has been virtually reduced to the status of a cog in the machine. Marx says that with the accumulation of capital the lot of workers grows miserable. This gives rise to class consciousness among workers, who find their interest antagonistic to the interest of the capitalists. Thus, Marx viewed the classes in purely antagonistic terms, possessing irreconcilable class interest. Unlike Marx, Weber did not envisage only two antagonistic classes. On the other hand, he envisaged various social strata's between the workers and the capitalist. Like Marx he admits the importance of economic factor in any system of stratification. But he also envisages two other determinants- Political power and Social prestige. In short Weber believes that wealth, Political influence and Social prestige go hand in hand in determining the status of a person. Thus, Weber defines class "By class is meant two or more orders of people who are believed to be and are accordingly ranked by the members of community in socially superior and inferior position."

1.4.2 RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CLASS, CASTE AND POWER

Theoretically speaking caste and democratic political system stand for opposite value systems. Caste is hierarchical. Status of an individual in caste-oriented social system is determined by birth. It has religious sanction by various holy texts, reinforced by priests and rituals. Traditionally, upper castes enjoy certain privileges not only in religious sphere but also in economic, education and political spheres. Customary laws differentiate individual by birth and sex. 'That is, certain rules are harsh, to women and Shudras and soft to males and Brahmins. On the other hand, democratic political system advocates freedom to an individual and equality of status. It stands for rule of Law. No one irrespective of status is above law. Indian democratic system under the Constitution stands for liberty, equality and fraternity among all citizens. It strives to build egalitarian social order. Generally, there is a close co-relationship between the three. Hierarchies of caste, class and power, the Brahmins have the highest position in the class hierarchy, while the untouchables have lowest position and in between the

two there are large collection of caste which have no fixed position. Similarly, there is a close relationship between the status of a caste and its economic position. The higher castes tend to be land owners while the tenants are mostly from the middle caste and agricultural labours come mostly from the untouchable castes. Similarly, the position of power and influences are in the hands of higher caste. Thus, we find a close so-relationship between class, caste and power. According to Professor M.N. Srinivas "A caste is dominant when it preponderates numerically over the other castes and when it also wields preponderant economic and political power. A large and a powerful caste group can more easily be dominant if its position in the local caste hierarchy is too low." Some scholars have argued that in the urban areas class is slowly replacing caste and that the caste values are being discarded by those urban classes which now look to the West for new ideas and values. However, Professor Srinivas does not agree with this view, he says, "There is a widespread impression among the educated Indians that caste is on its last legs and that the educated organized and Westernised members of the upper classes have already escaped its bonds. But these impressions are wrong. These people may observe very few dietic restrictions, marry outside the caste and even religion but this does not mean that they have escaped entirely from the bonds of caste." While we can not deny the hold of caste in politics. It is also true that the socio-economic status has a close relationship with political activity. This means that if the low status caste can raise their socio-economic status, they can also raise their level of political involvement and activity.

1.4.3 RISE OF MIDDLE CLASS IN INDIA

Policies of economic liberalisation initiated in India since the early 1990s have been accompanied by an array of images centered around consumption practices and wealth generated by the 'new' liberalising middle class. The 'newness' of this Indian middle class is a cultural characteristic that is marked by attitudes, lifestyles and consumption practices associated with commodities made available in India's liberalising economy. This production of the new Indian middle class parallels comparative trends in the construction of the 'new rich' as a social group that is the prime beneficiary of globalisation in contemporary Asia. The construction of such a category, in effect, marks the potential benefits of globalisation for emerging market-oriented contexts in nation such as India. This middle class is the visual urban embodiment of globalisation

that appears to dispel fears that places in late-industrialising nations like India will remain forgotten on the routes of capital movements. The growing cultural visibility of the new Indian middle class marks the emergence of a wider national political culture in liberalising India. This visibility represents a shift from older ideologies of state socialism to a political culture that is centered on a middle class-based culture of consumption. Middle class consumers represent the cultural symbols of a nation that has opened its borders to consumer goods that were unavailable during earlier decades of state-controlled markets. This political culture entails a shift from earlier ideologies that idealised poverty alleviation and asceticism to a set of national discourses that highlight the visibility of emerging elites such as the new middle classes. While state socialist ideologies tended to depict workers or rural villagers as the archetypical citizens and objects of development in the early decades in post-colonial India, mainstream national political discourses increasingly depict the middle classes as the representative citizens of liberalising India. The growing visibility of the new Indian middle class has resulted in what Indian scholar Rajni Kothari (1993) has referred to as a 'growing amnesia' towards poverty and the poor in liberalising India. The visibility of the urban middle classes sets into motion a politics of forgetting with regard to social groups that are marginalised by India's increased integration into the global economy. The politics of forgetting in this case does not refer to processes in which particular places or nations are left out of economic globalisation. Rather, it refers to a political discursive process in which specific marginalised social groups are rendered invisible and forgotten within the dominant national political culture. The politics of forgetting, in this sense, is not merely an inadvertent process of particular locations being left out of economic globalisation. It is a political project that seeks to produce a sanitised vision of the economic benefits of globalisation. This is not an uncontested process. In practice, the hegemonic role of the liberalising middle class co-exists with and is challenged by numerous forms of political mobilisation of marginalised caste and class groups in contemporary India. The politics of forgetting thus continually rests on more active processes of exclusion that are in turn contested by these marginalised groups. The process of forgetting is a political-discursive process in which dominant social groups and political actors attempt to naturalise these processes of exclusion by producing a middle-class-based definition of citizenship. The dynamics of this politics of forgetting in contemporary India

unfold through the spatial reconfiguration of class inequalities and distinctions at the local level. As Doreen Massey has noted "phenomena such as globalisation" can be understood as "changing forms of the spatial organisation of social relations. Social relations always have a spatial form and spatial content" Drawing on this approach, the focus on the ways in which the linkages between middle-class identity, economic restructuring and the politics of forgetting can be understood through local forms of spatial politics and contestations unfolding in urban India. These spatial practices are technologies for the production of a vision of a liberalising India that centres on the visibility of the new Indian middle class. The production of middle-class identity is linked to a politics of 'spatial purification' which centers on middle class claims over public spaces and a corresponding movement to cleanse such spaces of the poor and working classes. It is the active nature of this politics of purification that underlies the political project of 'forgetting' subordinated social groups such as squatters and street vendors. This process represents an emerging dimension in Indian politics, one in which middle-class individuals and social groups now consciously claim that the Indian middle class is a distinctive social group with its own set of social, political and economic interests that must be actively represented. This assertive middle class identity is articulated both in public discourses as well as in a range of cultural and social forms such as the development of new urban aesthetics and assertive claims on public urban space as well as the emergence of new civil and community organisations. Such forms of local spatial politics point to the production of an exclusionary form of cultural citizenship in which the urban Indian middle classes are constructed as consumer-citizens in liberalising India.

1.4.4 POLITICAL RISE OF OTHER BACKWARD CLASSES

No social system remains static. Social system changes from time to time with the changing social, economic and political circumstances. This is also true for the caste system. At the empirical level the caste hierarchy has never been static throughout history. Theoretically, all Jatis are hierarchically placed within a prescribed social status. Some Jatis enjoy high status and some occupy low status. Place of the Jati in the social order in the hierarchy is determined by its ritual status based on the observation of customs for interpersonal relationship. Some scholars believe this value system - acceptance of one's station in the life is the result of previous birth

- has consensus among all Hindus including the Untouchables. But it is not true. Though the upper castes try to maintain their higher status, the middle and lower castes have successfully tried to change their status. Having improved their economic condition, a dominant section of some of the low castes, including the groups, which were at one time treated as untouchables, imitated customs and norms of the upper castes residing in their vicinity. Sociologists call this process as sanskritisation. One also comes across instances of some castes or even individuals who have succeeded in improving their status even without adhering to the norms and rituals of the upper castes. Acquiring political authority facilitates not only power holder - ruler - but also his kin and relatives to enjoy higher social status in caste hierarchy. One can cite instances in history, which show that Shudras and ati-shudras having occupying position of power have acquired status of Kshatriyas even without following the path of sanskritisation. 'The process of sanskritisation which was prominent among the lower castes at one in India point of time, particularly in the 19th and early 20th century, has been slowed down in the 'sixties and 'seventies'. Earlier many castes hesitated to be called 'backward' despite the poor economic condition of the members. They feared that they would not be able to improve their social status by identifying themselves as 'backward'. But this is no longer true now, as the State has provided certain benefits to the backward castes. These castes have realised that they could improve their status by improving their economic condition rather than observing rituals followed by the upper castes. Now there is competition among the castes to be called 'backward'.

As the decade of the eighties came to a close, the country witnessed several developments that made a long-lasting impact on Indian politics. One long-term development of this period was the rise of Other Backward Classes as a political force. These are communities other than SC and ST who suffer from educational and social backwardness. These are also referred to as 'backward castes.' In the 1980s, the Janata Dal brought together a similar combination of political groups with strong support among the OBCs. The decision of the National Front government to implement the recommendations of the Mandal Commission further helped in shaping the politics of 'Other Backward Classes'. The intense national debate for and against reservation in jobs made people from the OBC communities more aware of this identity. Thus, it helped those who wanted to mobilise these groups in politics.

This period saw the emergence of many parties that sought better opportunities for OBCs in education and employment and also raised the question of the share of power enjoyed by the OBCs. These parties claimed that since OBCs constituted a large segment of Indian society, it was only democratic that the OBCs should get adequate representation in administration and have their due share of political power. The Mandal Commission Reservations for the OBC were in existence in southern States since the 1960s, if not earlier. But this policy was not operative in north Indian States. It was during the tenure of Janata Party government in 1977-79 that the demand for reservations for backward castes in north India and at the national level was strongly raised. Karpoori Thakur, the then Chief Minister of Bihar, was a pioneer in this direction. His government had introduced a new policy of reservations for OBCs in Bihar. Following this, the central government appointed a Commission in 1978 to look into and recommend ways to improve the conditions of the backward classes. This was the second time since Independence that the government had appointed such a commission. Therefore, this commission was officially known as the Second Backward Classes Commission. Popularly, the commission is known as the Mandal Commission, after the name of its Chairperson, Bindeshwari Prasad Mandal. The Mandal Commission was set up to investigate the extent of educational and social backwardness among various sections of Indian society and recommend ways of identifying these 'backward classes'. It was also expected to give its recommendations on the ways in which this backwardness could be ended. The Commission gave its recommendations in 1980. By then the Janata government had fallen. The Commission advised that 'backward classes' should be understood to mean 'backward castes', since many castes, other than the Scheduled Castes, were also treated as low in the caste hierarchy. The Commission did a survey and found that these backward castes had a very low presence in both educational institutions and in employment in public services. It therefore recommended reserving 27 per cent of seats in educational institutions and government jobs for these groups. The Mandal Commission also made many other recommendations, like, land reform, to improve the conditions of the OBCs. In August 1990, the National Front government decided to implement one of the recommendations of Mandal Commission pertaining to reservations for OBCs in jobs in the central government and its undertakings. This decision sparked agitations and violent protests in many cities of north India. The

decision was also challenged in the Supreme Court and came to be known as the 'Indira Sawhney case', after the name of one of the petitioners. In November 1992, the Supreme Court gave a ruling upholding the decision of the government. There were some differences among political parties about the manner of implementation of this decision. But now the policy of reservation for OBCs has support of all the major political parties of the country.

was the main force behind the state's response with an institutional package for statehood. Andhra Pradesh in India's south showed the way. The fast unto death in 1952 of Potti Sriramulu for a separate state for the Telugu-speakers triggered the reaction of Nehru for creation of the states. Second, in the 1970s and 1980s, the main focus of reorganization was India's north-east. The basis of reorganization was tribal insurgency for separation and statehood. The main institutional response of the Union government was the north-eastern States Reorganisation Act, 1971 which upgraded the Union Territories of Manipur and Tripura, and the Sub-State of Meghalaya to full statehood, and Mizoram and Arunachal Pradesh (then Tribal Districts) to Union Territories. The latter became states in 1986. Goa based on Konkani language became a state in 1987, was the sole exception. Third, the movements for the three new states - Chhattisgarh out of Madhya Pradesh, Jharkhand out of Bihar and Uttaranchal out of Uttar Pradesh - were long-drawn but became vigorous in the 1990s, successfully culminated in the creation of the three new states in 2000. And the most recent one we can see with the division of Andhra Pradesh to create a separate state of Telangana in 2014.

1.4.5 POLITICAL FALLOUT

The 1980s also saw the rise of political organisation of the Dalits. In 1978 the Backward and Minority Communities Employees Federation (BAMCEF) was formed. This organisation was not an ordinary trade union of government employees. It took a strong position in favour of political power to the 'bahujan' – the SC, ST, OBC and minorities. It was out of this that the subsequent Dalit Shoshit Samaj Sangharsh Samiti and later the Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) emerged under the leadership of Kanshi Ram. The BSP began as a small party supported largely by Dalit voters in Punjab, Haryana and Uttar Pradesh. But in 1989 and the 1991 elections, it achieved a breakthrough in Uttar Pradesh. This was the first time in independent

India that a political party supported mainly by Dalit voters had achieved this kind of political success. In fact, the BSP, under Kanshi Ram's leadership was envisaged as an organisation based on pragmatic politics. It derived confidence from the fact that the Bahujans (SC, ST, OBC and religious minorities) constituted the majority of the population, and were a formidable political force on the strength of their numbers. Since then the BSP has emerged as a major political player in the State and has been in government on more than one occasion. Its strongest support still comes from Dalit voters, but it has expanded its support now to various other social groups. In many parts of India, Dalit politics and OBC politics have developed independently and often in competition with each other. This gave rise to large middle class in Indian politics. In turn, acceptance of the political and social claims of the backward castes – political parties have recognized that the social and political claims of the backward castes need to be accepted. As a result, all political parties now support reservation of seats for the 'backward classes' in education and employment. Political parties are also willing to ensure that the OBCs get adequate share of participation.

the states of Tamil Nadu, Kerala and Karnataka. Another dispute arose among the states

1.4.6 LET US SUM UP

Politics in India has been based on caste in recent decades. But a rising middle class and increasing inequality within caste groups is paving the way for a class-based faultline. One cliché looms large in every election campaign in India: that caste politics may finally give way to class politics. But however, seeing the various election results, still caste subsumes every other factor. Perhaps, class may going to play a important role in the politics of number. Three key factors seem to have raised the salience of class in India's polity. Firstly, the rising inequality; second factor is the emergence of new inspirational class with its own values and expectations from the state; and the final factor is the fragmentation of old caste coalitions and the interplay of caste and class in recreating caste coalitions and political affiliations.

1.4.7 EXERCISE

1. Discuss the role of class in Indian Politics.
2. Critically examine the nature and implications of class in Indian Politics.

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2.1 NATIONALISM: DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVES AND THEIR IMPLICATIONS

- Mamta Sharma

STRUCTURE

2.1.0 OBJECTIVES

After going this lesson, you will be able to:

- Know the central themes of Nationalism.
- To understand the different perspectives of nationalism and its impact on the Indian nation state.
- To know the new form of Indian Nationalism under the influence of Subaltern studies.

2.1.1 INTRODUCTION

The word 'nation' has been used since the thirteenth century and derives from the Latin nasci, meaning to be born. In the form of natio, it referred to a group of people united by birth or birth place. In its original usage, 'nation' thus implied a breed of people or a racial group, but possessed no political significance. It was not until the late eighteenth century that the term acquired political overtones, as individuals and groups started to be classified as 'nationalists'. The term 'nationalism' was first used in print in 1789 by the anti-Jacobin French priest Augustin Barruel. By the mid-nineteenth century nationalism was widely recognized as a political doctrine or movement, for example as a major ingredient of the revolutions that swept across Europe in 1848. In many respects, nationalism developed into the most successful and compelling of political creeds, helping to shape and reshape history in many parts of the world for over two hundred years. The idea of nationalism was born during the French Revolution. Previously countries had been thought of as 'realms', 'principalities' or 'kingdoms'. The inhabitants of a country were 'subjects', their political identity being formed by allegiance to a ruler or ruling dynasty, rather than any sense of national identity or patriotism . However, the revolutionaries in France who rose up against Louis XVI in 1789 did so in the name of the people, and understood the people to be the 'French nation'. Their ideas were influenced by the writings of Jean-Jacques Rousseau and the new doctrine of popular self-government. Nationalism was therefore a revolutionary and democratic creed, reflecting the idea that 'subjects of the crown' should become 'citizens of France'.

As you have seen, modern nationalism in Europe came to be associated with the formation of nation-states. It also meant a change in people's understanding of who they were, and what defined their identity and sense of belonging. New symbols and icons, new songs and ideas forged new links and redefined the boundaries of communities. In most countries the making of this new national identity was a long process. How did this consciousness emerge in India?

In India, as in Vietnam and many other colonies, the growth of modern nationalism is intimately connected to the anti-colonial movement. People began discovering their unity in the process of their struggle with colonialism. The sense of being oppressed

under colonialism provided a shared bond that tied many different groups together. But each class and group felt the effects of colonialism differently, their experiences were varied, and their notions of freedom were not always the same. The Congress under Mahatma Gandhi tried to forge these groups together within one movement.

2.1.2 CENTRAL THEMES OF NATIONALISM

To treat nationalism as an ideology in its own right is to encounter at least three problems. The first is that nationalism is sometimes classified as a political doctrine rather than a fully-fledged ideology. Whereas, for instance, liberalism, conservatism and socialism constitute complex sets of interrelated ideas and values, nationalism, the argument goes, is at heart the simple belief that the nation is the natural and proper unit of government. The drawback of this view is that it focuses only on what might be regarded as 'classical' political nationalism, and ignores the many others, and in some respects no less significant, manifestations of nationalism, such as cultural nationalism and ethnic nationalism. The core feature of nationalism is therefore not its narrow association with self-government and the nation-state, but its broader link to movements and ideas that in whatever way acknowledge the central importance of the nation. Second, nationalism is sometimes portrayed as an essentially psychological phenomenon – usually as loyalty towards one's nation or dislike of other nations – instead of as a theoretical construct. Undoubtedly one of the key features of nationalism is the potency of its affective or emotional appeal, but to understand it in these terms alone is to mistake the ideology of nationalism for the sentiment of patriotism. Third, nationalism has a schizophrenic political character. At different times nationalism has been progressive and reactionary, democratic and authoritarian, rational and irrational, and leftwing and right-wing. It has also been associated with almost all the major ideological traditions. In their different ways, liberals, conservatives, socialists, fascists and even communists have been attracted to nationalism, and perhaps only anarchism, by virtue of its outright rejection of the state, is fundamentally at odds with nationalism.

2.1.3 PERSPECTIVES ON NATIONALISM

The different perspectives on nationalism will be discussed in this section. There are three major perspectives on Indian nationalism:

1. COLONIALIST
2. NATIONALIST
3. MARXSIST

2.1.3.1 COLONIALIST PERSPECTIVE

The colonialist paradigm on Indian history was given a mature form during the nineteenth century. Beginning with James Mill's History of India, the colonialist view could be found in the works of many English historians. Mountstuart Elphinstone, Henry Elliot and John Dowson, W.W. Hunter, and Vincent Smith were some important historians who provided overarching interpretations of Indian history. The colonialist view rejected the idea of India as a nation. The diversity and disunity of India were always emphasized by the colonialist thinkers as justification for the colonial rule which was considered to have united it. Right since early days of colonial rule, India was depicted as a land of hostile and warring units.

W.W. Hunter, Herbert Risley and many others emphatically attempted to prove it by segregating and classifying the country in innumerable tribes and castes. When the Indian national movement began emerging in the late nineteenth century and matured during the twentieth century, the famous British historians such a John Strachey and John Seeley asserted that it was impossible to forge a nation in India because it has never had the characteristics of a nation nor it could ever have it in future. According to them, India was a conglomeration of different and often antagonistic religious, ethnic, linguistic and regional groups which could never be welded into a nation. With the rise of the nationalist movement and the nationalist assertion of the existence of an Indian nation, it became even more necessary for the colonialist ideologues and historians to counter it. This they did by downgrading it as an agitation by some selfish members of the middle classes or the Bengali Babus. The strongest statement in this regard was provided by Valentine Chirol who, in his Indian Unrest (1910), asserted that India was a 'mere geographical expression', and even this geography was forged by the British. In his view, India was a 'variegated jumble of races and peoples, castes and creeds' which could never evolve into a nation, and which, in fact, is 'an antithesis to all that the word "national" implies'. In effect, India was 'inhabited by a great variety of nation', 'there are far more absolutely distinct languages spoken

in India than in Europe', and 'there are far more profound racial differences between the Maharatta and the Bengalee than between the German and the Portuguese'. It was only the British rule which 'prevents these ancient divisions from breaking out once more into open and sanguinary strife'. Thus, for him, the term 'India' was no more than a geographic creation by the British for administrative purposes.

Similarly, according to Vincent Smith, there was a basic lack of unity among the Indians. Except during the periods of imperial rules, Indian body politics always consisted of 'mutually repellent molecules.' The lack of cohesion among the Hindu states made them 'an easy prey to fierce hordes of Arabs, Turks, and Afghans, bound together by stern fanaticism'. This situation of disunity could only be corrected when a central authority was imposed from outside, as by the British. And India would again become fragmented 'if the hand of the benevolent despotism which now holds her in its iron grasp should be withdrawn'.

According to these views, there was no possibility of a movement which could be called national. Even when the national movement became a pan-Indian reality as a mass movement after the First World War, the colonialist historians questioned its effectiveness and attempted to highlight the religious, caste and linguistic divisions to deny it a national character.

2.1.3.2 NATIONALIST VIEWS

Nationalist views on Indian nationalism and national movement were formed in response to the colonialist view. While the nationalist writers accepted some of the ideas present in colonialist historiography, they strongly reacted against colonialist denigration of India and its people. In contrast to the instrumentalist approach of many colonialist historians, the nationalist historians adopted an idea-centric approach. There are primarily two views among them: according to some, the nationalist ideas have been adopted under the influence of the West, while some others argue that they have been present since the ancient times.

In the early phase of the national movement, the Moderate nationalists generally thought that this spirit of freedom arose primarily due to Western influences. According to these writers, Western education and ideas of liberty were basically responsible for the formation of national consciousness. Later, when the national movement

intensified, writers began searching for indigenous roots of such ideas. Both these approaches to nationalism remained in the works of many nationalist historians. Sometimes the same historian would present different views in their different works. Thus, these approaches should be marked basically as ideas rather than as segregated according to historians.

In the first view, the ferment generated in India in the wake of the propagation of Western ideas prepared the English-educated middle classes to form nationalist consciousness. Their yearning for liberty and freedom strengthened their patriotic feelings. The Indian National Congress was the result of the search to find avenue for self-expression and self-assertion. According to Bisheshwar Prasad, 'The loss of freedom and the specter of domination by the alien…rankled in the hearts of the people', and this intense feeling was expressed in numerous revolts since the establishment of the British rule culminating in the great revolt of 1857. After that, it sought new channels to express itself. Moreover, the relatively wider spread of the later (Extremist) phase of the national movement was explained, by writer such as R.G. Pradhan, B. Prasad, R.C. Majumdar and Lajpat Rai, as a result of 'better ideas and a greater spirit of freedom, or better leaders who possessed greater zeal, sturdier patriotism and a greater will and capacity to undergo suffering and make sacrifices.' Thus, as Bipan Chandra argues, the 'liberal nationalist writers tend on the whole to base themselves on the Whig view of history and see the national movement as a result of the spread and realization of the idea or spirit of nationalism.'

Many Indian nationalists and nationalist historians did not consider India as a formed nation in modern times. They, in line with Surendranath Banerjea, regarded India as 'a nation-in-the-making'. According to them, the task of the national movement was to unite Indians from various regions and different walks of life into a single nation based on their common grievances. R.C. Majumdar argued that 'the conception of India as a common motherland was still in the realm of fancy. There was no India as it is understood today. There were Bengalis, Hindustanis, Marathas, Sikhs, etc. but no Indian, at the beginning of the nineteenth century'. He thought that it was the movements launched by the Congress which 'gave reality to the ideal of Indian unity'. Tara Chand also thought that creation of an Indian nation was a recent phenomenon which emerged due to 'the combined economic and political change.'

However, there was another quite powerful trend which asserted that India had been a nation since the earliest times. Radha Kumud Mookerji, in his Fundamental Unity of India (1914) and many other works, most famously put forward the idea that India had been great and unified since ancient times. According to him, there had existed a sense of geographical unity of India since early times, and even the idea of nationalism was already present in early India. Har Bilas Sarda, in his Hindu Superiority (1906), declared that 'the ancient Hindus were the greatest nation that has yet flourished in the earth.' Lajpat Rai (1865-1928) asserted in his Young India (1916) that 'fundamentally India has been a nation for the last 2,000 years.' K.P. Jayaswal, in his Hindu Polity (1924), stated that India possessed everything which modern Britain could claim: big empires, enduring and successful republics, representative elective institutions, strong parliaments, a constitutional monarchy, and supremacy of Law above the executive authority.

On a different note, Rabindranath Tagore portrayed India as a civilization where various invaders, such as Greeks, Shakas, Huns, Turks, Persians, Afghans etc, came and became assimilated in its ethos enriching its culture. India was, therefore, not simply a territorial unit but possessed a much broader civilizational and cultural unity. It was in this inclusive and assimilative spirit, and not in the disruptive political strife, that Tagore located India's national identity and differentiated it from European nationalism. Along similar lines, Gandhi also visualized the India of the past and imagined an India of the future. Subhas Chandra Bose, in his Indian Struggle, argued that India possessed 'a fundamental unity' despite endless diversity. Jawaharlal Nehru also spoke about 'unity in diversity' and 'a cultural unity amidst diversity, a bundle of contradictions held together by strong but invisible threads'.

The nationalist historians also underlined the economic factors which led to a feeling of disaffection among Indian people. Exploitation of peasantry, high land revenue, forced cultivation of indigo and some other cash crops, drain of wealth, wasteful expenditure of Indian revenue for maintaining a large military force to be used against the Indians or for fighting wars which did not really concern India, and so on. The nationalist historians also pointed to the underlying contradiction between the imperialist rule and the Indian people as a whole. By doing this, they papered all the class, caste, linguistic, regional and religious contradictions which existed in Indian

society in order to portray a pan-Indian anti-imperialist front. According to nationalist historians, the national movement was a movement of all classes in Indian society.

Since Indian people as a whole had contradiction with imperialism, the national movement represented the feelings of the Indian people against imperialism. As Pattabhi Sitaramayya, a prominent Congress leader, claimed: 'The Congress then is a National organization that knows no difference between British India and Indian India, between one Province and another, between classes and masses, between towns and villages, between the rich and the poor, between agricultural and industrial interests, between castes and communities, or religions.'

The nationalist historians generally believed that the masses were not capable of independent action and were to be mobilised by the middle-class leaders. Thus, Surendranath Banerjea wrote in 1911 that 'Wherever you have a middle class, you have enlightenment, freedom, progress and prosperity…. The rise of the middle class in Bengal is therefore the most remarkable and the most reassuring of the signs of the times.' Lajpat Rai commented that 'The masses are easily led astray by governments or by classes in league with governments. In every country it is the educated middle class that leads the movement for political independence or for political progress'. C.F. Andrews and Girija Mukerji also wrote in 1938 in their The Rise and Growth of the Congress in India that 'The strength of the All-India movement lay in the newly educated middle classes…. The national movement, thus begun by the Congress, represented both the social aspirations of the middle classes in India and also the supreme desire for freedom and racial justice.' The nationalist historians think that the nationalist leaders were dedicated idealists inspired by patriotism and the welfare of the country. Even while coming from the middle classes, the nationalist leaders, in this view, possessed no personal or group or class interests and were devoted to the cause of the nation and Indian people. They acted as selfless spokespersons of the silent majority who could not speak on their own. They represented all classes, communities and groups and pursued national, secular and progressive politics.

2.1.3.3 MARXIST VIEWS

The Marxist historians have been critical of both the colonialist and nationalist views on Indian nationalism. They criticize the colonialist perspective for holding

a discriminatory view on India and its people, while they criticize the nationalist commentators for seeking the roots of nationalism in ancient past. They criticize both for not paying attention to economic factors and class differentiation in their analysis of the phenomenon of nationalism.

The Marxist paradigm is based on the analysis of the modes of production and classes. The Marxist historians perceive that there was a basic contradiction between imperialism and the Indian society. But they also do not ignore the class-contradiction within the Indian society. They try to explain these processes with reference to the economic changes under colonialism. And finally, they believe that India was not always a nation but rather a nation which was being created in modern times in which the nationalist movement had an important role to play.

It is by the application of these analytical categories of class and mode of production that M.N. Roy, a great figure in the national and international communist movement during the 1920s, placed the Indian nationalist movement within a universalistic framework. In his book, India in Transition (1922), he argued that this movement had developed at a certain juncture in the development of international capitalism. He was of the opinion that India was moving towards capitalism and had already come within the ambit of global capitalism. Thus, the dominant classes in India were not feudal lords but the bourgeoisie. In the context of feudal dominance, the emerging national bourgeoisie is often revolutionary. However, in India, since feudalism was approaching its end, the bourgeoisie had turned conservative in nature and wanted to preserve the existing order. In this situation, only the workers would be revolutionary. On the issue of Indian nationalism, Roy believed that it was the political ideology of native capitalism which developed in late nineteenth and early twentieth century in the shadow of imperialism. It matured along with the growth of native capital after the First World War. This period also witnessed the rise of the Indian National Congress. Thus, for Roy, Indian national movement represented the 'political ideology and aspiration of a youthful bourgeoisie.'

About 25 years later, R.P. Dutt formulated the most influential Marxist interpretation of Indian nationalism in his famous book India Today (1947). Dutt held that the revolt of 1857 'was in its essential character and dominant leadership the revolt of

the old conservative and feudal forces and dethroned potentates'. Thus, it is only from the last quarter of the 19th century that Dutt traced the beginning of the Indian national movement. The Indian National Congress, established in 1885, was the main organisation of this movement. Dutt believed that although the previous activities of the Indian middle classes formed the background, the Congress came into existence 'through the initiative and under the guidance of direct British governmental policy, on a plan secretly pre-arranged with the Viceroy as an intended weapon for safeguarding British rule against the rising forces of popular unrest and anti-British feeling.' However, Dutt argues that, owing to pressure of popular nationalist feelings, the Congress slowly abandoned its loyalist character and adopted a national role. This resulted in its transformation as a strong anti-colonial force which began to lead people's movement against colonial rule.

Applying the Marxist class analysis to the study of Indian nationalism, he argues that the class base of the Congress and the national movement changed over the period. Thus, in the initial years, Indian nationalism represented 'only big bourgeoisie – the progressive elements among the landowners, the new industrial bourgeoisie and the well-to-do intellectual elements'. Later, in the years preceding the First World War, the urban petty bourgeois class became more influential. After the War, the Indian masses – peasantry and the industrial working classes – made their presence felt. However, Dutt argues, the leadership remained in the hands of the propertied classes who remained most influential in the Congress. These elements prevented any radicalisation of the movement which could become dangerous to their own interests. He is particularly harsh on Gandhi whom he castigates as the 'the mascot of the bourgeoisie'. He asserts that the Non-cooperation Movement was withdrawn because the masses were becoming too militant and a threat to the propertied classes within and outside the Congress. The Civil Disobedience Movement met with a similar fate when it was 'suddenly and mysteriously called off at the moment when it was reaching its height' in 1932.

According to Dutt, the Congress had a 'twofold character' which persisted throughout its history. It was because of the very nature of the Indian bourgeoisie. On the one hand, its contradictions with imperialism prompted it to lead the people's movement against colonial government. But, on the other hand, its fear of a militant movement,

which could jeopardise its interests and privileges, drew it back into co-operation with imperialism. It, therefore, played a vacillating role throughout the period of the national movement. Dutt's work proved to be a trendsetter in Marxist historiography on Indian national movement. The latter works of the Marxist historians were in some measures influenced by it.

Dutt's book was followed by A.R. Desai's Social Background of Indian Nationalism (1948). It is another thoroughgoing account of the colonial period and the rise of nationalism from a Marxist perspective. According to Desai, the Indian national movement developed through five phases. Each phase was based on particular social classes which supported and sustained it. In the first phase, the Indian national movement was basically initiated and supported by the intelligentsia who were the product of the modern English system of education. This phase, which began with Rammohan Roy and his followers, continued till 1885 when the Indian National Congress was founded. Now a new phase began which extended until 1905 when the Swadeshi Movement emerged. In this phase, the national movement represented the interests of the new bourgeoisie which had started developing in India, although it was still in its infancy. The modern education had created a middle class, the development of the Indian and international trade had given rise to a merchant class, and the modern industries had created a class of industrialists. Thus, in its new phase, Indian national movement took up 'the demands of the educated classes and the trading bourgeoisie such as the Indianisation of Services, the association of the Indianswith the administrative machinery of the state, the stoppage of economic drain, and others formulated in the resolutions of the Indian National Congress'. The third phase of the national movement started with the Swadeshi Movement and continued till 1918. During this phase, the national movement covered a relatively broader social base which included 'sections of the lower-middle class'. In the fourth phase, which covered the period from the Rowlatt Satyagraha to the end of the Civil Disobedience Movement in 1934, the social base of the national movement expanded enormously. The movement, which was until now confined mainly to the upper and the middle classes, now began to encompass certain sections of the masses.

However, according to Desai, the leadership of the Congress remained in the hands of those who were under the strong influence of the Indian capitalist class. From

1918 onwards, the industrial bourgeoisie 'began to exert a powerful influence in determining the programme, policies, strategies, tactics and forms of struggle of the Indian national movement led by the Congress of which Gandhi was the leader.' Two other significant developments during this period were the rise of the left groups since the late 1920s, which tried to introduce pro-people agenda in the national movement, and the consolidation of communal forces which sought to divide the society.

In the fifth phase (1934-39), there was a growing disenchantment with the Gandhian ideology within the Congress and the rise of the Congress Socialists who represented the petty bourgeois elements. Outside the Congress, movements of the peasants, workers, depressed classes and various linguistic nationalities had developed. The divisive ideology of communalism had also grown in influence. However, according to Desai, all these stirrings were not of much consequence and the mainstream was still solidly occupied by the Gandhian Congress which represented the interests of the dominant classes.

These two books initiated the Marxist thinking on Indian national movement. They presented it as a movement dominated by the bourgeoisie. Their main argument is that although various classes, including the peasantry and the working classes, participated in it, its basic character remained bourgeois. This view of national movement remained quite common among the Marxist historians for quite some time.

N.M. Goldberg, an important Soviet historian, distinguished between the 'Moderate' and the 'Extremist' wings of early national movement by arguing that the social base of the former was the weak capitalist class tied to foreign capital, while the social base of the latter was constituted by the petty bourgeoisie. Another Soviet historian, V.I. Pavlov, similarly sought to establish a direct co-relation between various bourgeois strata and the different stages of Indian national movement. According to him, in the initial phase, the comprador big bourgeoisie could not take a strong stand against the colonial government which was reflected in 'moderate' activities. In the later stage, the industrial bourgeoisie with interests in local markets was more supportive of a struggle. Even more importantly, the Maratha petty bourgeoisie stirred up struggle against colonial government. Tilak heralded a militant phase in the movement.

However, over the years, several Marxist historians began to differ from such

restrictive paradigm for analysing and understanding the Indian nationalism. Bipan Chandra began to criticise this view and his criticism became more comprehensive over the years. In his very first book, The Rise and Growth of Economic Nationalism in India (1966), he emphasised on the important role of ideas and argued that ideas are not created directly from particular modes of production, even though the latter shape them. Thus, certain autonomy must be given to the ideas as significant vehicle of action and change. It is true, he says, that 'social relations exist independently of the ideas men form of them', but 'men's understanding of these relations is crucial to their social and political action'. Moreover, he argues that the intellectuals in any society stand above the narrow interests of the class in which they are born. It is 'sheer crude mechanical materialism' to define the intellectuals only on the basis of their origins in particular classes or groups. It is because the intellectuals are guided 'at the level of consciousness, by thought and not by interests'. Therefore, the Indian nationalist leaders, as intellectuals, were acting above the interests of the narrow class or group they were born in.

This does not mean, however, that they did not represent any class. But this was done at an ideological level and not for personal gain. As Bipan Chandra puts it: 'Like the best and genuine intellectuals the world over and in all history, the Indian thinkers and intellectuals of the 19th century too were philosophers and not hack of a party or a class. It is true that they were not above class or group and did in practice represent concrete class or group interests. But when they reflected the interests of a class or a group, they did so through the prism of ideology and not directly as members, or the obedient servants, of that class or group.' On the basis of his analysis of the economic thinking of the early nationalist leaders, both the so-called moderates and the extremists, Bipan Chandra concludes that their overall economic outlook was 'basically capitalist'. By this he means that 'In nearly every aspect of economic life they championed capitalist growth in general and the interests of the industrial capitalists in particular'. This does not mean that they were working for the individual interests of the capitalists. In fact, the capitalist support for the Congress in the early phase was negligible. Nationalist support for industrial capitalism derived from the belief of the nationalists that 'industrial development along capitalist lines was the only way to regenerate the country in the economic field, or that, in other words, the

interests of the industrial capitalist class objectively coincided with the chief national interest of the moment'. Thus, by abandoning the instrumentalist approach espoused by Dutt and Desai, Bipan Chandra began a major change in perspective in the Marxist historiography of the Indian national movement.

However, despite this change in perspective, Bipan Chandra remained anchored to several points of the paradigm developed by R.P. Dutt. In an essay, 'Elements of Continuity and Change in the Early Nationalist Activity', there were many points where his arguments resembled those of Dutt and Desai. Firstly, he interprets the 'peaceful and bloodless' approach of struggle adopted by the nationalist leadership as 'a basic guarantee to the propertied classes that they would at no time be faced with a situation in which their interests might be put in jeopardy even temporarily'. This understanding of non-violence was the same as that of Dutt and Desai.

Secondly, he argues that the relationship between the Indian masses and the nationalists always remained problematic. For the moderate leaders, the masses had no role to play. Even the extremists, despite their rhetoric, failed to mobilise the masses. Although the masses came into nationalist fold during the Gandhian period, they were not politicised and the lower classes of agricultural workers and poor peasants in most parts of country were never politically mobilised, 'so that the social base of the national movement was still not very strong in 1947'. And even when they were mobilised, the masses remained outside the decision-making process and the gulf between them and the leaders was 'unbridged'.

According to him, 'the political activity of the masses was rigidly controlled from the top. The masses never became an independent political force. The question of their participation in the decision-making process was never even raised.'

Thirdly, the nationalist leaders in all phases of the movement stressed that the process of achievement of national freedom would be evolutionary, and not revolutionary. The basic strategy to attain this goal would be pressure-compromise-pressure. In this strategy, pressure would be brought upon the colonial rulers through agitations, political work and mobilisation of the people. When the authorities were willing to offer concessions, the pressure would be withdrawn and a compromise would be reached. The political concessions given by the colonial rulers would be accepted

and worked. After this, the Congress should prepare for another agitation to gain new concessions. It is in this phased, non-violent manner that several political concessions would be taken from the British and this process would ultimately lead to the liberation of the country. On the basis of his analysis of the social base, the ideology, and the strategy of political struggle, Bipan Chandra concluded that the nationalist movement as represented by the Congress was 'a bourgeois democratic movement, that is, it represented the interests of all classes and segments of Indian society vis-à-vis imperialism but under the hegemony of the industrial bourgeoisie'. This character remained constant throughout its entire history from inception to 1947. Even during the Gandhian phase, there was no change. In fact, according to Bipan Chandra, 'the hegemony of the bourgeoisie over the national movement was, if anything, even more firmly clamped down in the Gandhian era than before'.

However, in a later book, India's Struggle for Independence, 1857-1947 (1988), Bipan Chandra has decisively moved away from the views of Dutt and Desai on Indian national movement. Most of the propositions regarding the Indian National Congress developed in the earlier quoted article are now abandoned. The Congress strategy is no longer seen in terms of pressure-compromise-pressure. It is now viewed in terms of Gramscian 'war of position' whereby a prolonged struggle is waged for the attainment of goal. As Bipan Chandra puts it: 'The Indian national movement … is the only movement where the broadly Gramscian theoretical perspective of a war of position was successfully practised; where state power was not seized in a single historical moment of revolution, but through prolonged popular struggle on a moral, political and ideological level; where reserves of counter-hegemony were built up over the years through progressive stages; where the phases of struggle alternated with "passive" phases.'

This struggle was not violent because the nationalist leaders were concerned with fighting against imperialism as well as welding India into a nation. In the course of a protracted struggle fought at both intellectual and political levels, the nationalist leaders wished to show that the colonial rule was not beneficial to the Indian people nor was it invincible. The Gandhian non-violence also is now reinterpreted. Thus, it was not considered as 'a mere dogma of Gandhiji nor was it dictated by the interests of the propertied classes. It was an essential part of a movement whose strategy

involved the waging of a hegemonic struggle based on a mass movement which mobilized the people to the widest possible extent.' The national movement was now conceived as an all-class movement which provided space and opportunity for any class to build its hegemony. Moreover, the main party, the Congress, is now regarded not as a party but a movement. In this way, Bipan Chandra now makes a clear break from the conventional Marxist interpretation of the Indian national movement.

Sumit Sarkar presents another famous Marxist interpretation of the national movement which is at variance with and critical of Dutt-Desai view. In his first book, The Swadeshi Movement in Bengal, 1903-1908 (1973), he terms it as a 'simplistic version of the Marxian class-approach'. He criticises its contention that the moderate phase was dominated by the 'big bourgeoisie' while the extremist phase by the 'urban petty bourgeoisie'. Instead, he argues that 'a clear class-differential between moderate and extremist would still be very difficult to establish, and was obviously nonexistent at the leadership level'. He thinks that this version of Marxist interpretation suffers from the 'defect of assuming too direct or crude an economic motivation for political action and ideals'.

According to him, the actions of the nationalist leaders could be better understood by using Trotsky's concept of 'substitutism' whereby the intelligentsia acts 'repeatedly as a kind of proxy for as-yet passive social forces with which it had little organic connection'. He also uses Gramscian categories of 'traditional' and 'organic' intellectuals. According to Antonio Gramsci, the famous Italian Marxist activist and thinker, the 'organic' intellectuals participate directly in the production process and have direct links with the people whom they lead. The 'traditional' intellectuals, on the other hand, are not directly connected with either the production-process or the people. However, they become leaders of particular classes by ideologically assuming the responsibility of those classes.

Sarkar thinks that the leaders of the Swadeshi movement in Bengal who came mostly from 'the traditional learned castes' and were not associated with commerce and industry particularly after the 1850s, and can be thought as 'traditional intelligentsia' in Gramscian sense. They were not the Gramscian organic intellectuals who generally emerge from the same classes which they lead. This view is quite close to that of

Bipan Chandra so far as there is an emphasis on the role of ideology in the formation of the early nationalist leadership.

Sumit Sarkar considers that even though the early nationalist leaders were not directly associated with the bourgeoisie, they objectively played a role in paving 'the way for the independent capitalist development of our country'. In another article, 'The Logic of Gandhian Nationalism' (1985), he goes further to argue that the objective stance of the Swadeshi Movement in favour of the bourgeoisie later gets transformed into direct intervention by the bourgeoisie and the subjective position taken in the interests of the capitalists by the leaders of the Civil Disobedience Movement. By studying the social forces involved in the Civil Disobedience Movement and the developments leading to the Gandhi-Irwin pact, he concludes that there was 'the vastly enhanced role of distinctively bourgeois groups, both in contributing heavily to the initial striking power of Civil Disobedience and ultimately in its calling off'. He qualifies his statement by saying that Gandhi was 'no mere bourgeois tool in any simplistic or mechanical sense' and that he can hardly be considered as 'a puppet' in the hands of the capitalists. He, however, insists that the Gandhian leadership had 'a certain coincidence of aims with Indian business interests at specific points' and 'an occasional significant coincidence of subjective attitudes and inhibitions with bourgeois interests'.

The Marxist perspective on Indian nationalism is, therefore, is informed by a class approach related to politics and ideology. The basic position is that the nationalist leadership and the nationalist ideology objectively and / or subjectively represented the Indian bourgeoisie and wanted that India should evolve on the path of independent capitalist development.

2.1.4 THE SUBALTERN STUDIES

During the closing decades of the last century, the scholars associated with the journal Subaltern Studies shot into fame by vehemently criticising all other forms of Indian history-writing. They put forward their own interpretation of the modern Indian history as a whole, particularly of Indian nationalism. Beginning in the early 1980s, with the publication of the first volume of Subaltern Studies (in 1982), this trend of interpretation of Indian nationalism became quite influential among certain sections

of Indian historians.

It was declared to be a radical departure in modern Indian historiography which claimed to dissociate from all earlier views on Indian national movement. In what can be called the manifesto of the project, Ranajit Guha, in the very first volume of the Subaltern Studies, declared that 'The historiography of Indian nationalism has for a long time been dominated by elitism – colonialist elitism and bourgeois-nationalist elitism.' According to Guha, all types of elitist histories have one thing in common and that is the absence of the politics of the people from their accounts. He criticised the three main trends in Indian historiography – i) colonialist, which saw the colonial rule as the fulfillment of a mission to enlighten the ignorant people; ii) nationalist, which visualized all the protest activities as parts of the making of the nation-state; and iii) Marxist, which subsumed the people's struggles under the progression towards revolution and a socialist state. According to him, there are no attempts in these works to understand and write about the way in which the subaltern groups view the world and practice their politics. Earlier historians were criticised for ignoring the popular initiative and accepting the official negative characterization of the rebel and the rebellion.

In his essay 'The Prose of Counter-Insurgency', Ranajit Guha launched a scathing attack on the existing peasant and tribal histories in India for considering the peasant rebellions as 'purely spontaneous and unpremeditated affairs' and for ignoring the consciousness of the rebels themselves. He accused all the accounts of rebellions, starting with the immediate official reports to the histories written by the left radicals, of writing the texts of counter-insurgency which refused to recognise the agency of the people and 'to acknowledge the insurgent as the subject of his own history'. According to Guha, they all failed to acknowledge that there existed a parallel subaltern domain of politics which was not influenced by the elite politics and which possessed an independent, self-generating dynamics. Its roots lay in pre-colonial popular social and political structures. However, this domain was not archaic: 'As modern as indigenous elite politics, it was distinguished by its relatively greater depth in time as well as in structure'. In his view, there was now an urgent requirement for setting the record straight by viewing the history from the point-of-view of the subaltern classes. The politics of the people was crucial because it constituted an autonomous domain which

'neither originated from elite politics nor did its existence depend on the latter'. The people's politics differed from the elite politics in several crucial aspects.

For one, its roots lay in the traditional organisations of the people such as caste and kinship networks, tribal solidarity, territoriality, etc. Secondly, while elite mobilisations were vertical in nature, people's mobilisations were horizontal. Thirdly, whereas the elite mobilisation was legalistic and pacific, the subaltern mobilisation was relatively violent. Fourthly, the elite mobilisation was more cautious and controlled while the subaltern mobilisation was more spontaneous.

The Subaltern historians, disenchanted with the Congress nationalism and its embodiment in the Indian state, rejected the thesis that popular mobilisation was the result of either economic conditions or initiatives from the top. They claimed to have discovered a popular autonomous domain which was opposed to the elite domain of politics. This domain of the subaltern was defined by perpetual resistance and rebellion against the elite. The subaltern historians also attributed a general unity to this domain clubbing together a variety of heterogeneous groups such as tribes, peasantry, proletariat and, occasionally, the middle classes as well. Moreover, this domain was said to be almost completely uninfluenced by the elite politics and was claimed to possess an independent, self-generating dynamics.

The charismatic leadership was no longer viewed as the chief force behind a movement. It was instead the people's interpretation of such charisma which acquired prominence in analysis of a movement. This idea is present in most of the early contributions to the series. Gyanendra Pandey, in 'Peasant Revolt and Indian Nationalism', argues that peasant movement in Awadh arose before and independently of the Non-cooperation movement. According to him, peasants' understanding of the local power structure and its alliance with colonial power was more advanced than that of the Congress leaders. In fact, the peasant militancy was reduced wherever the Congress organisation was stronger. In Stephen Henningham's account of the 'Quit India in Bihar and the Eastern United Provinces', the elite and the subaltern domains were clearly distinguished from each other.

He talks of two movements existing together but parallel to each other – 'an elite uprising', started by 'the high caste rich peasants and small landlords who dominated

the Congress', and a 'subaltern rebellion' powered by 'the poor, low caste people of the region'. Shahid Amin, in his article 'Gandhi as Mahatma', studies the popular perception of Mahatma Gandhi. He shows that the popular perception and actions were completely at variance with the Congress leaders' perception of Gandhi. Although the Mahatma's messages were spread widely through 'rumours', there was an entire philosophy of economy and politics behind it – the need to become a good human being, to give up drinking, gambling and violence, to take up spinning and to maintain communal harmony. The stories which circulated also emphasised the magical powers of Mahatma and his capacity to reward or punish those who obeyed or disobeyed him. On the other hand, the Mahatma's name and his supposed magical powers were also used to reinforce as well as establish caste hierarchies, to make the debtors pay and to boost the cow-protection movement. All these popular interpretations of the Mahatma's messages reached their climax during the Chauri Chaura incidents in 1922 when his name was invoked to burn the police post, to kill the policemen and to loot the market. David Hardiman, in his numerous articles, focused on subaltern themes and argued that whether it was the tribal assertion in South Gujarat, or the Bhil movement in Eastern Gujarat, or the radicalism of the agricultural workers during the Civil Disobedience Movement, there was an independent politics of the subaltern classes against the elites.

Similarly, Sumit Sarkar, in 'The Conditions and Nature of Subaltern Militancy', argues that the Non-cooperation movement in Bengal 'revealed a picture of masses outstripping leaders…and the popular initiative eventually alarmed leaders into calling for a halt'. Thus, 'the subaltern groups…formed a relatively autonomous political domain with specific features and collective mentalities which need to be explored, and that this was a world distinct from the domain of the elite politicians who in early twentieth century Bengal came overwhelmingly from high-caste educated professional groups connected with zamindari or intermediate tenure-holding'.

Thus we see that in these and in many other essays in the earlier volumes, an attempt was made to separate the elite and the subaltern domains and to establish the autonomy of subaltern consciousness and action. This phase was generally characterised by emphasis on subaltern themes and autonomous subaltern consciousness. The subalternist historians forcefully asserted that both the colonial ideology and the

bourgeois nationalist ideology failed to establish their hegemony over the subaltern domain. Moreover, the Indian bourgeoisie failed in its prime work of speaking for the nation, and the Congress nationalism was bourgeois and elite which restrained popular radicalism.

A few years after its inauguration as advocates of people's voice in history and proponents of an autonomous subaltern political domain, the project of Subaltern Studies underwent significant changes. Under postmodernist and post colonialist influences, many of its contributors began to question its earlier emphasis on autonomous subaltern consciousness. Gayatri Spivak, in particular, criticised the humanist viewpoint adopted by the earlier trend within Subaltern Studies. At another level, the idea of subalternity became much wider to include even the colonial elite as they were considered subaltern vis-à-vis the imperialist rulers, the phenomenon being termed by Partha Chatterjee as 'subalternity of the elite'. Chatterjee's influential book, Nationalist Thought and the Colonial World (1986), derived from the postcolonial framework of Edward Said which considered the colonial power-knowledge as overwhelming and irresistible. His later book, The Nation and its Fragments (1995), carries this analysis even further. Subalternity as a concept was also redefined. Earlier, it stood for the oppressed classes in opposition to the dominant classes both inside and outside. Later, it was conceptualised in opposition to colonialism, modernity and Enlightenment. The earlier emphasis on the 'subaltern' now gave way to a focus on 'community'. Earlier the elite nationalism was stated to hijack the people's initiatives for its own project; now the entire project of nationalism was declared to be only a version of colonial discourse with its emphasis on centralisation of movement, and later of the state. The ideas of secularism and enlightenment rationalism were attacked and there began an emphasis on the 'fragments' and 'episodes'. Thus, the subaltern historiography on Indian nationalism went through two phases.

2.1.5 LET US SUM UP

The colonialist view on Indian nation and nationalism disregarded the possibility of India ever becoming a nation. It, moreover, considered the national movement as a movement of narrow self-interest led by a microscopic English-educated minority. According to this view, this small middle-class section of the population would

never be able to form a nation out of the disparate assemblage of innumerable castes, linguistic and regional groups. The nationalist historians strongly reacted against this negative characterisation of Indian people. They completely rejected the colonialist idea that India could never be formed into a nation. In fact, as many of them argued, India always possessed the potential to be forged into a nation, and it did happen at several points in the past. Although they did not deny the role of modern Western ideas, many of these historians argued that India had an underlying cultural unity since the most ancient times. The nationalist historians also regarded the national movement as a pan-Indian movement encompassing all classes and groups led by idealist and selfless leaders.

The Marxist historians argued against both of them. Their analysis of the national movement was based on an understanding of the role of economic factors and classes in the making of the nation as well as a movement. According to them, although the national movement was an expression of the basic antagonism between the Indian people and imperialist government, it was a movement either directly influenced by bourgeoisie or indirectly working in the direction of capitalist development. Thus, even though various classes and groups were involved in the movement, it ultimately served the fundamental interests of the Indian bourgeois classes. The Subaltern historians question the official narrative of Indian nationalism. They underline the existence of a strong popular nationalism which was autonomous and more militant than the organised and official nationalism.

2.1.6 EXERCISE

1. Discuss the different perspectives of Nationalism.
2. Write a short note on themes of Nationalism.
3. Write a short note on Subaltern studies.

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2.2 COMMUNALISM: NATURE AND ISSUES

- Mamta Sharma

STRUCTURE

2.2.0 OBJECTIVES

After going through this lesson, you will be able to understand:

- How communalism evolved in Indian society
- Know the factors responsible for the growth of communalism in Indian society
- Know the implication of communal violence in the Indian society

2.2.1 INTRODUCTION

Communalism, is referred in the western world as a "theory or system of government in which virtually autonomous local communities are loosely in federation". Communalism is a political philosophy, which proposes that market and money be abolished and that land and enterprises to be placed in the custody of community. But in the Indian sub-continent context, communalism has come to be associated with tensions and clashes between different religious communities in various regions. Development of communalism as political philosophy, has roots in the ethnic and cultural diversity of Africa. It is characterized as, People from different ethnic groups or community, who do not interact much or at all and this has somewhere acted as hindrance in the economic growth and prosperity of Africa. Communalism in South Asia is used to denote the differences between the various religious groups and difference among the people of different community. And generally, it is used to catalyse communal violence between those groups. Communalism is not unique only to South Asia, but is also found in Africa, America, Europe, Australia, and Asia. But it is significant socio-economic and political issue in Bangladesh, India, Pakistan, Myanmar, Sri Lanka, Nepal, etc.

2.2.2 COMMUNALISM: MEANING

In everyday language, the word 'communalism' refers to aggressive chauvinism based on religious identity. Chauvinism itself is an attitude that sees one's own group as the only legitimate or worthy group, with other groups being seen – by definition – as inferior, illegitimate and opposed. Thus, to simplify further, communalism is an aggressive political ideology linked to religion. Perhaps, adherence to a religion or religious system is not communalism. Attachment to a religious community or religiosity is not communalism. On the other hand using a religious community against other communities and against the nation is communalism. Indulgence in ritualism, superstition, obscurantism, magic charm and occult practices like astrology is not communalism. These are merely irrational, unscientific and primitive attitudes, arising out of traditions or fear of the future or unbounded ambition. Even conservatism in social life and conservative orientation in politics is not communalism. It can be called social backwardness and political reaction. However, it should be recognized clearly that all

these aspects can and have been used in promoting communal consciousness. Indeed, the communalists have utilized most of these aspects in order to build their communal political base.

It is important to emphasise that communalism is about politics, not about religion. Although communalists are intensely involved with religion, there is in fact no necessary relationship between personal faith and communalism. A communalist may or may not be a devout person, and devout believers may or may not be communalists. However, all communalists do believe in a political identity based on religion. The key factor is the attitude towards those who believe in other kinds of identities, including other religion-based identities. Communalists cultivate an aggressive political identity, and are prepared to condemn or attack everyone who does not share their identity. One of the characteristic features of communalism is its claim that religious identity overrides everything else. Whether one is poor or rich, whatever one's occupation, caste or political beliefs, it is religion alone that counts.

By 'communalism' we mean the opposition of religious communities of each other. It is an ideology which emphasizes the separate identity of a religious group in relation to other groups and often a tendency to promote its own interest at their expense. In a way it is based on the idea of an inherent antagonism based on irreconcilability of interests between them. The assertion of separate identity may be reconciled with nationalism because the latter does not imply obliteration of other groups within the national territory. But when the relations between groups become hostile the problem starts, because then the antagonistic posture of the groups itself becomes a substitute for religion and leads to clashes in society, which in turn adversely affect the spirit of national cohesion. Communalism is the antagonistic assertiveness in political, social, and economic spheres by one aggregation of individuals against another after being organized along religious, caste or other ascriptive lines. In other words, communalism means to believe or to propagate that the socio-economic and political interests of one religious, caste or an ascriptive group are dissimilar, divergent and antagonistic to those of another. According to Robert Melson and Howard Wolpe, "Communalism is the political assertiveness of a community to maintain its identity in a plural society undergoing modernization."

Bipan Chandra in his famous work "Communalism in Modern India" observes: "the concept of communalism is based on the belief that religious distinction is the most important and fundamental distinction, and this distinction overrides all other distinctions. Since Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs are different religious entities, their social, economic, cultural and political interests are also dissimilar and divergent. As such, the loss of one religious group is the gain of another group and vice-versa. If a particular community seeks to better its social and economic situation, it is doing at the expense of another.

Communalism is an especially important issue in India because it has been a recurrent source of tension and violence. During communal riots, people become faceless members of their respective communities. They are willing to kill, rape, and loot members of other communities in order to redeem their pride, to protect their home turf. A commonly cited justification is to avenge the deaths or dishonour suffered by their co-religionists elsewhere or even in the distant past. No region has been wholly exempted from communal violence of one kind or another. Every religious community has faced this violence in greater or lesser degree, although the proportionate impact is far more traumatic for minority communities. To the extent that governments can be held responsible for communal riots, no government or ruling party can claim to be blameless in this regard. In fact, the two most traumatic contemporary instances of communal violence occurred under each of the major political parties. The anti-Sikh riots of Delhi in 1984 took place under a Congress regime. The unprecedented scale and spread of anti-Muslim violence in Gujarat in 2002 took place under a BJP government. India has had a history of communal riots from pre-Independence times, often as a result of the divide-and-rule policy adopted by the colonial rulers.

2.2.3 NATURE OF COMMUNALISM IN INDIAN SOCIETY

If we discuss about Indian society, we will find that, ancient India was united and no such communal feelings were there. People lived peacefully together, there was acceptance for each other's culture and tradition. For example, Ashoka followed religious tolerance and focused mainly on Dharma.

In Medieval period, we have examples such as- Akbar, who was epitome of secular practices and believed in propagating such values by abolishing Jajhiya tax and

starting of Din-I- ilahi and Ibadat Khana. Same acceptance for different cultures and tradition was practiced in several kingdoms throughout India, because of which there was peace and harmony, barring few sectarian rulers like Aurangzeb, who was least tolerant for other religious practices. But such motives were guided purely for their personal greed of power and wealth.

Such rulers and actions by them like- imposing taxes on religious practices of other community, destructing temples, forced conversions, killing of Sikh guru, etc. were instrumental in deepening and establishing the feeling of communal differences in India. But these incidents were not common as, huge majority of Indians were rural and were aloof from such influences and so people coexisted peacefully. Though, they were very rigid in practicing their own rituals and practice, but it never became barrier in the peaceful coexistence. Overall, the Hindus and Muslims in those days, had common economic and political interests. Communalism in India is result of the emergence of modern politics, which has its roots in partition of Bengal in 1905 and feature of separate electorate under Government of India Act, 1909.Later, British government also appeased various communities through Communal award in 1932, which faced strong resistance from Gandhi ji and others. All these acts were done by the British government to appease Muslims and other communities, for their own political needs. This feeling of communalism has deepened since then, fragmenting the Indian society and being a cause of unrest. Communal consciousness arose as a result of the transformation of Indian society under the impact of colonialism and the need to struggle against it

2.2.4 STAGES OF COMMUNALISM IN THE CONTEXT OF INDIA

India is a land of diversity. And it is known for lingual, ethnic, cultural and racial diversity. As, we have discussed above, communalism in India is a modern phenomenon, which has become threat to India's Unity in Diversity. We will see the various stages: -

First stage was rise of nationalist Hindu, Muslim, Sikh, etc. with only first element of communalism as discussed above. Roots of this were led in later part of 19 century with Hindu revivalist movement like Shuddhi movement of Arya Samaj and Cow

protection riots of 1892. On the other hand, movements like Faraizi movement started by Haji Shariatullah in Bengal to bring the Bengali Muslims back on the true path of Islam, was one of the religious reform movement which had bearing on communalism in 19 century. Later people like Syed Ahmed Khan, who despite of having scientific and rational approach, projected Indian Muslims as a separate community (qaum) having interest different from others.

Second stage was of Liberal communalism, it believed in communal politics but liberal in democratic, humanist and nationalist values. It was basically before 1937. For example,organisations like Hindu Mahasabha, Muslim League and personalities like M.A. Jinnah, M M Malviya, Lala Lajpat Rai after 1920s.

Third was the stage of Extreme Communalism, this had a fascist syndrome. It demanded for separate nation, based on fear and hatred. There was tendency to use violence of language, deed and behaviour. For example, Muslim League and Hindu Mahasabha after 1937.

It spread as a by-product of colonialism, economic stagnations and absence of modern institutions of education and health. These factors caused competition, people started using nepotism (patronage bestowed or favouritism shown on the basis of family relationship, as in business and politics), paying bribes to get job, etc. Short term benefits from communalism started giving validity to communal politics. Later on, spread of education to peasant and small landlords gave rise to new middle class, as agriculture was becoming stagnant. So, these people started demanding communal representation and this way, social base for communalism widened. Middle class oscillated between anti-imperialism and communalism. Communalism, started rooting deeply, as it was an expression of aspiration and interest of middle class for less opportunity.

Further, from very beginning upper caste Hindus dominated colonial services as they adapted early to colonial structure. Because of Mughal rule and 1857 revolt, colonial government was suspicious towards Muslims and they patronised Hindus. This resulted in resentment in Muslims in late 19 century and they then formed a pressure group under Sir Sayed Ahmed Kahn to bargain as a separate community. In contrast Congress standpoint was always focused on ‘rights and freedom of individual’ not on a particular

community. In several part religious distinction coincided with social and class distinction, causing communal distortion.

2.2.5 FACTORS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE GROWTH OF COMMUNALISM IN INDIA

There may be several factors that may be attributed to the cause and growth of Communalism in India. Some scholars attribute this cause due to stagnant economy during the British Rule. The stagnation of economy may have affected the aspirations and economic prosperity for certain sections within society. Scholars opine that this section of society usually termed as 'Middle Class' used communalism as a weapon for their own survival at the cost of other classes in society. Subsequently, other leaders from the community and political parties joined to fuel the tension of Communalism in India. This may be well illustrated with the emergence of modern politics with its roots in partition of Bengal in 1905 and feature of separate electorate under Government of India Act, 1909.

Later, British government also appeased various communities through Communal award in 1932, which witnessed strong resistance from Gandhiji and others. All these acts were done by the British government to appease Muslims and other communities, for their own political needs. This feeling of communalism has deepened since then, fragmenting the Indian society and being a cause of unrest. Let us now discuss the core factors in detail:

Divide and Rule Policy of British: On the one hand, in the case of religion, the British took advantage of the existing religious pluralism. Especially, in the aftermath of the revolt of 1857 by the sepoys of British army, the colonial rulers realised that if they wished to continue their rule over India, then they had to break the country from within on religious lines. They adopted the policy based on Roman maxim, 'Divide et Impera' (Divide and Rule). Even though the revolt was a result of several political, social, religious and economic factors, the unity that Hindu and Muslim sepoys show cased in what is considered the immediate military cause of the revolt was alarming for the British. In what was an eye opener for the colonial rulers, both Hindu and Muslim sepoys refused to use the cartridges of the new Enfield rifle, which were greased with cow and pig fats. To break this unity became their primary concern.

Soon after in 1905, they divided Bengal, which was then the epicentre of freedom struggle in India, on religious lines. While East Bengal became a Muslim majority state, West Bengal had majority Hindus. Then in 1909, they introduced separate electorate for Muslims through Morley Minto Act, which was a step towards breaking the religious unity and taking the advantage of religious pluralism in India. At another level, the British started giving preference to Sikhs over Hindus and Muslims for their army jobs, giving rise to the notions of Sikhs as the martial race of India. This partiality towards the Sikh was because of the support they had given to the British in the 1857 uprising. They also created the myth of martial races creating the Gorkha identity out of the hill men who were loyal to them.

The British sowed the seeds of discord between the major religious communities, especially the Hindus and Muslims as it was the only way they could get control over the various Indian principalities by playing them against each other. In the pre-independence period the British used the policy of Divide and Rule to weaken the nationalist aspirations by creating a cleavage between the Hindus and Muslims, favoring one community against the other in terms of services and opportunities. It resulted in communal tensions between the two groups and therefore, it is considered that the Hindu-Muslim disunity took shape during the continuation of British Rule in India. In this regard, clear demarcation was made by many historians between the ancient period of Indian history and the medieval. Prominent among them was British historian James Mill of the early nineteenth century. They endorsed that since ancient India was ruled by Hindu rulers, it was a period of much growth and prosperity against the continuous decay of the medieval period under the Muslim rulers. This readily suggests that the basic character of polity in India is defined by religion which relied on the beliefs that Indian society and culture had reached ideal heights in the ancient period. On the contrary, Muslim communalism harped upon the glory of the Muslim rulers. Such distorted texts of Indian history significantly contributed to the rise of communalism. During the national movement, a strong Hindu religious element was introduced in nationalist thought. The orientalist writings which glorified the Hindu religion and period in history became the basis for the propogation of nationalist ideas and pride for the motherland. In the process the Muslim were seen as alien. Other factors which are believed to fan the flames of communalism include rumors and distorted news publicized by media which disseminates false information to the public. Also, political parties resorted to the politics of appeasement whereby sanctions were used to appease different ethnic, religious, cultural groups for votes. This vote bank

politics greatly followed tactics of appeasement by provisioning services and opportunities to a few sections of the population against the other sections.

2.2.6 FAMOUS COMMUNAL VIOLENCE IN INDIA

Partition of India,1947 : After partition, millions of people were forced to move from both sides of the border. Hindus in Pakistan and Muslims in India were killed in masses, women were raped, and many children lost their parents. There was hatred everywhere, violence didn't see anything except bloodshed. Later, it turned in the problem of refugees and their rehabilitation and became one of the biggest challenge for independent India.

Anti-Sikh riots, 1984: This is one of the bloodshed in India, where Sikhs in large number were massacred by anti- Sikh mob. This massacre took place in response to the assassination of Prime Minister Indira Gandhi by his own Sikh body Guard in response to her actions authorising the military operation.

Ethnic cleansing of Kashmiri Hindu Pandits in 1989: Kashmir is known as the heaven of India and was known for its Kashmiryat, i.e. the reflection of love, peace and harmony through brotherhood and unity of Hindu, Muslims and other communities living together. But, the brotherhood saw a serious blow due to Extremist Islamic terrorism in the Kashmir valley, which led to mass killing and large scale exodus of Kashmiri Pandits from the valley to the various regions and corners of the India, giving them the status of refugee in their own country. Since then, the valley is under the grip of communal violence and the ongoing unrest has become a problem for the development of the people.

Babri Masjid Demolition in Ayodhya, 1992: According to Hindu mythology, Ayodhaya is birth place of Lord Rama and therefore it is sacred place for Hindu religion. But in medieval period Mughal General Mir Baqi, built a mosque, named after Mughal ruler Babur. There were disputes since then and riots also took place. But in 1990, due to some political mobilisation, there was atmosphere of protest by Hindu religious groups and in large scale "karsevak" visited Ayodhya from all parts of India, in support of demolishing Babri Masjid and building Ram temple there. These movements caused huge amount of bloodshed. After this, violence was followed by the Godhra incident in 2002, when "karsevak" returning from Ayodhya in a Sabarmati Express were killed by fire in the coaches of train. This act was followed by the extended communal violence in Gujarat. That violence is like black spot in the history of the

Gujarat and nation too, as people were killed without any mercy. Hindu and Muslim community became antagonist to each other.

Assam Communal Violence,2012: North eastern states are known for its distinguished tribal population and ethnic diversity. However, large scale Bangladeshi immigration has changed the demography of North eastern states, which often becomes reason for clashes. In 2012, there were ethnic clashes between Bodos (Tribal, Christian & Hindu faith) and Muslims. Ethnic tensions between Bodos and Bengali-speaking Muslims escalated into a riot in Kokrajhar in July 2012, when unidentified miscreants killed four Bodo youths at Joypur.

Muzaffarnagar Violence, 2013: The cause of this ethnic clash between Jat and Muslim community is very much disputed and has many versions. According to few, it was started after some suspicious post on Social media platform Facebook. According to some, it was escalated after the eve teasing case in Shamli. Let the reasons be unknown, but what matters is, the nature and scale of loss to the country with respect to human resource and peace.

2.2.7 WHAT STATE HAS DONE

National human rights commission (NHRC) in India fights for the causes of rights of the victims, but its recommendations are advisory in nature, which doesn't give significant outcome. From time to time, respective governments have constituted various committees, to give recommendations to solve the issue of communal violence. Prominent among them are

SACHAR COMMITTEE, NANAVATI COMMITTEE and RANGANATH MISHRA COMMISSION.

The Nanavati-Mehta commission, set up by Gujarat government in 2002 to enquire about Gujarat violence.

Sachar Committee, appointed in 2005, recommended to set up Equal Opportunity Commission (EOC) in 2010. EOC was to set up a grievance redressal mechanism for all individual cases of discriminations- religion, caste, gender & physical ability among others.

The Ranganath Misra Commission was entrusted by the Government of India to suggest practical measures for the upliftment of the socially and economically backward sections among religious and linguistic minorities and to include the modalities of implementation for the same. The report of the National Commission

for Religious and Linguistic Minorities, headed by former Chief Justice of India Rangnath Mishra, says that 10% should be reserved for Muslims and 5% for other minorities in central and state government jobs in all cadre and grades.

The purpose of all above committees is to give recommendations to find out the causes of backwardness of minorities and steps required to improve their conditions. The Indian law defines communal violence as, "any act or series of acts, whether spontaneous or planned, resulting in injury or harm to the person and or property, knowingly directed against any person by virtue of his or her membership of any religious or linguistic minority, in any State in the Union of India, or Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes within the meaning of clauses (24) and (25) of Article 366 of the Constitution of India"

2.2.8 LET US SUM UP

Though India is under the grip of communal violence, but till now, other than provisions under IPC and CrPC, there is no firm law to punish the originators of such violence, no clear policy for relief and rehabilitation of victims. There are no regulations for security of witness, for accountability of public servants, etc.

The role of police in communal riots is highly controversial. Generally, riot victims complain that- police did not came to rescue, police forces were themselves instrumental in the killing, they led the mob in looting and burning, arrested the innocent people and harassed them inside the lockup, etc. But as we know, that police can act much better, if there is political will and if they are given free hand along with the implementation of recommended police reforms. There specialised battalions of Rapid Action force in India, which is a wing of CRPF, to deal with riots, riot like situations, crowd control, rescue and relief operations, and related unrest.

2.2.9 EXERCISE

1. Discuss meaning of communalism.
2. Discuss nature of communalism in Indian Politics.
3. Explain the factors responsible for the growth of communalism in India.

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2.3 SOCIALISM : EVOLVING TRENDS

- Mamta Sharma

STRUCTURE

2.3.0 OBJECTIVES

After going through this lesson you will be able to;

- Know the historical background of socialism and also development of socialism.
- Understand the different trends of socialism and to know how the socialism evolved during different phases of history.
- Know the emerging trends of socialism in the 21st century.

2.3.1 INTRODUCTION

The difficulty of defining socialism is apparent to anyone who attempts to study this protean doctrine, not least because what socialism is or is not is usually a matter of contentious debate. However, there is a general consensus that the various schools of socialism share some common features that can be summarized as follows. Socialism is above all concerned with the relationship between the individual, state, and society. For the socialist, the individual is never alone and thus must always define himself or herself in relation to others. Socialists believe that a well-ordered society cannot exist without a state apparatus, not least because the state is seen as the most effective vehicle for coordinating and administering to the needs of all. Socialists' views on human nature distinguish them from their principal political rivals, the liberals and conservatives. While the latter two groups tend to hold that all humans are inherently self-interested and materialistic, socialists contend that these traits are products of social conditioning under capitalism. On this view, individuals act selfishly and competitively, not because it is in their nature do so, but rather because they are encouraged and rewarded for such behavior. Socialists hold that the values and beliefs promoted in a socialist society would enhance our capacity for acting cooperatively and collectively in pursuit of mutually reinforcing material and spiritual goals.

2.3.2 DEVELOPMENT OF SOCIALISM

The term 'socialist' derives from the Latin sociare, meaning to combine or to share. Its earliest known usage was in 1827 in Britain, in an issue of the Co-operative Magazine. By the early 1830s the followers of Robert Owen (1771–1858) in Britain and Saint- Simon (1760–1825) in France had started to refer to their beliefs as 'socialism', and by the 1840s the term was familiar in a range of industrialized countries, notably France, Belgium and the German states. Although socialists have sometimes claimed an intellectual heritage that goes back to Plato's Republic or Thomas More's Utopia ([1516] 1965), like liberalism and conservatism the origins of socialism lie in the nineteenth century. Socialism arose as a reaction against the social and economic conditions generated in Europe by the growth of industrial capitalism. Socialist ideas came quickly to be linked to the development of a new but growing class of industrial workers, who suffered the poverty and degradation that are so often a

feature of early industrialization. Although socialism and liberalism have common roots in the Enlightenment, and share a faith in principles such as reason and progress, socialism emerged as a critique of liberal market society and was defined by its attempt to offer an alternative to industrial capitalism.

The character of early socialism was influenced by the harsh and often inhuman conditions in which the industrial working class lived and worked. The laissez-faire policies of the early nineteenth century gave factory owners a free hand when setting wage levels and factory conditions. Wages were typically low, child and female labour were commonplace, the working day often lasted up to twelve hours and the threat of unemployment was ever-present. In addition, the new working class was disorientated, being largely composed of first-generation urban dwellers, unfamiliar with the conditions of industrial life and work and possessing few of the social institutions that could give their lives stability or meaning. As a result, early socialists often sought a radical, even revolutionary alternative to industrial capitalism. For instance, Charles Fourier (1772–1837) in France and Robert Owen in Britain advocated the establishment of utopian communities based upon cooperation and love, rather than competition and greed. The Germans, Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels (1820–95), developed more complex and systematic theories, which claimed to uncover the 'laws of history' and proclaimed that the revolutionary overthrow of capitalism was inevitable.

In the late nineteenth century, the character of socialism was transformed by a gradual improvement in working-class living conditions and the advance of political democracy. The growth of trade unions, working-class political parties and sports and social clubs served to provide greater economic security and to integrate the working class into industrial society. In the advanced industrial societies of western Europe it became increasingly difficult to continue to see the working class as a revolutionary force. Socialist political parties progressively adopted legal and constitutional tactics, encouraged by the gradual extension of the vote to working-class men. By the First World War, the socialist world was clearly divided between those socialist parties that had sought power through the ballot box and preached reform, and those, usually in more backward countries such as Russia, that proclaimed

a continuing need for revolution. The Russian Revolution of 1917 entrenched this split: revolutionary socialists, following the example of Lenin and the Bolsheviks, usually adopted the title 'communist', while reformist socialists retained the name 'socialist' or 'social democrat'.

The twentieth century witnessed the spread of socialist ideas into African, Asian and Latin American, countries with little or no experience of industrial capitalism. Socialism in these countries often developed out of the anti colonial struggle, rather than a class struggle. The idea of class exploitation was replaced by that of colonial oppression, creating a potent fusion of socialism and nationalism. The Bolshevik model of communism was imposed on eastern Europe after 1945; it was adopted in China after the revolution of 1949 and subsequently spread to North Korea, Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos. More moderate forms of socialism have been practised elsewhere, for example by the Congress Party, which dominated Indian politics in the decades after independence in 1947. Distinctive forms of African and Arab socialism were also developed, being influenced respectively by the communal values of traditional tribal life and the moral principles of Islam.

In South and Central America in the 1960s and 1970s, socialist revolutionaries waged war against military dictatorships, often seen to be operating in the interests of US imperialism. The Castro regime, which came to power after the Cuban revolution of 1959, developed close links with the Soviet Union, while the Sandinista guerrillas, who seized power in Nicaragua in 1979, remained non-aligned. In Chile in 1970, Salvador Allende became the world's first democratically elected Marxist head of state, but was overthrown and killed in a CIA-backed coup in 1973. Since the late twentieth century socialism has suffered a number of spectacular reverses, leading some to proclaim the 'death of socialism'. The most dramatic of these reverses was, of course, the collapse of communism in the eastern European revolutions of 1989–91. However, rather than socialists uniting around the principles of western social democracy, these principles were thrown into doubt as parliamentary socialist parties in many parts of the world embraced ideas and policies that are more commonly associated with liberalism or even conservatism.

2.3.3 THE CENTRAL THEMES OF SOCIALISM

One of the difficulties of analysing socialism is that the term has been understood in at least three distinctive ways. From one point of view, socialism is seen as an economic model, usually linked to some form of collectivization and planning. Socialism, in this sense, stands as an alternative to capitalism, the choice between these two qualitatively different productive systems traditionally being seen as the most crucial of all economic questions. However, the choice between 'pure' socialism' and 'pure' capitalism was always an illusion, as all economic forms have, in different ways, blended features of both systems. Indeed, modern socialists tend to view socialism not so much as an alternative to capitalism, but as a means of harnessing capitalism to broader social ends. The second approach treats socialism as an instrument of the labour movement. Socialism, in this view, represents the interests of the working class and offers a programme through which the workers can acquire political or economic power. Socialism is thus really a form of 'labourism', a vehicle for advancing the interest of organized labour. From this perspective, the significance of socialism fluctuates with the fortunes of the working-class movement worldwide. Nevertheless, although the historical link between socialism and organized labour cannot be doubted, socialist ideas have also been associated with skilled craftsmen, the peasantry and, for that matter, with political and bureaucratic elites. The central theme of socialism revolves around the issues of community, cooperation, equality, social class and common ownership of property.

2.3.4 EVOLVING TRENDS IN SOCIALISM

Two major issues have divided competing traditions and tendencies within socialism. The first is the goals or 'ends' for which socialists should strive. Socialists have held very different conceptions of what a socialist society should look like; in effect, they have developed competing definitions of 'socialism'. The principal disagreement here is between fundamentalist socialism and revisionist socialism, represented, respectively, by the communist and the social democratic traditions. This section discusses the second issue that has divided socialists: the 'means' they should use to achieving socialist ends, or the 'roads to socialism'. This concern with means follows from the fact the socialism has always had an oppositional character: it is a force for change,

for the transformation of the capitalist or colonial societies in which it emerged. The 'road' that socialist have adopted is not merely a matter of strategic significance alone; it both determines the character of the socialist movement and influences the form of socialism eventually achieved. In other words, means and ends within socialism are often interconnected.

2.3.4.1 Revolutionary Socialism

Many early socialists believed that socialism could only be introduced by the revolutionary overthrow of the existing political system, and accepted that violence would be an inevitable feature of such a revolution. One of the earliest advocates of revolution was the French socialist Auguste Blanqui (1805–81), who proposed the formation of a small band of dedicated conspirators to plan and carry out a revolutionary seizure of power. Marx and Engels, on the other hand, envisaged a 'proletarian revolution', in which the class-conscious working masses would rise up to overthrow capitalism. The first successful socialist revolution did not, however, take place until 1917, when a dedicated and disciplined group of revolutionaries, led by Lenin and the Bolsheviks, seized power in Russia in what was more a coup d'état than a popular insurrection. In many ways the Bolshevik Revolution served as a model for subsequent generations of socialist revolutionaries.

During the nineteenth century, revolutionary tactics were attractive to socialists for two reasons. First, the early stages of industrialization produced stark injustice as the working masses were afflicted by grinding poverty and widespread unemployment. Capitalism was viewed as a system of naked oppression and exploitation, and the working class was thought to be on the brink of revolution. When Marx and Engels wrote in 1848 that 'A spectre is haunting Europe- the spectre of Communism', they were writing against a background of revolt and revolution in many parts of the continent. Second, the working classes had few alternative means of political influence; indeed, almost everywhere they were excluded from political life. Where autocratic monarchies persisted throughout the nineteenth century, as in Russia, these were dominated by the landed aristocracy. Where constitutional and representative government had developed, the right to vote was usually restricted by a property qualification to the middle classes. In the exceptional cases where universal manhood

suffrage was introduced much earlier, as in France in 1848, it was in predominantly agricultural and still deeply religious countries where the majority of the electorate, the smallholding peasantry, were politically conservative. In such cases, the French anarchist Proudhon warned that 'universal suffrage is counter revolution'. For the unenfranchised working masses the only realistic prospect of introducing socialism lay with political revolution.

Revolution has, however, not merely been a tactical consideration for socialists; it also reflects their analysis of the state and of the nature of the state power. Whereas liberals believe the state to be a neutral body, responding to the interests of all citizens and acting in the common good, revolutionary socialists view the state as an agent of class oppression, acting in the interests of 'capital' and against those of 'labour'. Marxists, for example, believe that political power reflects class interests, and that the state is a 'bourgeois state', inevitably biased in favour of capital. Political reform and gradual change are clearly pointless. Universal suffrage and regular and competitive elections are at best a façade, their purpose being to concealing the reality of unequal class and to misdirect the political energies of the working class. A class-conscious proletariat thus has no alternative: in order to build socialism it has first to overthrow the bourgeois state through political revolution. Marx believed that this revolution would be followed by a temporary period called the 'dictatorship of the proletariat', during which the revolution would need to be protected against the danger of counter-revolution carried out by the dispossessed bourgeoisie.

In the second half of the twentieth century, faith in revolution was most evident amongst socialists in the developing world. In the post-1945 period many national liberation movements embraced the 'armed struggle' in the belief that colonial rule could neither be negotiated nor voted out of existence. In Asia, the Chinese Revolution of 1949, led by Mao Zedong, was the culmination of a long military campaign against both Japan and the Chinese Nationalists, the Kuomintang. Vietnamese national unity was achieved in 1975 after a prolonged war fought first against France and subsequently against the United States. Until his death in 1967, Che Guevara, the Argentine revolutionary, led guerrilla forces in various parts of South America and commanded troops during the Cuban revolution of 1959, which overthrew the US- backed Batista

regime and brought Fidel Castro to power. Similar revolutionary struggles took place in Africa.

The choice of revolutionary or insurrectionary political means had profound consequences for socialism. For example, the use of revolution usually led to the pursuit of fundamentalist ends. Revolution had the advantage that it allowed the remnants of the old order to be overthrown and an entirely new social system to be constructed. Thus when the Khmer Rouge, led by Pol Pot, seized power in Cambodia in 1975 they declared 'Year Zero'. Capitalism could be abolished and a qualitatively different socialist society established in its place. Socialism, in this context, usually took the form of state collectivization, modelled upon the Soviet Union during the Stalinist period. The revolution 'road' was also associated with a drift towards dictatorship and the use of political repression. This occurred for a number of reasons. First, the use of force accustomed the new rulers to regard violence as a legitimate instrument of policy; as Mao put it, 'power resides in the barrel of a gun'. Second, revolutionary parties typically adopted military style structures, based upon strong leadership and strict discipline, that were merely consolidated once power was achieved. Third, in rooting out the vestiges of the old order, all oppositional forces were also removed, effectively preparing the way for the construction of totalitarian dictatorships. The revolutionary socialist tradition, nevertheless, was fatally undermined by the collapse of communism in what were, effectively, the counter-revolutions of 1989- 91. This finally ended the divide that had opened up in socialist politics in 1917, and completed the conversion of socialism to constitutional and democratic politics. Where revolutionary socialism survives, it is only in pockets such as continuing Maoist insurgency in Peru and Nepal.

2.3.4.2 Evolutionary Socialism

Although early socialists often supported the idea of revolution, as the nineteenth century progressed enthusiasm for popular revolt waned, at least in the advanced capitalist states of Western and Central Europe. Capitalism itself had matured and by the late nineteenth century the urban working class had lost its revolutionary character and been integrated into society. Wages and living standards had started to rise, partly as a result of colonial expansion into Africa and Asia after 1875. The working class

had also begun to develop a range of institutions –working men's clubs, trade unions, political parties and so on – which both protected their interests and nurtured a sense of security and belonging within industrial society. Furthermore, the gradual advance of political democracy led to the extension of the franchise (the right to vote) to the working classes. By the end of the First World War, a large majority of western state had introduced universal manhood suffrage, with a growing number extending voting rights also to women. The combined effect of these factors was to shift the attention of socialists away from violent insurrection and to persuade them that there was an alternative evolutionary, 'democratic' or 'parliamentary' road to socialism. It is notable, for example, that towards the end of his life

Marx was prepared to speculate about the possibility of a peaceful transition to socialism in the advanced capitalist countries of western Europe, and Engels openly approved of the electoral tactics increasingly employed by the German Social Democratic Party (SPD). Where revolutionary doctrines continued to dominate it was usually in economically and politically backward countries such as Russia. The Fabian Society, formed in 1884, took up the cause of parliamentary socialism in the UK. The Fabians, led by Beatrice Webb (1858–1943) and Sidney Webb (1859–1947), and including noted intellectuals such as George Bernard Shaw and H. G. Wells, took their name from the Roman General Fabius Maximus, who was noted for the patient and defensive tactics he had employed in defeating Hannibal's invading armies. In their view, socialism would develop naturally and peacefully out of liberal capitalism via a very similar process. This would occur through a combination of political action and education. Political action required the formation of a socialist party, which would compete for power against established parliamentary parties rather than prepare for violent revolution. They therefore accepted the liberal theory of the state as a neutral arbiter, rather than the Marxist belief that it was an agent of class oppression. The Webbs were actively involved in the formation of the UK Labour Party and helped to write its 1918 constitution. The Fabians also believed that elite groups, such as politicians of all parties, civil servants, scientists and academics, could be converted to socialism through education.

These elite groups would be 'permeated' by socialist ideas as they recognized that socialism is morally superior to capitalism, being based, for example, upon Biblical

principles, and is also more rational and efficient. A socialist economy, for instance, could avoid the waste involved in class conflict and debilitating poverty. Fabian ideas also had an impact upon the SPD, formed in 1875. The SPD quickly became the largest socialist party in Europe, and in 1912 the largest party in the German Reichstag.

Although committed in theory to a Marxist strategy, in practice it adopted a reformist approach, influenced by the ideas of Ferdinand Lassalle (1825–64). Lassalle had argued that the extension of political democracy could enable the state to respond to working-class interests, and he envisaged socialism being established through a gradual process of social reform, introduced by a benign state. Such ideas were developed more thoroughly by Eduard Bernstein , whose Evolutionary Socialism (1898) developed ideas that paralleled the Fabian belief in gradualism. Bernstein was particularly impressed by the development of the democratic state, which he believed made the Marxist call for revolution redundant. The working class could use the ballot box to introduce socialism, which would therefore develop as an evolutionary outgrowth of capitalism. Such principles dominated the working-class political parties that sprang up around the turn of the century: the Australian Labour Party was founded in 1891, the UK Labour Party in 1900, the Italian Socialist Party in 1892, its French counterpart in 1905, and so on. They came, in the 1970s, to be adopted also by western communist parties, led by the Spanish, Italian and French communist parties. The resulting Euro-communism was committed to pursuing a democratic road to communism and maintaining an open, competitive political system.

2.3.4.3 Marxism Socialism

Strictly speaking, 'Marxism' as a codified body of thought only came into existence after Marx's death in 1883. It was the product of the attempt, notably by Marx's lifelong collaborator, Engels, the German socialist leader Karl Kautsky and the Russian theoretician Georgi Plekhanov (1857– 1918), to condense Marx's ideas and theories into a systematic and comprehensive world view that suited the needs of the growing socialist movement. Engels' Anti-Duhring, written in 1876, while Marx was still alive, is sometimes seen as the first work of Marxist orthodoxy, emphasizing the need for adherence to an authoritative interpretation of Marx's work. This orthodox Marxism, which is often portrayed as 'dialectical materialism'

(a term coined by Plekhanov and not used by Marx), later formed the basis of Soviet communism. 'Vulgar' Marxism, as it has been called, undoubtedly placed heavier stress on mechanistic theories and historical inevitability than did Marx's own writings. The matter, however, is further complicated by the breadth and complexity of Marx's own writings and the difficulty of establishing the 'Marxism of Marx'. Some, for instance, see Marx as an economic determinist, while others proclaim him to be a humanist socialist. Moreover, distinctions have also been drawn between his early and later writings, sometimes presented as the distinction between the 'young Marx' and the 'mature Marx'. It is nevertheless clear that Marx himself believed that he had developed a new brand of socialism that was scientific in the sense that it was primarily concerned with disclosing the nature of social and historical development, rather than with advancing an essentially ethical critique of capitalism.

At least three forms of Marxism can be identified. These are as follows:

1. Classical (Marx Philosophy)
2. Orthodox communism
3. Modern

Orthodox communism

The Russian Revolution and its consequences dominated the image of communism in the twentieth century. The Bolshevik party, led by V. I. Lenin, seized power in a coup d'état in

October 1917, and the following year adopted the name 'Communist Party'. As the first successful communist revolutionaries, the Bolshevik leaders enjoyed unquestionable authority within the communist world, at least until the 1950s. Communist parties set up elsewhere accepted the ideological leadership of Moscow and joined the Communist International, or 'Comintern', founded in 1919. The communist regimes established in eastern Europe after 1945, in China in 1949 and in Cuba in 1959 were consciously modelled upon the structure of the Soviet Union. Thus Soviet communism became the dominant model of communist rule, and the ideas of Marxism-Leninism became the ruling ideology of the communist world.

However, twentieth-century communism differed significantly from the ideas and expectations of Marx and Engels. In the first place, although the communist parties that developed in the twentieth century were founded upon the theories of classical Marxism, they were forced to adapt these to the tasks of winning and retaining political power. Communism, in that sense, was 'Marxism in practice'. Twentieth-century communist leaders had, in particular, to give greater attention to issues such as leadership, political organization and economic management than Marx had done. Second, the communist regimes were shaped by the historical circumstances in which they developed. Communist parties did not achieve power, as Marx had anticipated, in the developed capitalist states of western Europe, but in backward, largely rural countries such as Russia and China. In consequence, the urban proletariat was invariably small and unsophisticated, quite incapable of carrying out a genuine class revolution. Communist rule thus became the rule of a communist elite and of communist leaders. Furthermore, being born in a context of backwardness, the newly-formed communist regimes were dominated by the task of economic development. Twentieth-century communism therefore became more an ideology of modernization than one of social and personal emancipation. Twentieth-century communist regimes were also forced to confront enemies within and without. The Bolshevik regime in Russia, for example, had to survive a three-year civil war in which the 'white' or Tsarist forces were supported by and invasion by troops from the UK, France, the United States and Japan. As a result, the emerging communist regimes became accustomed to employing coercive means to maintain political stability and defend themselves against 'class enemies'. Third, Soviet communism, which later became the basis for the world communist movement, was crucially shaped by the decisive personal contribution of the first two Bolshevik leaders, Lenin and Stalin.

Lenin was both a political leader and a major political thinker. Lenin's ideas reflected his overriding concern with the problems of winning power and establishing communist rule. The most significant and novel of Lenin's ideas was his belief in the need for a new kind of political party, a revolutionary party or vanguard party. Unlike Marx, Lenin did not believe that the proletariat would spontaneously develop revolutionary class consciousness. Such a party should be composed of professional and dedicated revolutionaries. Its claim to leadership would lie in its ideological wisdom, specifically

its understanding of Marxist theory, which was thought to provide a scientific explanation of social and historical development. The party could therefore act as the 'vanguard of the proletariat' because, armed with Marxism, it would be able to perceive the genuine interests of the proletariat and be dedicated to awakening the proletarian class to its revolutionary potential.

Major political changes accompanied this 'second revolution'. During the 1930s Stalin used this power to brutal effect, removing anyone suspected of disloyalty or criticism in an increasingly violent series of purges carried out by the secret police, the NKVD. The membership of the Communist Party was almost halved, over a million people lost their lives, including all surviving members of Lenin's Politburo, and many millions were imprisoned in labour camps, or gulags. Political Stalinism was therefore a form of totalitarian dictatorship, operating through a monolithic ruling party, in which all forms of debate or criticism were eradicated by terror in what amounted to a civil war conducted against the party itself.

Modern

While Marxism - or, more usually, Marxism-Leninism – was turned into a secular religion by the orthodox communist regimes of the eastern Europe and elsewhere, a more subtle and complex form of Marxism developed in western Europe. Referred to as modern Marxism, western Marxism or neo-Marxism, this amounted to an attempt to revise or recast the classical ideas of Marx while remaining faithful to certain Marxist principles or aspects of Marxist methodology.

Two principal factors shaped the character of modern Marxism. First, when Marx's prediction about the imminent collapse of capitalism failed to materialize, modern Marxists were forced to re-examine conventional class analysis. In particular, they took greater interest in Hegelian ideas and in the stress upon 'Man the creator' found in Marx's early writings. In other words, human beings came to be seen as makers of history, not simply puppets controlled by impersonal material forces. By insisting upon an interplay between economics and politics, between the material circumstances of life and the capacity of humans to shape their own destiny, modern Marxists were able to break free from the rigid 'base/superstructure' straightjacket. In short, the class struggle was no longer treated as the beginning and end of social analysis. Second,

modern Marxists were usually at odds with, and sometimes profoundly repelled by, the Bolshevik model of orthodox communism.

The Hungarian Marxist Georg Lukács (1885–1971) was one of the first to present Marxism as a humanistic philosophy, emphasizing the process of 'reification', through which capitalism dehumanizes workers by reducing them to passive objects or marketable commodities. Antonio Gramsci drew attention to the degree to which the class system is upheld not simply by unequal economic and political power but also by bourgeois 'hegemony', the spiritual and cultural supremacy of the ruling class, brought about through the spread of bourgeois values and beliefs via civil society – the media, churches, youth movements, trade unions and so on. A more overtly Hegelian brand of Marxism was developed by the so-called Frankfurt School, whose leading members were Theodor Adorno (1903–69), Max Horkheimer (1895–1973) and Herbert Marcuse. Frankfurt theorists developed what was called 'critical theory', a blend of Marxist political economy, Hegelian philosophy and Freudian psychology, that came to have a considerable impact on the so-called 'new left'. In contrast a form of structural Marxism emerged from the writings of the French communist Louis Althusser (1918–90). This was based on the assumption that Marx viewed individuals as simply bearers of functions that arise from their structural location, in which case Marxism becomes a 'new science' essentially concerned with the analysis of the structure of a social totality. A very different approach has been adopted by analytical Marxists such as John Roemer (1986), who has tried to fuse Marxism with a methodological individualism more commonly associated with liberalism.

2.3.5 SOCIALISM IN THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY

Some would regard a discussion of socialism in the twenty-first century as pointless. Socialism is dead and the obituaries have been written. The evidence to sustain this view is all too familiar. The eastern European revolutions of 1989–91 removed the last vestiges of 'actually existing socialism', and where nominally socialist regimes survive, as in China, North Korea and Cuba it is only because of the willingness of communist parties to introduce market reforms. Elsewhere, parliamentary socialist parties have been in flight from traditional principles, attempting to maintain electoral credibility by demonstrating growing sympathy market-orientated economics.

The only serious debate has been about the cause of socialism's death. End-of-history theorists such as Francis Fukuyama (1989) have put it down to the inherent flaws in all socialist models and the manifest superiority of liberal capitalism. Others have highlighted the tendency of a globalized economy irresistibly to draw all nations into an international capitalist system. Still others have emphasized the shrinkage of socialism's political base from the mass ranks of the working class to an isolated and de-politicized underclass. Whatever the explanation, the world has shifted dramatically and permanently to the right, consigning socialism to what Trotsky, in very different circumstances, called the 'dustbin of history'.

However, socialists with a longer sense of history are unlikely to succumb to this despond. Just as predictions at the beginning of the twentieth century about the inevitable victory of socialism proved to be flawed, so proclamations about the death of socialism made at the beginning of the twenty-first century are likely to be unreliable. Indeed, as recently as the 1960s it was free market liberalism that was considered to be redundant while socialism appeared to be making irresistible progress. Hopes for the survival of socialism largely rest on the enduring and perhaps intrinsic imperfections of the capitalist system. As Ralph Miliband put it in his final work, Socialism for a Sceptical Age (1995), 'the notion that capitalism has been thoroughly transformed and represents the best that humankind can ever hope to achieve is a dreadful slur on the human race'. In that sense socialism is destined to survive if only because it serves as a reminder that human development can extend beyond market individualism. Moreover, globalization may bring opportunities for socialism as well as challenges. Just as capitalism is being transformed by the growing significance of the supranational dimension of economic life, socialism may be in the process of being transformed into a critique of global exploitation and inequality. Although it is as yet theoretically unsophisticated, this, after all, is the thrust of the emergent anti-capitalist or anti-globalization movement. In other words, socialism in the twenty first century may simply be reborn as anti-capitalism.

2.3.6 LET US SUM UP

If socialism survives, what kind of socialism will it be? What seems clear is that it is unlikely to draw inspiration from the bureaucratic authoritarianism of the Soviet

era. Marxism-Leninism might indeed be dead, and few socialist tears would be shed at its passing. One of the consequences of this may be a re-examination of Marx's legacy, now disentangled from the experience of Leninism and Stalinism. However, this is more likely to be Marx the humanist socialist than the more familiar twentieth-century image of Marx as an economic determinist. As far as parliamentary socialism is concerned, an important task remains. Keynesian social democracy, at least in its post-1945 guise, may have been discarded, but a politically and electorally viable alternative to market capitalism has yet to emerge. Interest in the third way and in other neo-revisionist projects undoubtedly provides evidence of the desire for 'new thinking' within socialism and particularly of the need to resist fundamentalist neo-liberalism, but it is difficult to see it a proof of socialism's rebirth. Meanwhile the search for the new socialist paradigm continues.

2.3.7 EXERCISE

1. Discuss the central themes of Socialism.
2. Explain the evolving trends in Socialism.
3. Write a short note on Socialism in 21st century.

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2.4 COMMUNISM: PARLIAMENTRY AND RADICAL

- Mamta Sharma

STRUCTURE

2.4.0 OBJECTIVES

After going through this lesson, you will be able to:

- Know the Communism in India with its Various Strands like Left and Radical
- Understand the nature of politics based on parliamentary communism in different states

2.4.1 INTRODUCTION

What is striking in contemporary India is the salience of both the contrasting varieties of Marxism–Leninism. On the one hand, those pursuing the constitutional path of parliamentary democracy claim to be Marxist–Leninist notwithstanding the severe Marxist critique of parliament being "a pig sty." On the other hand, those upholding violence as the only means for revolution consider themselves to be true followers of Marxism–Leninism. The latter group sees Marxism–Leninism as having completely lost its revolutionary potential at the hands of the parliamentary left in India. Nonetheless, there is no denying that both versions of Marxism–Leninism seem to have consolidated effective ideological platforms for mobilizing the socio-economically marginalized sections of society. While the parliamentary left remains a strong contender for power in West Bengal, Kerala, and Tripura, the Maoists have also succeeded in mobilizing the indigenous population in several parts of the country. Not only have the parliamentary communists moved away from a revolutionary to a reformist Bernsteinian social democratic orientation, they have also fulfilled their ideological commitment to the preservation of democratic institutions by forging broad social alliances to pursue a well thought out system of wealth distribution that does not alienate the propertied sections of society.

With their moderate agrarian policy to accommodate the rural middle class in the power structure, the parliamentary left never became an effective mouthpiece of the poorest of the poor, the landless laborers, and thus failed to mobilize them for their ideological battle. This failure created a natural constituency for the Maoists in rural India, especially in those areas where the incumbent left government agreed to follow a forcible land acquisition policy for private investment even at the cost of displacing the local inhabitants. In the changed environment of globalization, the economic scene has suddenly shifted, and concern for the poorest of the poor seems to have considerably disappeared.

2.4.2 THE PARLIAMENTARY LEFT AND RADICAL (MAOISTS) IN INDIA: MAIN CHARACTERSTIC

The Parliamentary Left: It is now evident that the parliamentary left parties, instead of emphasizing "class antagonism" as a means for the establishment of an egalitarian

society, seem to have confirmed their clear antipathy toward violence by accepting election as a meaningful instrument of socio-economic changes. The parliamentary left appears to have flourished in circumstances in which the state is utilized for facilitating "development with redistribution." Once elected to power, the communist party, as the records show, has thus "transformed from an essentially agitating and confrontational force to an administrative patronage-dispensing institution." Drawing on a social alliance of apparently contradictory class forces, the reformist left parties sustain their viability as a democratically elected government within an economy that is not favourably disposed toward the classical ideological goal of the left. There is no doubt that the political power of the left depends on the degree to which it has consolidated its social base through legal and extra-parliamentary struggles. While the party leadership is a significant determinant of success, its chances are also circumscribed by its organic relationship with the party managers at the grassroots. By a well-knit organizational network (sustained in a Stalinist way), the parliamentary left maintains and retains a support base that crumbles once mass disenchantment leads to the rise and consolidation of parallel power centres capable of challenging those in power.

The Radical (Maoists)

Unlike the parliamentary left that keeps on changing its ideological strategies, Maoism is an ideological continuation of the past, and yet it is also a contextual response to the peculiar Indian reality that differs radically from one place to another. In the past, ultra-left movements seem to have uncritically accepted the "one size fits all" approach by accepting the classical Marxism–Leninism as sacrosanct. Given the obvious socio-economic and cultural diversity of the continental variety, India can never be comprehended in a single axis. By being sensitive to this well-entrenched diversity, Maoism has reinvented Marxism–Leninism in a most creative fashion by rejecting the straight-jacketed Marxist–Leninist formula of socio-economic changes. Even within India, the issues that the Maoists raise differ radically from one state to another. In Andhra Pradesh, Maoism draws, for instance, on anti-feudal sentiments whereas in the tribal belt of Orissa and Chhattisgarh rights over forest produce remain the most effective demand for political mobilization. This context-driven articulation

of Maoism is certainly a critical factor in its emergence as perhaps the most effective ideological voice of the downtrodden, notwithstanding the determination of a coercive state to crush the campaign.

The phase that began with the official acceptance of economic liberalization is different from what had gone on before various counts. Besides the obvious drawbacks of market-driven development plans, this phase also included mass mobilization regarding numerous "new macro issues," particularly the environment and displacement of people due to indiscriminate industrialization. The indigenous population seems to have been hard hit, and it is therefore not surprising that Maoism has struck an emotional chord with the tribal population in areas where forest land is being taken away for industrial purposes at the cost of the habitat. By challenging the land grabbing by the industrial houses and the government, the Maoists in these areas have become the "true savior" of the tribal population. In fact, this is a major factor explaining the growing consolidation of Maoism in a large number of constituent Indian states. Besides attacking feudal forces, the Maoist radicals have also championed the cause of the indigenous population who lost their land due to reckless mining operations at the behest of the state.

Special Economic Zones (SEZ) and the Maoists Response

The introduction of market-driven economic reforms in 1991 in India was ostensibly due to a fiscal crisis that the Indian state had overcome with financial support from the World Bank and International Monetary Fund. However, the reforms hardly brought benefits to the marginalized. Furthermore, the opening of the economy also legitimized the operation of the private players in the domestic economy, and, as a facilitating measure, Special Economic Zones (SEZ) were created by forceful acquisition of prime agricultural land for industrial purposes, which rendered the land-dependent population jobless and homeless. The SEZs are those special-earmarked territories that are duty-free and tax-free enclaves that are considered "privileged territories" for trade operations and tariffs. Their ostensible purpose is to attract large volumes of investment by providing "world-class infrastructural facilities, a favorable taxation regime, and incentives for sectoral clustering." SEZs offered the neoliberal state a means to accomplish its ideological goals, and it was a policy decision supportive of

private investment for rapid economic development facilitated by the state. True to its newly acquired neoliberal role, the state was not hesitant to undertake even coercive measures to forcibly acquire land for these private operators because they felt that opposition to the SEZ policy threatened "to sabotage the dream of a more prosperous, efficient and powerful India."

This led to mass consternation especially in the tribal districts of Chhattisgarh, Orissa, Jharkhand, and Andhra Pradesh, which the left-wing extremists exploited to build a stable social base in opposition to the displacement and dispossession of the indigenous population. At the heart of the protests were "the perceived abuses of the Land Acquisition Act." As a result, the state that zealously pursued the path of reforms seems to have lost its credibility with those involved in the "everyday struggle" for mere survival. The period since the late 1980s has thus seen growing resistance to such policies by the dispossessed groups in different parts of the country. The Red Corridor is also described as "the mineral corridor," given the rich reserve of minerals in this large tract of tribe-inhabited areas. The Maoists aim to resist "the handover of mineral wealth of India to multinationals and foreign capitalists" by transforming the area into a war zone. This is a different kind of war being waged in parts of India where people "are fighting in their own territory to save their land, forest, water, minerals from being grabbed and they are convinced that they have an alternate vision, not just for themselves, the Adivasis, but for Indian people as a whole." In such volatile circumstances, the installation of the SEZs seems to have provoked new issues and resistance movements even in areas which were, until then, free from Maoist radical politics. It is therefore not just coincidental, that localities rose in rebellion against the ruling parliamentary left in West Bengal when the incumbent Left Front forcibly took over land from the farmers in Nandigram and Singur for an automobile factory. The forcible land acquisition led to the fusion of diverse strands of discontent into a powerful political movement. Maoists were reported to have participated in the movement against forcible land acquisition, which was basically a spontaneous mass outburst in opposition to the policy of dispossession.

2.4.3 PARLIAMENTARY COMMUNISM IN INDIA: THE CPI AND THE CPI (M)

This section is divided into two parts. Part I deals with the parliamentary left by reference to its contextual socio-cultural and political roots in Tripura, Kerala, and West Bengal, respectively, and Part II is devoted to left-wing extremism, christened as Maoism in India, that has flourished as a powerful ideological tool at the hands of the impoverished against the exploitation of human beings by human beings.

The CPI and CPI (M)

For a long time, the CPI struggled with a basic strategic question—how to relate itself to the nationalist movement led by the Indian National Congress (INC). While one faction of the CPI wanted to support the progressive part of Congress, another faction could find no common ground with the INC because it saw Congress as representing the interests of the evolving bourgeoisie in urban areas, and of large landowners in rural areas. The faction supporting collaboration with the INC eventually achieved hegemony in the CPI, and so the party supported the independence movement during the 1940s and Jawaharlal Nehru's socialist rhetoric in the early years after independence. In the aftermath of the Sino-Indian War of 1962, the CPI split into two factions, Leftist-Centrists and Rightists. The Leftists supported a more revolutionary, anti-Congress strategy while the aim of the Rightists was to support progressive tendencies in Congress. The centrists were divided on the question of which group to join, but eventually allied themselves with the Leftists to form the Communist Party of India (Marxist). For a while, the two parties opposed each other in elections. The CPI supported Congress and, later, Congress(I), Indira Gandhi's faction, whereas the CPI(M) took part in anti-Congress coalitions, including some with the Janata Party, the first major 'centrist alternative to the Congress Party'. Another split in the CPI(M) occurred in 1969. Dissatisfied with the results of the parliamentary struggle so far and inspired by the Naxalbari uprising, the Maoist faction decided to pursue extra-parliamentary action. This helped the centrists in the CPI(M) (which slowly became the main parliamentary communist party) become stronger and, increasingly, it was they who decided the party line. The pro-Congress CPI, on the other hand, tried to push Congress in a more progressive direction. Following the split of the

Congress Party in 1969, the CPI supported the faction led by Indira Gandhi. This put it in a difficult position during the Emergency (1975–77), when it continued to support Indira Gandhi's authoritarian rule. Voters did not approve and so the CPI became largely insignificant following the 1977 election, which the Janata Party won so decisively.

During the Emergency, the CPI(M) was largely underground and silent, but it never allied itself with Indira Gandhi. This helped it to return to power in the West Bengal state election held in the aftermath of the Emergency. Although it did not have to ally itself with any 'bourgeois' party to govern, the CPI(M) maintained relatively moderate policies while in power. It was in 1977 that the CPI(M) finally became reformist. However rather than confront the institutions of the Indian republic, it tried to change the socio-economic situation within the state. This strategy essentially meant a break from its earlier confrontational tactics. Previously the communists had relied on mass mobilisation to force social change at ground level, irrespective of any constitutional constraints. These radical tactics had made the more moderate allies of the Left nervous and thus undermined the coalition governments led by the Left.

Since 1977, the reformist stance of the CPI(M) has remained more or less unchanged. As Atul Kohli notes, it is 'a party that is communist in name and organization but ''social democratic'' in ideology and practice'. Its defining political stance in national terms is its opposition to communal politics, unregulated economic globalisation, and imperialism. However the policies of the CPI(M) differ from state to state. Many see the West Bengal unit, for example, as fostering economic globalisation because of its attempts to create special economic zones in rural areas. Moreover, as Desai argues, the 'ostensibly common identity of the Communist Party of India conceals different historically evolved party formations'. In Kerala, it 'grew out of a tradition of mass-based, grassroots organization, while the CPI in Bengal was more isolated from popular movements', and in Tripura, it developed a symbiotic relationship with the literacy movement. According to Desai, these specific party formations have each played a role in shaping the policies of the Left in these states.

2.4.4 PARLIAMENTARY COMMUNITS IN DIFFERENT STATES

Parliamentary communist parties in different states have differed in their attitudes towards development. Firstly, it should be noted that, especially prior to 1977,

development was considered to be a secondary issue. The primary aim of the communist parties was to bring about a revolution. Development was important only insofar as it served this aim and it was not until later, with the rise of reformism, that development became important, with the policies of the Left either aimed at bringing about development or impacting upon it. Generally, Left parties found it difficult to achieve substantial economic development in particular, industrialisation within a capitalist framework. Capital would not invest in regions with comparatively strong labour regulations, a politicised labour force, or state governments that they perceived to be hostile. This in turn may have been why the communist parties in power focused on other issues such as land reform, decentralisation and education. It also explains why their work on the development front can be much better analysed using the concept of human development. Generally, the Left has aimed to achieve development by introducing substantive change on the ground, often by introducing policies of a redistributive nature, which require strong mobilisation. Thomas Isaac argues in the context of the People's Planning Campaign in Kerala that fundamental reforms cannot be merely legislated. Legislation remains empty phrases unless powerful movements oversee their implementation'. This is as true for this reform as it is for other Leftist projects such as Operation Barga, an initiative to ameliorate the poor situation of sharecroppers in West Bengal during the 1970s.

The Left has ruled in different times, in different states, in different coalitions in India. The Left in Kerala, West Bengal and Tripura is discussed below:

2.4.4.1 The Case of Kerala

A lot has been written about development in Kerala. This is unsurprising given its extraordinary trajectory, which couples very high levels of human development with low per capita income. The literature, of course, searches for reasons for this distinct way of development, identifying the redistributive reforms of the Left Front governments as an important factor. The first communist-led government in India was formed in Kerala in 1957. It was based on the then-undivided CPI, but also relied on some independent members of the Legislative Assembly. As already mentioned, the main strategy of the CPI at that time was to enforce radical change from below, as far as this was possible, within a liberal-democratic framework. Radical change was

attempted initially in two areas: land reform and a change in the education system.

Eventually, both attempts were unsuccessful. The land reforms ordinance and the education bill failed to become reality. However on a more subtle level, both were successful while the state government could not implement them, the issues were put on the table, and important aspects of both were implemented by subsequent governments. Still, for the first communist government, these initiatives proved fateful. The education bill met heavy opposition from sections of Kerala society, and the plans for land reform to limit the amount of land a person could own were stopped by the Supreme Court. Worse, these attempts at drastic change caused the centre to react. It used Article 356 of the Constitution to dismiss the state government on the grounds that law and order had broken down. This experience was pivotal for the Indian Left as a whole, because it starkly revealed the limits of Indian democracy. Later Indian Leftists would often cite this case as an example of what not to do. At the same time, however, in terms of strategies and outcome, this experience was archetypical for early communist-led governments.

After this experience, at times the Left succeeded in increasing its popular vote share, but never became a dominant political force. This is striking because it contrasts with the experience in West Bengal and Tripura, where the Left has managed to become the hegemonic actor. In Kerala, the Left has proven itself unable to win two consecutive elections. Those elections it did win were with the help of non-Leftist parties such as the Indian National League, which is seen as partisan because it is Muslim-based. Thus in terms of political success, Kerala is not a model state for the CPI(M) and its allies. Paradoxically this political failure might be one reason for the state's developmental success. Kerala's highly-competitive political environment may have been conducive to its better developmental performance. Consider the problem of corruption, which is endemic in India. Electoral competition makes it more important for the party in power to control corruption, or it will be voted out of power. On the other hand, if both competing parties are corrupt, the problem will persist. Earlier however, especially during the first communist ministry, the communists proclaimed an anti-corruption agenda and were perceived as honest. This put Congress in a difficult position, as a perceived increase in corruption during its term in power would almost surely translate into it losing votes in the next election. Then again, the communists

might be seen as honest, but this could change once the means of being corrupt that is, constant power were established. It may be that the ongoing stiff competition from Congress has helped the Left avoid this pitfall in Kerala.

Three ways in which electoral competitiveness might have helped Kerala can be extrapolated from the communists' 1957 experience. Firstly, as noted, the Left could not enact its reforms, but it did bring to the fore important issues which were aimed at empowering the marginalised sections of society. Thus the Left was seen as a pro-poor force. In a politicised state such as Kerala, where comparatively large sections of the poor are educated, a Congress-led government could no longer easily turn a blind eye to the problems of the poor. Even when the government was Congress-led, it could not govern with an anti poor agenda. Secondly, when a Congress alliance is in power, the Left is in opposition. Heller describes the effect of this situation in the following way: 'The Kerala CPM's critical role has been less a function of its governance capacity than of its mobilization capacity. Having found itself periodically in the opposition, the CPM has retained much of the social movement dynamic from which it was born by having to continually reinvigorate its mobilization base and reinvent its political agenda'. In other words the success of the Left with respect to human development has been dependent on its mobilisation power. Naturally, it has been easier to retain this dynamic in opposition. Thirdly, it may have been a good thing that the reforms the communists envisaged were not enacted. The reforms might not have been conducive to development, for whatever reason; or they could have led to a counter-reaction from well-off sections of society, leading to large-scale confrontation and violence. Luckily this did not happen, which brings us to the third important aspect of the Kerala case, the adherence to constitutional means in the struggle for political power. By and large, the state has seen very low levels of political violence, which makes it different from the other Indian states. This is even more striking considering its high level of politicisation. As we will see, both West Bengal and Tripura have been marred by political violence. How can we explain this difference? The most promising answer seems to lie in the culture of education in the state. Kerala has always had a comparatively educated population and, following Seymour Lipset, we may suggest that this has helped to keep struggles within constitutional limits. The last aspect to be emphasised in the Kerala case concerns

policy priorities. Whereas land reform was in some way or another always on the agenda of the communists and education was a priority issue for the Kerala Left, the issue of decentralisation was rather neglected. Only in 1996, roughly two decades after the issue was tackled in West Bengal and Tripura, did the Left Democratic Front in Kerala enact the People's Campaign for Decentralized Planning, a comprehensive decentralisation programme. The idea was to swiftly institutionalise decentralisation, implementing it via a campaign to mobilise society. Even though the programme had its problems particularly that local governments had difficulty in spending the funds earmarked for the campaign it brought a new dynamic to the process of development, as evidenced in the renewed rise in Kerala's literacy rate. Summarising the Kerala experience, we can conclude that the presence of the Left has been a success in terms of the policies it implemented and the developmental progress it brought. At the same time, from a political perspective, Kerala has been disappointing for the Left, as the party failed to become the dominant force and never won consecutive state elections. This pattern contrasts sharply with its experience in West Bengal.

2.4.4.2 The Case of West Bengal

In West Bengal, the history of the parliamentary Left can be divided into two periods, pre- and post-1977. The pre-1977 period was marked by confrontation, instability and violence, whereas the later period has been characterised by political stability but developmental stagnation. This second period ended with the state election of 2011 that brought the opposition Trinamool Congress to power, but it is too early to evaluate the Left in this possible third period. The first communist-dominated state government in West Bengal was formed in 1967, ten years after the first communist ministry in Kerala. In this government, formed under the United Front, the Left was not as strong as it had been in Kerala ten years before. The CPI (M) had to ally with moderate parties such as the Bangla Congress, which did not have a consistent social reform agenda. Ruling during a food crisis, the coalition was not able to mould its diverse interests into a coherent policy and seemed to have no future. The centre repeated the strategy it had used to unseat the government in Kerala in 1959. It used the governor to dislodge the state government after only six months in power. An alternative government formed at the end of 1967 lasted only about a hundred days, then President's rule was imposed for a year. The central government's interference

was very unpopular with Bengali voters, and so the United Front won the election in 1969.

This time, the CPI(M) was stronger and more assertive, and attempted radical land reform from below. Occupation of illegally-owned land by the landless was actively encouraged by the government. This caused resistance from large landowners, the dominant class in rural Bengal. As well, in the aftermath of the Naxalbari uprising in the northern part of the state, the Maoists broke away from the CPI(M) to take up arms. After one year in power, the moderate partners of the CPI(M) resigned and President's rule was imposed once again. This marked the beginning of a seven-year period in opposition for the Left. The 1972 election was allegedly rigged by Congress, and between 1975 and 1977 the Emergency curtailed political activity. As elsewhere, in West Bengal the CPI(M) remained largely underground during this period. Surprisingly, though, it won a landslide victory in the election immediately after the Emergency in 1977. This time, it formed government only with other Left parties under a Left Front umbrella. Defying the expectations of many, this time the Left was much more moderate than before. While in previous governments it had not any real chance of carrying out its radical reforms, this time, although it took some bold initiatives to begin with, they were less radical than before. Instead of focusing on the most marginalised section of rural Bengal society through comprehensive land reform, the Left Front tried to ameliorate the poor conditions of share-croppers.

On paper, share-croppers did have some rights, such as a guaranteed share of their output, but in practice most were not registered as share-croppers and so could not demand their rights. As a result, they were entirely dependent on the generosity of the landlord whose land they cultivated. Operation Barga, initiated by the Left Front, fundamentally changed this situation. Sharecroppers no longer had to prove they were share-croppers; instead, landlords had to disprove that share-croppers cultivated the land whose produce they laid claim to. This legal change, together with party-led mobilisation, encouraged share-croppers to register their labour to gain their legal rights. Another important early initiative of the Left Front government was the drive towards decentralisation. Elections for local governments (panchayats) were first held in 1978, earlier than in any other major state, and have been held regularly ever since. Moreover, far from becoming merely an instrument of the dominant rural classes,

many poor peasants and middle-class people have been elected to the panchayats, breaking the traditional dominance of the landlords. However, because the Left Front has easily won most local elections, the Panchayati Raj system is seen by critics as an instrument of the ruling parties.

These two bold reforms, Panchayati Raj and Operation Barga, were both passed in the late 1970s. While they were partially successful in enhancing the situation of a marginalised section of rural Bengali society and of improving rural development, no further initiatives have followed. The promise of change through which the Left Front came to power has not materialised. Instead, its rule has become institutionalised. Several reasons can be given for this failure. From an electoral perspective, Operation Barga was sufficient to secure the support of a large part of the rural population, share-croppers would overwhelmingly vote for the Left Front, which had brought about such a big improvement in their lives. Besides, after

1977, the support base of the CP I(M) changed no longer did it focus on the poorest of the poor. Instead, the middle-class peasantry became its main support base in rural areas. Because the middle-class peasantry was against radical reforms that would improve the situation of the marginalised at its expense, comprehensive land reform was no longer pursued by the Left Front government. This change in the party's focus was partly a side-effect of decentralisation reform.

When the CPI (M) came to power in 1977, it had 33,000 mostly dedicated members. When local elections were held in 1978, it fielded around 56,000 candidates. In other words, it had to rely on standing sympathisers and opportunists to win the local election. Candidates who seized the opportunity to get elected on the ruling party's ticket were seldom dedicated Marxists. The party managed to overcome this problem in the course of time. By 1983, it had roughly 100,000 members and, five years later, more than 150,000. This five-fold increase in membership brought another change with it. The party itself became less disciplined and less radical in the course of broadening its membership. While the party's size is still relatively small in comparison with the size of the electorate, it must also be said that radical reforms, such as the seizure of land by the United Front government in the name of land reform, were achieved with a far smaller party. Paradoxically, in the 1960s members were more dedicated and radical, so mass mobilisation of the poor was still possible. Thus becoming a larger

party is one of the reasons why the CPI(M)-led governments have not continued with their mobilisation-based strategy. Another factor is that many of the most dedicated CPI(M) members left the party following the Maoist split in 1969, and were replaced by more moderate new members. What is more, for the most part these more radical cadres split from the CPI(M) as a result of the mobilisation-based tactics. These tactics entailed a constant need for a radical outlook, cultivated and continued by ground-level cadres. Perceiving the party as not being radical enough, many of these ground-level cadres left to become part of the Maoist uprising. Leaders of the CPI (M) probably feared that this traumatic experience, when many of its best men left the party in order to fight against it, would be repeated if radical, mobilisation-based tactics were continued. We may conclude that the Left Front did not introduce further bold reforms because of its institutionalisation in power and its refraining from mass mobilisation.

The poor performance of the opposition and the success of Operation Barga has meant that the electoral imperative to perform better has become practically non-existent. In the 2000s, the Left Front changed its focus from rural development to industrialisation, following the recent example of the Chinese Communist Party. The earlier concentration on rural development, together with poor state–capital relations, did not bode well for the industrial sector. The state government was unable to reconcile itself to the private sector's reluctance to invest in West Bengal, and it blamed a hostile central government for the resultant industrial stagnation. In order to overcome this problem, the Left Front tried to attract capital by creating special economic zones in rural areas. These zones were created by buying land from farmers. This is similar to what has been done in other Indian states, but the resistance to it from the local population, opposition groups and Maoists has been stronger in West Bengal. In Nandigram, where farmers expected the government to create a special economic zone, a parallel administration was instead established in 2007 to oversee it, and state government officials were not even allowed to enter. Instead of taking the fears of the local population seriously, the Left Front government saw it as a conspiracy by the Maoists and the opposition, led by the Trinamool Congress. It deployed police to retake the area, which they did heavy-handedly, and many people were killed. Similar events occurred in Singur.

Furthermore, from the mid-2000s onwards, the Maoist insurgency in West Bengal accelerated. In the area of Lalgarh, the Naxalites control large areas of rural land. Rather than trying to understand the socio-economic reasons for the Naxalite resurgence, the Left Front has again approached this problem as one purely of law and the CPI(M) probably feared that this traumatic experience, when many of its best men left the party in order to fight against it, would be repeated if radical, mobilisation-based tactics were continued. We may conclude that the Left Front did not introduce further bold reforms because of its institutionalisation in power and its refraining from mass mobilisation. The poor performance of the opposition and the success of Operation Barga has meant that the electoral imperative to perform better has become practically non-existent. In the 2000s, the Left Front changed its focus from rural development to industrialisation, following the recent example of the Chinese Communist Party. The earlier concentration on rural development, together with poor state–capital relations, did not bode well for the industrial sector. The state government was unable to reconcile itself to the private sector's reluctance to invest in West Bengal, and it blamed a hostile central government for the resultant industrial stagnation. In order to overcome this problem, the Left Front tried to attract capital by creating special economic zones in rural areas. These zones were created by buying land from farmers. This is similar to what has been done in other Indian states, but the resistance to it from the local population, opposition groups and Maoists has been stronger in West Bengal.

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In light of these setbacks, it is no surprise that the CPI(M)-led state government was voted out of power in 2011, after 34 years of continuous rule. The loss stems mainly from the failures of the Left Front government. It won successive elections with great ease, but never set out a radical reform agenda. In the beginning, it launched inspiring initiatives, but then fell into a pattern of stagnation. From the perspective of electoral competition, this experience in West Bengal is as unsurprising as the example of Kerala more than thirty years of uninterrupted rule does not necessarily make a party perform particularly well. However, the third state in our analysis, Tripura, does not fit into this pattern at all.

2.4.4.3 The Case of Tripura

In Tripura, the communist movement developed very differently from those in other parts of India. While during the nationalist struggle, the communists aligned themselves with the Congress-led independence movement, in Tripura communism evolved in synergy with Tripura nationalism. The latter was more a form of regionalism than a nationalism directed against India. Needless to say, regional identities also mattered in Kerala and West Bengal, but the extent to which the communists aligned with the Tripura movement was remarkable. The primary aim of communism in Tripura was to advance the interests of the indigenous inhabitants of Tripura who, due to the immigration of Bengalis during the last century, had become a minority in their own homeland. The indigenous inhabitants had become marginalised socio-economically, with less access to education than Bengalis and with their ancestral land having been given to the immigrants. In the late 1940s, the communists even led an unsuccessful armed uprising to achieve their aims. Following this they refrained from violence, but the CPI's failure to take power constitutionally led some tribal people to pursue the path of violence once again, leading to a split between the nationalists and communists in Tripura.

In 1977, the Left Front was voted into power for the first time in Tripura. By that time, the armed insurgency of the Tribal National Volunteers (TNV) had polarised society and the perceived pro-tribal stance of the Left Front led the Bengalis to create their own militia. In 1979, the state government created the Tripura Tribal Areas Autonomous District Council (TTAADC), an autonomous region for the indigenous people of

Tripura. The TTAADC covered more than two-thirds of the state and some segments of the Bengali population feared that the TTAADC would mean the end of Tripura as an Indian state. The polarisation worsened to such an extent that in June 1980, riots broke out. Thus, the first term of the Left Front was marred by conflict. From an administrative perspective, the TTAADC was a step towards decentralisation, which was paralleled by the introduction of the Panchayati Raj system around the same time. However in such a polarised environment, with an armed insurgency active in many parts of the state, these policies did not have the desired developmental effects. In 1988, the Left Front was voted out of power and the new Congress-led state government made a peace agreement with the insurgents. This agreement failed to bring lasting peace and the disappointed insurgents created new armed groups that continued to fight the state. In 1993, the Left Front again came to power and has remained in government ever since.

The main focus of the Left Front now became to improve education. A literacy campaign targeting both Bengali and tribal adults was started with the support of civil society organisations. Follow-up campaigns were conducted to ensure that the neo-literates would continue to build on their literacy. This mobilisation-based campaign was very successful, and together with the improvements in the education system, it helped raise the state of education in Tripura to a much higher level. One reason that the Left Front took this road was that its mass support in Tripura was based on the tribal education movements of the 1940s; part of its identity and legitimacy sprang from its focus on education. Relative to the size of the electorate, the party had many members in Tripura at the time of the new education campaigns. Another reason was that the tribal insurgency was rooted in the socio-economic marginalisation of the tribals. To end the insurgency, its causes had to be wiped out and education was one of the sectors in which marginalisation was highly visible. In 1981, half of Tripura's population was literate, but only a quarter of tribals could read or write. Mass mobilisation was used as a strategy because it was one of the CPI(M)'s strengths.

The Left Front continued to fight the insurgency by attacking its root causes. It initiated some symbolic programmes, such as restoring alienated land to the tribals. Even though the material value of this programme might have been negligible, its political value was high. Another initiative has been the re-naming of villages and rivers which

were originally named in tribal languages, but had come to be known officially by their Bengali names. This re-naming represented recognition by the government that the land was originally tribal. These initiatives, together with a counter-insurgency strategy based on the police rather than the army (the former being arguably less heavy-handed than the latter) weakened the insurgent groups and there are indications that the insurgency may end in the near future. In the meantime, Tripura has advanced markedly in terms of human development. From being a backward state in a backward region, it has become a model state in the field of education and a positive example of economic turnaround, with per capita income rising from only two-thirds of the national average in the mid 1990s to parity with the all-India level by 2000.

Summarising the case of Tripura, it may be said that Left Front rule has been successful, even though the political dominance of the Left resembled West Bengal more closely than Kerala. As in Kerala, the CPI(M)-led government has continued to rely on the mobilisation of society to achieve its goals, although it did not face the same electoral pressure as in Kerala. The reasons for these variations between the states are elaborated in the concluding section.

Maoism in India (The Radical Left)

As we have earlier discussed that following the India–China war in 1962, the Communist party split into two: the CPI and Communist Party of India (Marxist; CPI (M). While the CPI preached the theory of "peaceful road to non-capitalist development," the CPI (M) followed the centrist line. Though there were serious differences on ideological and tactical lines, both the parties went ahead with their parliamentary exercises. But another split in the CPI(M) occurred in 1969 when dissatisfied with the results of the parliamentary struggle so far and inspired by the Naxalbari uprising, the Maoist faction decided to pursue extra-parliamentary action. This helped the centrists in the CPI(M) (which slowly became the main parliamentary communist party) become stronger and increasingly, it was they who decided the party line.

The Maoist movement in India is among the longest and most lethal home grown insurgencies that the world has seen. While the origin of Left-Wing Extremism (LWE) in the country goes back to the Telangana Peasant rebellion (1946-51), the movement

took the young republic by storm in 1967. On 25th of May 1967, peasants, landless labourers, and adivasis with their lathis, arrows and bows undertook daring raids of the granaries of a landlord at the Naxalbari village in West Bengal. The rebellion, quelled by the police in a matter of a few days, gave birth to what would be called the Naxalite Movement (named after the hamlet) led by the charismatic Charu Majumdar and his close associates, Kanu Sanyal and Jangal Santhal. The rebels quickly found support not only amongst the nearby villages, but also from the People's Republic of China. The Communist Party of China's mouthpiece, People's Daily, not only called the event "Spring Thunder", it also devoted an entire editorial page highlighting the importance of the Naxalbari incident. Majumdar and Sanyal took initial inspiration from China's founding father, Mao Zedong, and his tactics to capture political power the Naxalite movement eventually became radically different from what Maoism stood for.

The arrest of Charu Majumdar on 16th of July 1972 and his subsequent death in police custody some days later prompted analysts to pen obituaries for the Naxalite Movement. Within a decade, however, the movement made its presence known in other regions of the country. Notably, the early 1980s saw the revival of the armed militancy when Andhra Pradesh-based Kondapalli Seetharamaiah formed the People's War Group (PWG) in 1980. Formed to fight for the cause of peasants and the landless, the armed militia launched a series of daring attacks, assassinations and bombings targeting landlords, upper-caste leaders and politicians in Andhra Pradesh. In the late 1990s, when the Andhra Pradesh police forces decimated the PWG, many thought the end of the insurgency.

Yet again the insurgency proved those analysts wrong, as it spread into Central India in the early 2000s, particularly the mountainous Dandakaranya and the adjoining regions covering Madhya Pradesh, Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh, Odisha and parts of Maharashtra. The merging of the Communist Party of India (Maoist-Leninist), the PWG, Maoist Communist Centre of India (MCCI) and 40 other armed factions into the Communist Party of India (Maoist) in 2004 turned the tide in favour of the insurgents. Prior to 2004, the Maoists were not only a relatively a minor force loosely operating in four states (i.e., Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Andhra Pradesh) but were also highly fragmented to the point that they killed each other's cadres and

followers. The 2004 truce between two major Maoist factions that decided to merge proved strategic, allowing the insurgents to enhance their strengths in spatial spread and firepower.

The movement eventually spread across such a vast geography that it surpassed all other insurgent activity including those in the J&K and the Northeast. At their peak, the Naxalites were dominating in more than 200 districts across the country, prompting then Prime Minister Manmohan Singh in April 2006 to call the Maoist movement "the single biggest internal-security challenge ever faced by our country."

The insurgents also rapidly enhanced their firepower in terms of regular fighters, arms and ammunition, resources and insurgent expertise. Within a short period of times, the People's Liberation Guerrilla Army (PGLA), the armed wing of CPI (Maoist) nurtured 20,000 regular cadre of which nearly 10,000 are hardcore fighters. These cadres were armed with automatic weapons, shoulder rocket launchers, mines and other explosive devices, light machine guns, mortars, self-loading guns and grenades. They also acquired know-how in making and deploying increasingly sophisticated bombs and according to some reports, set up manufacturing centres for weapons including rocket launchers. By mid-2000s, the Maoists had managed to create full-fledged administrative and military infrastructure in states like Chhattisgarh, Odisha, Jharkhand, Maharashtra, Bihar and West Bengal.

A key to the Maoist movement's growth was the expansion of its financial base. By the late 2000s, coinciding with the spread of their geographical influence, the amount of financing in the hands of the Naxalites had reached some INR 1,500 crore (approximately US$ 350 million). This rise in financial resources dramatically improved their ability to buy weapons, attract recruits, and modernise their communication warfare systems including the use of information and communication technology.

The high points of the Maoist insurgency in India were the Chintalnar massacre of 76 soldiers in Chhattisgarh's Dantewada district in April 2010, and the killings of top leaders of the Congress Party in Chhattisgarh's Jeeram Ghati area in Sukma district in May 2013. These two incidents, amongst many other daring attacks on security forces, sounded the alarm for the country's policymakers that the rebels were posing a serious threat.

2.4.5 LET US SUM UP

Thus, by analysing the above content it has been found that communism in India is uniquely textured. In the case of Parliamentary left, by discarding the violent revolutionary method of capturing power, it has, for instance, flourished because of its success in pursuing effective policies of "redistribution" of basic economic resources within the parliamentary form of governance. So, domestic imperatives transformed Indian communism into a movement with legitimacy among the dispossessed sections through the middle classes, not the wretched of the earth, which was always the main constituency of the communist revolutionary movements elsewhere. The middle class has remained at the helm of the affairs. The movement achieved electoral success but "paradoxically failed to advance communism." It is thus argued that the parliamentary communism, despite being a significant political force in contemporary Indian politics, has ceased to be a movement for revolutionary changes in India. There is thus an ideological vacuum that is filled by the Maoists who have successfully mobilized the exploited masses for movements as possibly the only way out of their subhuman existence. Maoism in India has thus provided the dispossessed with a powerful voice to challenge the prevalent class balances that support high economic and income disparity and exploitation of the impoverished. It is also an ideological challenge against "an extremely oppressive social system, where those at the bottom of multiple layers of disadvantage live in condition of extreme disempowerment."

On the other hand, it is difficult to predict the future of Maoism though there is no doubt that it has succeeded, so far, in expanding the red corridor by involving mainly the peripheral sections of society in an area stretching across almost half of India. This itself is suggestive of the historical limitations of the state-led development programs that failed miserably to take care of the basic needs of a vast population. The situation seems to have worsened following the acceptance of neoliberal economic reforms in the wake of a serious domestic fiscal crisis in the early 1990s. The government design for rapid industrialization seems to have received a serious blow because of organized opposition by those who lost their land to industrialization. The idea of Special Economic Zones did not auger well with the people at the grassroots, who felt betrayed by the government policy of transferring land owned by many small

peasants to a single, privately owned company. In areas where Maoism was hardly a force, the forcible eviction of peasants from land for Special Economic Zones leads to circumstances in which Maoists are accepted by those fighting for their rights as a natural ally.

2.4.6 EXERCISE

1. What is communism?
2. Discuss the features of communism in India.
3. Explain in detail the communism scenario in different states of India.

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3.1 PRE-REFORMS INDIAN ECONOMY: GOALS, FEATURES AND STRUCTURES

- Rajnish Saryal

STRUCTURE

3.1.0 OBJECTIVES

After going through this lesson, you will be able to understand:

- Historical background to the India's economic development;

- The importance of the state in economic development of the country immediately after independence, especially through framing of five year plans to achieve specific targeted goals;
- The reasons for the initiation of economic reforms since late 1980s and particularly from early 1990s;
- How some drastic measures were initiated with the onset of LPG.

3.1.1 INTRODUCTION

Economic growth and development is highly important for improvement in the quality of life of the people of any country. Growth means positive change in the level of production and services by a country over a certain period of time. Rate of economic growth and development are closely related. An increasing economic growth implies positive economic development.

Contemporary economists divide the history of India's economic growth into two phases - first 45 years after independence and the two decades of free market economy. When India secured independence from the British empire in 1947, the economy, which had just taken a beating from the second world war, had to once again withstand the repercussions of Indo-Pak partition. India had to deal with large scale refugee camps, poverty, illiteracy, health hazards and many social and economical problems. Keeping these problems in mind, the government headed by Jawaharlal Nehru adopted a socialistic economy for India.

Besides the PSUs and the socio-economic programs, another good thing that happened to India was the opening up of the economy also known as Liberalization, Globalization, and Privatization (LPG) in the 1990s as a result of the World Trade Organization (WTO) agreements. Indian industry, that was used to several years of protectionism, initially protested against LPG underestimating the industry's capability to compete with developed nations. However, in few years, Indian industry proved itself wrong. This is evident from the statistics available to us. The GDP of India has grown from a merge 93.7 billion rupees in 1950 to about 410006.4 billion rupees in 2006. Right from 2003, India is growing at a rate more than 8 per cent. Today, India is recognized for its quality of high technology software services capability throughout the world.

India has good foreign exchange reserves and fiscal deficit is under control. Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) are consistently pumping in several billion dollars into the Indian equity market. Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) is a record high in India after the economy was opened up during 1990s. Hence, it is imperative on our part to understand India's economic development, its growth trajectory in details.

3.1.2 INDIAN ECONOMY: HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The basic foundations on which India embarked upon its path of development since gaining independence in 1947 were the eradication of poverty, ignorance, disease and inequality of opportunity. The objective of India's development strategy has been to establish a socialistic pattern of society through economic growth with self-reliance, social justice and alleviation of poverty. These objectives were to be achieved within a democratic political framework using the mechanism of a mixed economy where both public and private sectors co-exist. India initiated planning for national economic development with the establishment of the Planning Commission. The aim of the First Five Year Plan (1951-56) was to raise domestic savings for growth and to help the economy resurrect itself from colonial rule. The real break with the past in planning came with the Second Five Year Plan (Nehru-Mahalanobis Plan). The industrialization strategy articulated by Professor Mahalanobis placed emphasis on the development of heavy industries and envisaged a dominant role for the public sector in the economy. The entrepreneurial role of the state was evoked to develop the industrial sector. Commanding heights of the economy were entrusted to the public sector. The objectives of industrial policy were: a high growth rate, national self-reliance, reduction of foreign dominance, building up of indigenous capacity, encouraging small scale industry, bringing about balanced regional development, prevention of the concentration of economic power, reduction of income inequalities and control of economy by the State. The planners and policy makers suggested the need for using a wide variety of instruments like state allocation of investment, licensing and other regulatory controls to steer Indian industrial development on a closed economy basis.

The strategy underlying the first three plans assumed that once the growth process gets established, the institutional changes would ensure that benefits of growth trickle

down to the poor. But doubts were raised in the early seventies about the effectiveness of the 'trickle down' approach and its ability to banish poverty. Further, the growth itself generated by the planned approach remained too weak to create adequate surpluses- a prerequisite for the 'trickle down' mechanism to work. Public sector did not live up to the expectations of generating surpluses to accelerate the pace of capital accumulation and help reduce inequality. Agricultural growth remained constrained by perverse institutional conditions. There was unchecked population growth in this period. Though the growth achieved in the first three Five Year Plans was not insignificant, yet it was not sufficient to meet the aims and objectives of development. These brought into view the weakness of economic strategy.

A shift in policy was called for. The Fifth Plan (1974-79) corrected its course by initiating a program emphasizing growth with redistribution. To accelerate the process of production and to align it with contemporary realities, a mild version of economic liberalization was started in the mid 1980s. Three important committees were set up in the early 1980s are: Narsimhan Committee on the shift from physical controls to fiscal controls; Sengupta Committee on the public sector; and the Hussain Committee on trade policy. The result of such thinking was to reorient our economic policies. As a result there was some progress in the process of deregulation during the 1980s. Two kinds of delicensing activity took place. First, thirty two groups of industries were delicensed without any investment limit. Second, in 1988, all industries were exempted from licensing except for a specified negative list of twenty six industries. Entry into the industrial sector was made easier but exit still remained closed and sealed.

Hence, the roots of the liberalization program were started in the late 80's when Rajiv Gandhi was the Prime Minister of India, but the reach and force of the reform program was rather limited. There were political reasons as to why this program could not be enhanced which we talk about later.

3.1.3 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT: THE ROLE OF THE STATE

During 1950s it was believed that the State could play a significant role both in raising the domestic rate of savings and putting it to more productive role. Pre-industrial economies are predominantly rural and agricultural in character. They have land tenure

system in which a substantial part of the surplus over subsistence needs of cultivators and farm labourers gets appropriated by a small class of non-cultivating land owners and intermediaries (especially under the Zamindari system and other feudal forms of tenure) and used for non-essential consumption. Abolition of such exploitative and socially wasteful land tenure systems could release surplus for productive investment. Land reforms combined with taxation of agriculture (either directly or indirectly by influencing prices of agricultural commodities relative to that of manufacturers) are means of exploiting this potential. Both require State intervention.

Apart from its role in maintaining law and order, defining and protecting property rights, enforcement of contract and the like, the State has to take the primary responsibility for providing elementary education, basic health care, safe drinking water and other facilities which are in the nature of basic needs in any civilized society and which, in addition, have beneficial effects on the general level of productivity. The latter effects - which are referred to as external economies - raise questions as to whether the market mechanism can secure the appropriate sharing of costs and benefits. Where externalities (beneficial or otherwise) happen to be significant, direct intervention is necessary and justified.

Projects (e.g., road networks, major irrigation, steel plants, railways) which call for investments on a scale far beyond the capacity of individual investors and/or are in the nature of natural monopolies (e.g., public utilities) from another category where direct involvement of the State is deemed justifiable. In most cases even if the private sector is allowed to operate, the need for effective mechanism to define and enforce standards, norms and efficiency, "fair" rate of return on investment and the like is universally accepted. All of this calls State regulation, though not necessarily direct ownership and operation. During the early phases of Indian planning, given that indigenous industrial entrepreneurs were few in number and had relatively limited resources, the industrialists themselves favoured a large, direct role for the State in many of these activities.

The government can also help development by creating conditions which induce people to save more. Low rate of savings are of course partly a reflection of low level of income. But those who have relatively large incomes may prefer to spend on current

consumption rather than save when there are relatively limited opportunities for investments that offer attractive returns. A relatively stagnant, slow growing economy implies that profitable opportunities for investment are limited. State intervention can expand such opportunities in several ways. Public mobilisation of idle labour for creating productive assets especially roads, irrigation, land improvement, schools, rural hospitals, etc. increase the potential productivity of private resources and thereby create profitable private investment opportunities. Under certain conditions, increased public expenditure can enlarge the scope for profitable investment by creating additional demand for goods and services. Both these effects are likely to be considerably strengthened if there is a coordinated programme of investments for 'balanced development' ensuring that supplies of key inputs and services grow in step with the demand for them. This aspect is particularly important in the case of activities which are closely inter-related. With a coordinated programme, the risk of shortages or excesses of particular goods or services are substantially reduced. Reduced risks induce business to invest more.

Finally, strong State intervention is a logical corollary of the goals of social justice and preventing concentration of power which have been explicitly incorporated among the Directive Principles of State Policy in the Constitution. In addition, the Directive Principles of State Policy lay emphasis on:

1. Securing to all citizens the right to an adequate means of livelihood;
2. Ensuring that distribution of ownership and control of material resources is regulated in a manner which best serves the common good;
3. Preventing the concentration of wealth and means of production; and
4. Protecting children from being forced to work or being exploited on account of economic necessity.

Though these provisions lacked legal sanction, they do reflect the importance attached to 'social justice' and have shaped the scope and nature of State intervention.

Altogether, as the First Plan put it, whether one thinks of the problem of capital formation or of the introduction of new techniques or of the extension of social services

or of the overall realignment of the productive forces and class relationships in society, one inevitability comes to the conclusion that a rapid expansion of the economic and social responsibilities of the State will alone be capable of satisfying the legitimate expectations of the people. This need not involve complete nationalisation of the means of production or elimination of private agencies in agriculture or business and industry. It does however mean a progressive widening of the public sector and a reorientation of the private sector to the needs of a planned economy (First Plan).

3.1.4 THE FAILURE OF INDIAN ECONOMY

While the reasons for adopting a centrally directed strategy of development were understandable against the background of colonial rule, it, however soon became clear that the actual results of this strategy were far below expectations. Instead of showing high growth, high public savings and a high degree of self-reliance, India was actually showing one of the lowest rates of growth in the developing world with a rising public deficit and a periodic balance of payment crises. Between 1950 and 1990, India's growth rate averaged less than 4 per cent per annum and this was at a time when the developing world, including Sub-Saharan Africa and other least developed countries, showed a growth rate of 5.2 % per annum.

An important assumption in the choice of post-independence development strategy was the generation of public savings, which could be used for higher and higher levels of investment. However, this did not happen, and the public sector-instead of being a generator of savings for the community's good- became, over time, a consumer of community's savings. This reversal of roles had become evident by the early seventies, and the process reached its culmination by the early eighties. By then, the government began to borrow not only to meet its own revenue expenditure but also to finance public sector deficits and investments. During 1960-1975, total public sector borrowings averaged 4.4 % of GDP. These increased to 6 % of GDP by 1980-81, and further to 9 % by 1989-90. Thus, the public sector, which was supposed to generate resources for the growth of the rest of the economy, gradually became a net drain on the society as a whole.

Following are some of the reasons for the deterioration of the public sector in India.

1. The legal system in India is such that it provides full protection to the private interests of the so called 'public servant', often at the expense of the public that he or she is supposed to serve. In addition to complete job security, any group of public servants in any public sector organization can go on strike in search of higher wages, promotions and bonuses for themselves, irrespective of the costs and inconvenience to the public. Problems have become worse over time and there is little or no accountability of the public servant to perform the public duty.

2. The 'authority' of governments, at both centre and states, to enforce their decisions has eroded over time. Government can pass orders, for example, for relocation of unauthorized industrial units or other structures, but implementation can be delayed if they run counter to private interests of some (at the expense of the general public interest).

3. The process and procedures for conducting business in government and public service organizations, over time, have become non-functional. There are multiplicities of departments involved in the simplest of decisions, and administrative rules generally concentrate on the process rather than results. There is very little decentralization of decision-making powers, particularly financial powers. Thus, while local authorities have been given significant authority in some states for implementing national programmes, their financial authority is limited.

Hence during early 90's it was imperative for India to correct its clearly faulty developmental process. There have been several reasons put forward for the failure of the developmental path which necessitated the reforms of Manmohan Singh in 1991.

3.1.5 INDIAN ECONOMY IN THE POST REFORM PERIOD

The salient features of new economic policy adopted in the post 1991 period are liberalisation, privatisation and globalisation of the economy (LPG policy).

3.1.5.1 Liberalisation

Simply speaking liberalisation means to free to economy from the controls imposed

by the Govt.Before 1991, Govt. had put many types of controls on Indian economy. These were as follows:

a) Industrial Licensing System

b) Foreign exchange control

c) Price control on goods

d) Import License.

Due to all these controls, the economy became defective. The entrepreneurs were unwilling to establish new industries. Corruption, undue delays and inefficiency rose due to these controls. Rate of economic growth of the economy came down. Economic reforms were introduced to reduce the restrictions imposed on the economy. In this direction the first step was taken to liberalise the Indian economy. The following steps have been taken for liberalisation:

(i) ***Independent determination of interest rate:***

Under the policy of liberalisation interest rate of the banking system will not be determined by RBI rather all Banks are independent to determine the rate of interest.

(ii) ***Increase in the investment limit of the Small Scale Industries:***

Investment limit of the small scale industries has been raised to Rs. 1 crore. So that they can modernize their industry.

(iii) ***Freedom to import capital goods:***

Indian industries will be free to buy machines and raw materials from foreign countries to expand their business.

(iv) ***Freedom to import Technical know-how:***

Under new economic policy the entrepreneurs are free to import technical know-how and develop modernisations. The main aim of the policy is to develop computers and electronics.

(v) ***Freedom for expansion and production to Industries:***

Industries are free to expand and produce under the policy of liberalisation. Previously,

the govt. used to fix the maximum limit of production capacity. No industry could produce beyond that limit. Now the industry can produce freely. Also they can produce anything depending on the demand.

(vi) ***Freedom from Monopolies Act:***

According to Monopolies and Restrictive Trade Practices (MRTP) Act, all those companies having assets worth Rs. 100 crore or more were called MRTP firms and were subjected to several restrictions. Now these firms have not to obtain prior approval of the Govt. for taking investment decision.

(vii) ***Removal of Industrial Licensing and Registration:***

Previously private sector had to obtain license from Govt. for starting a new venture. In this policy private sector has been freed from licensing and other restrictions. However, industries licensing is still necessary for following industries:

(i) Liquor

(ii) Cigarette

(iii) Defence equipment

(iv) Industrial explosives

(v) Drugs

(vi) Hazardous chemicals.

3.1.5.2 Privatisation

Simply speaking, privatisation means permitting the private sector to set up industries which were previously reserved for the public sector. Under this policy many PSU's were sold to private sector. In privatisation, the Govt.'s role is only reduced it does not disappear. Literally speaking, privatisation is the process of involving the private sector-in the ownership of Public Sector Units (PSU's).

The main reason for privatisation was in currency of PSU's are running in losses due to political interference. The managers cannot work independently. Production capacity remained under-utilized. To increase competition and efficiency need of

privatisation was felt.The following steps are taken for privatisation:

1. Sale of shares:

Indian Govt. has been selling shares of PSU's to public and financial institution e.g. Govt. sold shares of MarutiUdyog Ltd. This was the private sector will acquire ownership of these PSU's. The share of private sector has increased from 45% to 55%.

2. Disinvestment in PSU's:

The Govt. has started the process of disinvestment in those PSU's which had been running into loss. It means that Govt. has been selling out these industries to private sector. Govt. has sold enterprises worth Rs. 30,000 crores to the private sector.

3. Minimisation of Public Sector:

Previously Public sector was given the importance with a view to help in industrialisation and removal of poverty. But these PSU's could not able to achieve this objective and policy of contraction of PSU's was followed under new economic reforms. Number of industries reserved for public sector was reduces from 17 to 4.

(a) Transport and railway

(b) Mining of atomic minerals

(c) Atomic energy

(d) Defence equipment

3.1.5.3 Globalisation

Literally speaking Globalisation means to make Global or worldwide, otherwise taking into consideration the whole world. Broadly speaking, Globalisation means the establishment of relations of the economy with world economy in regard to foreign investment, trade, production and financial matters.

Globalisation may be defined as integrating the economy of a country with the economies of other countries under conditions of free-flow of trade and capital and movement of persons across the borders. Economic reforms aim at close association of India economy with world economy. There will be an increased co-operation of

India economy with world economies across the world. Capital and technology will flow from the developed countries of the world towards India. Following steps are taken for Globalisation:

(i) Reduction in tariffs:

Custom duties and tariffs imposed on imports and exports are reduced gradually just to make India economy internationally beneficial.

(ii) Long term Trade Policy:

Forcing trade policy was enforced for longer duration. The main features of the policy are:

(a) Liberal policy

(b) All controls on foreign trade have been removed

(c) Open competition has been encouraged.

(iii) Partial Convertibility:

Partial convertibility can be defined as to sell foreign currency like dollar or pound, for foreign transaction at a price determined by the market. Partial convertibility of Indian rupee was allowed to achieve the objectives of globalisation. This convertibility stood valid for following transaction:

(a) Remittances to meet family expenses

(b) Payment of interest

(c) Import and export of goods and services.

(iv) Increase in Equity Limit of Foreign Investment:

Equity limit of foreign capital investment has been raised from 40% to 100% percent. In 47 high priority industries foreign direct investment (FDI) to the extent of 100% will be allowed without any restriction. In this regard Foreign Exchange Management Act (FEMA) will be enforced.

3.1.6 TRENDS IN THE POST REFORM PERIOD

In the post-reform period there is a rise of net national product in the Indian economy. India's net national product at factor cost (national income) was Rs. 2,55,405 crore in 1950-51. Since then it rose to Rs. 47,66,754 crore in 2012-13. Thus, over a period of 63 years, the trend rate of growth of national income was around 4.7 per cent annum which is by no means spectacular. However, if this growth rate is judged keeping in view the prolonged period of stagnation that preceded independence, it is no small an achievement. Moreover, during the 22 years period (1991-92 to 1912-13), the rate of increase in national income has been 6.4 per cent per annum which is quite satisfactory.

The Indian economy has also shown upward trends in the Per Capita Income of people. In 1950-51 India's per capita income at 2005-05 prices was Rs. 7,144. Since then in a period of 63 years it rose to Rs. 39,168 in 2012-13. Since 1991-92 over a period of twenty two years the rate of increase in per capita income was rather impressive at 4.7 per cent annum. Per capita income rose at the rate of 5.9 per cent per annum in the Tenth Plan and 6.3 per cent per annum in the Eleventh Plan.

There is also an Increase in the Rate of Capital Formation. In the year 1950-51, the rate of capital formation was 8.7 per cent of the GDP. In the year 2013-14, this rate increased to 32.3 per cent of the GDP.

3.1.7 LET US SUM UP

To sum up, although the Indian economy still exhibits some features of an underdeveloped economy, it has registered a not too insignificant increase in the national income and per-capita income during the period of economic planning. In fact, it is now the second fastest growing economies in the world after China. Structurally also the economy has progressed as is evidenced by the growth of the capital goods industries, expansion of infrastructure, performance of the public sector, changes in the financial organization, progress in the service sector (particularly the information technology sector), etc. These factors over the years have created an element of dynamism in the country's economy and one can hopefully say that it would sustain the future.

3.1.8 EXERCISE

1. Discuss the primacy of State in economic development in the pre-reform period in India.
2. Briefly discuss the reasons for the deterioration of the public sector in India.
3. Give the salient features of new economic policy adopted in the post 1991 period.
4. Discuss the significant trends that India experienced in the post reform period.

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3.2 POLITICS OF ECONOMIC REFORMS: IMPACT ON INDUSTRIAL AND SERVICE SECTORS

- Rajnish Saryal

STRUCTURE

3.2.0 OBJECTIVES

After going through this lesson, you will be able to understand:

- Rationale for the economic reforms initiated in India from early 1990s onwards;
- Basic reforms initiated such as macroeconomic reforms, structural reforms, fiscal adjustment and stabilisation, etc.;
- Impact or consequences of the economic reforms particularly with regard to state planning and welfare policies;

3.2.1 INTRODUCTION

Indian economic reforms of 1991 represent a radical shift from the dysfunctional development strategy of the previous four decades. The pre-reform strategy pursued import substituting industrialization, with the state playing the dominant role in the economy. Its foundations were laid prior to independence and attracted wide support across the political spectrum. As such, there was no significant political support for reforms until 1991, when a serious macroeconomic and balance of payments crisis forced a rethinking of the development strategy.

Until the early eighties India's macroeconomic policies were conservative. Current revenues of the Central Government exceeded current expenditures so that there was a surplus available to finance in part the deficit in capital account. In the early eighties, because of lax fiscal policies, current revenue surpluses turned into deficits, so that the government had to borrow at home and abroad, not only to finance its investment, but also its current consumption.

External borrowing was largely on concessional terms from multilateral lending institutions and from bilateral, government to government external aid until the eighties. As the eighties wore on, the government also resorted to borrowing from abroad on commercial terms both from the capital market and non-resident Indians (NRIs). In 1983-84, out of $22.8 billion of public and publicly guaranteed external debt, roughly 17% was owed to private creditors. On the eve of the macroeconomic crisis in 1990-91, external debt had tripled to $69.3 billion, of which around 30% were owed to private creditors. Thus debt to private creditors grew five-fold in seven

years. Since the gross fiscal deficit was too large to be financed entirely by drawing on savings (domestic and external) part of it was monetized.

Although fiscal expansionism was unsustainable, with some liberalization in the form of delicensing of some industries and permitting flexible use of capacity in others through changes in product-mix within the licensed capacity under so-called "broad banding", and relaxation of some import restrictions, it did generate growth. The average annual rate of growth of real GDP in the sixth and seventh plans, which covered the eighties, was 5.5% and 5.8% respectively, much higher than the so-called Hindu rate of growth of 3.5% of the earlier three decades.

By 1990-91, the gross fiscal deficit had grown to about 10% of GDP. If one includes the losses of non-financial public sector enterprises, the consolidated public sector deficit stood at around 10.9% of GDP in 1990-91, of which nearly 4.3 percent of GDP was for interest payments on domestic and external debt. An analysis by Willem Buiter and Urjit Patel showed that unless corrective steps were taken, India faced fiscal insolvency.

The rising fiscal deficits and the steep rise in oil prices during the Gulf crisis of 1990, put pressure on prices and the exchange rate, fuelling expectations about imminent devaluation of the currency. Political instability in 1990, as reflected in two changes of prime ministers within a year, led to a lack of confidence of non-resident Indians (NRIs) in the government's ability to manage the economy. The expectation of a devaluation of the rupee and the fall in confidence, led to the withdrawal of their deposits in Indian banks by NRIs and withdrawal of capital by other external investors. Foreign exchange reserves dwindled to a level that was less than the cost of two weeks' worth of imports. The spectre of default on short-term external loans loomed and led to a downgrading of India's credit rating. The government approached the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund for assistance and also undertook systemic reforms.

The major thrusts of the reforms of 1991 related to measures to address the macroeconomic and balance of payments crisis through fiscal consolidation and limited tax reforms, removal of controls on industrial investment and on imports (other than consumer goods initially), reduction in import tariffs, creation of a less

unfavourable environment for attracting foreign capital, prudent management of movements in the exchange rate while allowing market forces to play a major role in its determination, making the rupee convertible for current account transactions and finally, opening energy and telecommunication sectors for private investment (domestic and foreign).

3.2.2 RATIONAL FOR THE REFORMS

As is well-understood, India faced a macroeconomic crisis that required immediate attention when Prime Minister Rao took office. This is crisis had to be attended to forthwith. But, as in many South American countries in the 1980s, the macroeconomic crisis became also the occasion for undertaking substantial microeconomic (or what are sometimes called "structural") reforms that had been long overdue.

In fact, these structural reforms were necessary because we had evidently failed to generate adequate rates of growth of income and of per capita income. Not merely did India's weak performance in this regard fall below her own expectations as defined in the earlier Plans, it also put India behind many other developing countries, and way behind the super performers in the Far East.

Indeed, it is necessary to appreciate that we had become marginalised in the world economy. Not merely were our growth, and hence all else such as poverty alleviation, unsatisfactory, the multiplying success stories were to found elsewhere. Increasingly, many of our economic policies were also seen as wittingly foolish, impossible to explain as sensible. Among these were our maze of senseless bureaucratic controls on production and investment. Perhaps the most compelling reason for reforms was then to clean the house and restore India eventually to the position of respect in the world economy and polity that she enjoyed during the years of Prime Minister Nehru's stewardship.

3.2.3 MACROECONOMIC REFORMS

By the time the crisis of 1991 occurred, there was considerable support among key figures in and out of government for the view that a thorough going reform was necessary to pull the economy out of the morass it had gotten into.

The reform package outlined by Manmohan Singh in 1991 had three distinct components.

1. Fiscal stabilisation to check the growing fiscal deficit and contain it at a much lower level in such a manner that public investments in basic social and economic infrastructure could be substantially stepped up without generating inflationary pressure;
2. Internal liberalisation to increase competitiveness pressure, leaving enterprises free to make their production and investment decisions in the light of market conditions and enlarging the scope and freedom for private enterprise;
3. Integration with the global economy by removing controls on foreign trade and exchange rates, lowering tariffs and rationalising their structure and substantially relaxing regulations regarding external capital flows and a proactive policy for attracting foreign direct investment. This package, it was claimed, would release powerful growth impulses and lift the economy to a high growth trajectory comparable to that of East Asia. This view prevailed and has come to be accepted by successive government regimes since.

The policy changes brought into force since July 1991 fall broadly into two categories. The first set of measures is part of what is normally known as stabilisation policy. The second set of measures comes under the category of structural reform policies. As Rangarajan rightly points out, while the stabilisation policies were intended to correct the lapses and put the house in order in the short term, the structural reforms policies were intended to accelerate economic growth over the medium term. Structural reform policies cannot succeed unless a degree of stabilisation has been brought about. But stabilisation by itself will not be adequate unless structural reforms are undertaken to avoid the recurrence of the problems faced in the recent period.

3.2.4 STRUCTURAL REFORMS

Structural reforms were broadly in the area of industrial licensing and regulation, foreign trade and investment and the financial sector. There is considerable unanimity among the economists about the need to reduce and, as far as possible, elimination barriers to the entry and expansion of firms. The policy of licensing as has been practised in the past has had no particular merit and, in fact, the Approach Document of the Eighth Plan submitted in May 1990 had also said: "A return to the regime of

direct, indiscriminate and detailed controls in industry is clearly out of question. Past experience has shown that such a control system is not effective in achieving the desired objective. Also the system is widely abused and leads to corruption, delays and inefficiency." In relation to foreign trade policy, the aim was to liberalise the regime with respect to imports and try to bring about a closer link between exports and imports.

As regards import duties the policy has been gradual even though it is accepted by all that the tariff rate in India is perhaps the highest even among the developing countries. A progressive reduction becomes essential in order to avoid a high-cost economy. As regards foreign investment, the new policy measures certainly make a break with the past. In an era in which capital is mobile and moving across borders in a big way and where technology transfer is through investment, we cannot afford to close our country to the flow of foreign investment. In fact, the flow of foreign investment into the country has been meagre. If retained earnings are excluded the flow is almost negligible. The relaxations that we have made in relation to foreign investment are yet very modest as compared with the concessions offered by many developing countries. Many of the fears expressed in this context are in the nature of putting the cart before the horse. We must take action and if it becomes apparent that the flow of foreign investment is excessive and it is undermining the domestic economy.

Finally, in relation to the financial sector it has to be noted that while there has been a considerable widening and deepening of the Indian financial system, many inefficiencies have crept into the system during the past 15 years. An administered interest rate structure had put the whole system in a straight-jacket. The extent of cross-subsidisation in lending rates had undermined the profitability of the banking system. Equally, due to various pressures, the quality of loan assets had also deteriorated. With low profitability, the banking system in particular has not been in a position to provide adequately for loan losses. The capital of the Indian banking system is woefully inadequate. Thus, a reform of the financial system to provide greater autonomy to the institutions both in terms of the interest rate structure and operational matters had become necessary.

3.2.5 FISCAL ADJUSTMENT AND STABILISATION

A key aspect of the structural adjustment programmes is to restrict the fiscal deficits of the governments. According to the Economic Survey 1992-93, in the second half of the 1980s, the fiscal imbalance worsened with average fiscal deficit rising to 8.2 per cent of the GDP compared to 6.3 per cent in the early 1980s. Compared to this, the average fiscal deficit in the post-reform period has been 5.7 per cent of GDP. This suggests that the government has succeeded in managing the fiscal situation quite well.

However, the extent of fiscal deficits tends to mask the methods adopted by the government to balance the budget and its implications.

Firstly, the revenue deficit which represents s the gap between revenue receipts and revenue expenditure has increased in the post-reform period (at 2.9 per cent) on average compared to an average of 2.6 during the second half of 1980s. This implies that the government has been unable to contain its current expenditure. Therefore, fiscal deficit has been contained either by reducing capital investment or by raising capital receipts such as borrowings or disinvestment of public sector holdings of the government. A rising level of revenue deficit has thus been sustained with government borrowings of the scale of the revenue deficit to finance its consumption expenditure rather than producing a revenue surplus to finance capital expenditure in social sectors (and defence) which do not yield a future income flow to the exchequer. Deepak Nayyar among other analysts has argued that such a fiscal regime "is not sustainable in medium-term for it is bound to fuel inflationary pressures or sustain the balance of payments, and thus disrupt the process of growth."

Secondly, fiscal adjustment has been achieved by squeezing public investment rather than government consumption. Capital expenditure as a proportion of total government expenditure has declined steadily from 30.18 per cent in 1990-91. As a proportion of GDP, capital expenditure has come down from 5.5 per cent to 3.6 per cent during the same period.

Finally, it has been shown that the burden of adjustment has been unequal in that it has led to declining expenditures on social sectors such as education, health and poverty alleviation. Panchamukhi and Mahendra Dev have observed a decline in social sector

spending especially during the early post-reform period. Hence, concerns have been raised regarding the levels of human development.

3.2.6 MACROECONOMIC IMPACT OF THE REFORMS

The compound rate of growth for the second half of 1980s was 5.8 per cent per annum. Compared to that for the post-reform period excluding 1991-92 as year of exceptional crisis, the average for 1992-98 comes to 6.5 per cent per annum. The average rate for the 1993-94 to 1998-99 period (based on the new series of GDP) comes to 6.8per cent. Similarly the trend rate for the post reform period estimated at 6.9 per cent is higher than 5.5 per cent applicable for the 1980s. The post-reform growth, therefore, has been at least 1.1 percentage point higher than the average rate achieved during the pre-reform period.

Signs of Industrial Revival: Recent trends and surveys do indicate that the industry may finally be coming out of the recession. Liberalisation is expected to bring efficiency and productivity gains in the industry.

Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) Inflows: Liberalisation of FDI policy regime has been an important aspect of the reforms. Compared to approvals of FDI in 1991, the approvals of FDI inflows since the liberalisation of policy in 1991 reveal a dramatic jump.

While the magnitudes of inflows have recorded impressive growth, they are still at a small level compared to the country's potential. Furthermore, one of the objectives of the current reforms of policies is to remove impediments for export-oriented manufacture in general and at attract MNEs to locate efficiency-seeking FDI in the country. These investments could help India in expanding manufactured exports by using her as an export platform. The majority of recent approvals of FDI, however, aim to exploit India's sizeable and expanding domestic market. The efficiency seeking or export-oriented FDI have yet to start flowing to the country in a considerable manner.

3.2.7 ECONOMIC REFORMS: CONSEQUENCES

The paradigm shift in policy to economic liberalization was a momentous event, celebrated by some and regretted by others. Its consequences reverberated in many areas of the economy and polity, and threw up policy challenges for the leadership.

The consequences of economic reforms were far reaching that no structure of Indian economy remains immune from their impact. The consequences of economic reforms, however, were far more reaching for the India State as liberalization relaxed the State control on the market. Baldev Raj Nayar highlighted the following consequences of economic reforms on the Indian state and its control on market through Planning Commission.

Economic liberalization marked a serious rupture with the earlier regime of economic planning since the hallmark of that regime had been the subordination of the market to the state, whereas the intent of economic reform was to liberate the market from the control of the state. In most eyes, economic planning was precisely the target of economic liberalization - that is, reform aimed to release the market from the grip of economic planning, from the hegemony of the public sector, and from the system of discretionary controls.

In actuality, however, despite the appearance of a sudden rupture, considerable ambivalence and ambiguity surrounded the official turn to liberalization, for the then Prime Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao favoured both economic liberalization and economic planning. Rao undoubtedly wanted removal of unnecessary controls and regulations for the sake of national advance, but he also believed that "the growth and development of the country cannot be left entirely to the market mechanism" since the market basically responded to existing power and not need. Consequently, for him: "Planning is necessary to overcome such limitations of the market mechanism. Planning is essential for macro-economic management, for taking care of the poor and the downtrodden, who are mostly outside the market system and have little asset endowment." Rao therefore, opted for both the market mechanism and planning, asking in effect that the two be dovetailed. The break with the previous economic regime was therefore not as comprehensive and thoroughgoing as it appeared at the time or as its opponents painted it to be.

At its base, economic planning is a political and administrative mechanism of the nation-state to develop a consensus over the essential economic tasks for the centre, the states, and the market for a finite period of time, and it is equally also a site where there three forces intersects and interacts. In the post reform period, four changes in

planning are striking with regard to the relationship between the centre, the state and the market as pointed out the by Baldev Raj Nayer:

3.2.7.1 From Comprehensive Planning to Indicative Planning

Planning in India was comprehensive insofar as it covered the entire economy and its various sectors. With the dismantling of a substantial part of the licensing and control system and the opening up of vast areas of the economy to the private sector after economic liberalization and economic reforms, economic planning could no longer be comprehensive. The post reform period, with the increased empowerment of private sector, planning could no longer be prescriptive for much of that sector. In this fashion, comprehensive planning was transformed into indicative planning, particularly in relation to the private sector.

The change from comprehensive planning to indicative planning was heralded by the Eighth Five Year Plan (1992-1997), which saw itself as marking and facilitating the transition from the former to the later. Declaring that it had redefined the Planning Commission's role, the plan announced that "from a highly centralized planning system, we are gradually moving towards indicative planning".

3.2.7.2 From Planning to Private Sector Expansion

India had a mixed economy before economic liberalization and it continued to have one afterward, but the balance between the public sector and the private sector in the mixed economy has decisively changed. With economic liberalization, the public sector has seen a relative decline in the pace of its expansion and therefore in its presence in economic planning, which was precisely the intent of the shift. But the halt to the relentless expansion of the public sector was profoundly consequential for the Planning Commission since the later had derived its drive and energy earlier from planning for the public sector.

Second, another "important structural change" has been the shift in the share of public investment in total investment. During the Fifth, Sixth and Seventh Five Year Plans - all of which prior to liberalization - actual public investment was around 45 percent. Since then, such investment has been a precipitous fall; it now stands at around 22 percent. Thus, most of the investment, amounting to nearly 80 percent, now comes

from the private sector, indicating a remarkable change from the pre-liberalization period.

In summary, it is patent that there has been a substantial decline in the share of public investment in India's total investment since economic liberalization. That said, however, the continued massive presence of the public sector as an inheritance from the past and, especially, its reinvigoration and expansion after liberalization suggest that India remains a mixed economy in which the state is not only a major economic actor but a dominant one. As such, the public sector continues to perform the same functions for India's economic integration subsequent to liberalization as it did before, primarily knitting India together economically. True, there has been a decline quantitatively in its relative share of the economy, but qualitatively it has improved its efficiency and profitability, in considerable part in response to the challenge of economic liberalization. Given the massive presence of the public sector in the national economy and its ongoing expansion, detailed and prescriptive planning in relation to it would seem to be of continued relevance.

3.2.7.3 From Planning for a Producer State to Planning for Quasi Welfare State

Prior to 1991, economic planning was largely geared toward building a self-reliant socialist economic. As part of that aim, the planners had focused on promoting the role of the state as an entrepreneur and producer. Economic liberalization certainly interrupted the ever-expanding role of the state as producer by removing most constraints on private producers to install and expand capacity. Since the state now relied on the private sector for economic growth, there was thus a decline in the role of the public sector as a producer, though only relatively and not absolutely. Supporters of the socialist regime had feared the shrinking of the state's role as producer - and thus as economic planner - and had therefore opposed liberalization.

Despite the relative diminution of the role of the state as producer, in actual fact, there has been no shrinking of the overall economic role of the state. Indeed, the post-liberalization period has seen an expansion of that role. However, there is an apparent tilt away from the producer state to quasi-welfare state, where the resources at the command of the state have been increasingly directed toward the social sectors, particularly for programs that provide some minimum recompense for economic deprivation.

The relative shift to the welfare state in planning is fundamental to India's economic and social integration. It is indicative of the intent of the political leadership to build an economically and socially cohesive nation-state. At a minimum, such an endeavour requires the alleviation, if not the removal, of the existing sharp social and economic disparities, particularly with respect to those living below the poverty line. Earlier, the meeting of this requirement may have been covered by the notion of 'growth with social justice', but today, in its more intensified form, it is encompassed under the term 'inclusive growth'.

3.2.7.4 From Centralization to Coordination in Planning

The government agencies group industries into four industrial sectors - agriculture (including forestry, fishing, poultry, etc.), mining, manufacturing and services. It can also be classified into three sectors i.e. the primary sector (agriculture, forestry, fishing and mining), the secondary sector (manufacturing) and the tertiary sector (services). Until recently, the service sector was not considered as important as other sectors. However, this view of the service sector changed considerably, particularly in the 1980s, when it was realised that services consist of a large and significant component of modern economies - both industrial and post- industrial. The service sector produces "intangible" goods. Some are well known and already existing viz. government, health, education and some are quite recent viz. communications, information technology, etc. Production of services tends to require relatively less natural capital and more human capital in comparison to agricultural or industrial goods. As a result, the demand has grown for more educated workers prompting countries to invest more in education bestowing an overall benefit to their people. Another benefit of the growing service sector is that by employing fewer natural resources, it puts less pressure on the local, regional and global environment.

In the early economies, the service sector was primarily underdeveloped because governments failed to respond to the growing demand for services. However with the shift to market economies, the service sectors have grown rapidly to meet the rising needs of the emerging private sectors. Growth of services is particularly important because it allows these economies to employ a share of the educated labour force. So, in addition to continued public support for health and education, growth of services

can help countries preserve the stock of human capital that will be crucial to their development.

Everything that grows also changes its structure. Similarly, a growing economy also changes the proportions and interrelations among its basic sectors— agriculture, industry, and services and between other sectors— rural and urban, public and private, domestic- and export-oriented. The structure of an economy can be seen by comparing its share between the three main sectors—agriculture, industry, and services in the country's total output and employment. Though agriculture is a developing economy's most important sector, but as the per capita income rises, agriculture loses its prominence giving way to the rise in the industrial sector and subsequently to the service sector. These two consecutive shifts are called industrialization and post industrialization (or "deindustrialization"). All growing economies are likely to go through these stages, which can be explained by structural changes in consumer demand and in the relative labour productivity of the three main economic sectors.

Industrialization

With the increase in people's income, their demand for food, the main product of agriculture reaches its natural limit, and they begin to demand relatively more industrial goods. As a result industrial output takes over a larger share of GDP than agriculture and employment in industry becomes predominant.

Post Industrialization

As incomes continue to rise, people's need becomes less "material" and they begin to demand more services especially in health, education, entertainment, and many other areas. This makes services more expensive relative to agricultural and industrial goods, further increasing the share of services in GDP. The lower mechanization of services is also one of the reasons why employment in the service sector continues to grow while employment in agriculture and industry declines because of technological progress that increases labour productivity and eliminates jobs. Eventually the service sector replaces the industrial sector as the leading sector of the economy. Services are distinguished from goods in that services are generally personalised and may be provided by an individual or an economic unit and which add to or improve

another person's economic wellbeing. Thus we can say that the service sector is the lifeline for the socio - economic growth of a country. Being the largest and the fastest growing sector globally, it is contributing more to the global output and employing more people than any other sector. By the mid 1990s, services accounted for almost two-thirds of world GDP, up from about half in the 1980s. An efficient service sector is crucial for the growth and competitiveness of a country's economy.

Service Sector in India

The Services Sector constitutes a large part of the Indian economy both in terms of employment potential and its contribution to national income. This sector covers a wide range of activities from the most sophisticated in the field of Information and Communication Technology to simple services pursued by the informal sector workers, for example, vegetable sellers, hawkers, rickshaw pullers, etc. The following broad grouping of activities can be considered to form part of the Services Sector:

Activities Comprising the Service Sector

(a) Trade (b) Hotels and restaurants (c) Transport including tourist assistance activities as well as activities of travel agencies and tour operators (d) Storage and communication (e) Banking and insurance (f) Real estate and ownership of dwellings (g) Business services including accounting; software development; data processing services;business and management consultancy; architectural, engineering and other technical consultancy; advertisement and other business services (h) Public administration and defence (i) Other services including education, medical and health, religious and other community services, legal services, recreation and entertainment services (j) Personal services and activities of extra-territorial organizations and bodies Unlike many developing countries, the Indian economy so far has shown considerable resilience to the global economic crisis by maintaining one of the highest growth rates in the world. The services sector accounted for around 88% of the growth rate in the gross domestic product in 2008–09. The dramatic growth of the services sector in India reflects rapid strides made by the educated professionals. It is heartening to note that India is called the services hub of the world. The traditional perception of India stands changed today from being a land of beggars and snake-charmers of yesteryears to being a land of knowledge workers. The largest contributor to this change is the

information technology enabled services and the business processing and outsourcing services (ITeS & BPO). They have already hit the shores of India with a boom. A number of sector specific measures have been taken up by the government of India to promote IT and ITeS and other sun rise sectors like telecom, organized retail, hospitality, entertainment, and financial service sectors. In the tourism front we are "Incredible India" and in the economic front, it is unmistakably "Opportunity India".

According to Jay Kandampully (2009), the service sector will play an important role in economic growth in developing countries like India. However, he said that as income levels increase, people will be able to afford more services while they will be spending this additional income on quality services such as education, health, travel, etc. On the other hand, small-scale entrepreneurs can step in to meet this need of the people for more and more services with growth in income levels and lifestyle changes while the service sector will provide more employment opportunities than manufacturing sector. Moreover, 80% of the employment opportunities in the U.S. are in the service sector whereas the three factors crucial to success for entrepreneurs in the service industry are customer focus, reliability and consistency of services. During the last two decades it has been observed, in both developed and developing countries, that the service sector has emerged as the main driver of economic growth as compared to the primary and secondary sectors. As per G. Ramakrishna's (2010) reports: apart from growth in service sector; industry, agriculture and the open policies of 1990s also had a positive impact on India's economic growth though the service sector appears to contribute more. The sources of service sector growth in India appear to be income elasticity of demand, open policies and the growth in the other areas like communications, business, banking and insurance and trade services.

Economic liberalization resulted in significant and substantial change in economic planning with regard to the relationship between state and market. It also resulted in change in planning in terms of relationship between centre and states. If a-command-and control relationship between the state and market had prevailed earlier, prior to liberalization, shades of a somewhat similar relationship can be said to have existed between the centre and state in India's polity. This relationship was no entirely a function of the centralized nature of India's federal setup, but was in considerable part a consequence of the particular configuration of the party system at the time.

However, liberalization's impact is double-edged, and not one dimensional. Economic liberalization has two aspects - an internal and an external one. The former revolves around the relaxation or removal of controls by the state over the market. The latter, involving the integration of the national economy with the international economy, carriers benefits, but it also confronts the nation-state with the new challenges by increasing the exposure to the external shocks; individual regions of the nation-state do not remain immune from their destabilizing effects. External shocks necessitate national measures by the centre, both remedial and preventive, to cope with them.

Such measures have implication have implications for the state, particularly in the area of fiscal discipline, just as the conduct of fiscal affairs in the state has implications for the centre's macroeconomic management. In the circumstance, there can be no escape under globalization from cooperation between the centre and states in coping with such challenges. 'Cooperative federalism' is therefore not a choice but a necessity for both centre and state; the centre needs the cooperation of the states in order to cope with challenges from the world economy and the states need the support of the centre to mitigate the malign aspects of such challenges.

3.2.8 EXERCISE

1. To what extent do you think the strategy adopted for development in India in the first four decades a Dysfunctional development strategy? Give valid reasons.
2. Briefly explain the rationale behind the economic reforms initiated beginning from 1991.
3. Discuss about the policy measures of Structural Reform and Stabilization and why were necessary?
4. Briefly discuss the macroeconomic impact of the Reforms.
5. Discuss various consequences of Economic Liberalization in India

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3.3 ECONOMIC REFORMS: IMPACTS ON AGRICULTURE SECTOR

- Rajnish Saryal

STRUCTURE

3.3.0 OBJECTIVES

After going through this lesson, you will be able to understand:

- How economic reforms and policy makers have to negotiate with the India's political context;
- Trends and contradictions between economic reforms and democratic politics as economic reforms leave some as winners and other as losers.

3.3.1 INTRODUCTION

Political theorists have argued that in democracies "special interest groups" hinder reform - so why and how has liberal economic reform in India persisted through the 1990s, especially in the context of Rajiv Gandhi's failed attempts at reform in the late 80s? Against claims that coalitions of vested interests and lobby groups prevent change in democracies, in India the fragmentation of power groups and multiple sources of influence allowed skilful politicians to carry out, what Rob Jenkins call, "reform by stealth".

3.3.2 DEMOCRATIC POLITICS AND LPG REFORMS

The economy of India had undergone significant policy shifts from the beginning of the 1990s. This new model of economic reforms is commonly known as the LPG or Liberalisation, Privatisation and Globalisation model. The primary objective of this model was to make the economy of India the fastest developing economy in the globe with the capabilities that help it match up with the biggest economies of the world.

The chain of reforms that took place with regard to business, manufacturing, and financial services industries targeted at uplifting the economy of the country to a more proficient level. These economic reforms had influenced the overall economic growth of the country in a significant manner.

The new government that came to power in 1991 had to restructure the economy, but the greater need of the hour was to stabilise the economy-reduce inflation and reduce fiscal deficits. The fiscal deficits would have to be substituted by foreign borrowings. But the structural model of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank involved India having to open up its economy and replace public institutions and investments by market determined investment and production decisions. Thus, the early attempts of Rajiv Gandhi to loosen state control over the economy finally found completion in the measures taken by the Narasimha Rao Government and the New Economic Policy (NEP) was adopted.

Once India had embraced the free-market system, economic reforms in the country were supported by a standby credit from the IMF. In 1991-92, this credit supported fiscal retrenchment and a credit squeeze in the economy. The rupee was devalued by 19 per cent. Import controls were instituted. The deflation and import compression

helped improve the balance of payments to a large extent. The Indian economy has taken a definite upward swing since the 1991 reforms, and is now one of the fastest growing economies of the world.

However, globalisation leads to erosion in the state's capacity. The ability of the government in its position as a welfare government is getting reduced to a large extent. The world over, welfare states are giving way to more minimalist states that perform only the core functions of governance such as maintenance of law and order.

Free-market forces have become the prime determinants of economic and social priorities in the country. The appearance of multinational companies on the global economic platform has also led to a reduction in the capacity of governments to take their own decisions.

How favourably is this form of governance suited to the various political parties? This is a crucial question. Soon after assuming power in 1991, the Congress Government, headed by the then Prime Minister, P.V. Narasimha Rao, announced its decision to liberalise, privatise and globalise the Indian economy. The Opposition reacted strongly to this, describing Finance Minister Dr Manmohan Singh's ideas as "far too radical for what the compulsions of democratic politics would allow".

The Indian National Congress, in its Economic Agenda, has claimed that its policies have led to a substantial increase in the growth rate of the country and has brought a major segment of people above the poverty line. The Congress also claims that it was the manner in which the reforms were carried out that made a big difference to their rate of success. However, a major factor in the continuing success of the economic reforms, through the regimes of many different political parties, has been the "directional convergence" of all these parties towards the same economic goals. They all maintained the economy's orientation towards the free market and encouraged globalisation.

It is also true, however, that the parties in the Opposition lived up to their role of "opposing" the government. All parties, when in Opposition, vehemently criticise the policies of the government. Nonetheless, the debates in Parliament and the manifestoes of most major national parties have always argued over the minor details of economic policies, rather than objecting to the idea of reforms as whole.

A comparison of the 2004 election manifestoes of the Bharatiya Janata Party and the Indian National Congress point out, interestingly, that both parties essentially guarantee the same things, though their promises are worded very differently. It is also interesting to note the acrimonious language in which each speaks of the other's failures, while taking the very same steps themselves.

The BJP had opposed the Congress Government's policies of external liberalisation in the early 1990s, but after it came to power (from 1998 to 2004), it itself promoted external liberalisation and announced measures that aimed at attracting private foreign investment on a large scale. The same kind of economic policy is again adopted by the present BJP government though with more vigour.

The Communists have passionately opposed liberalisation policies, and termed them as "abject surrender to the IMF". However, when the United Front government came to power from 1996 to 1998, the Left-wing parties supported them all through their policies regarding financial sector liberalisation, disinvestment, foreign investment etc.

Thus, even though the powers of the state have been reduced to a large extent because of the open economy, economic reforms are still being favoured as compared to the earlier socialist model of development.

The evident reason for this is the fact that ever since the Indian economy was liberalised, we have seen phenomenal growth rates, touching the six-point mark in the 1990s. The inflow of better quality consumer goods satisfied the middle class of society and high foreign exchange stocks were beneficial to investors. Thus, such conditions proved satisfactory to most people. The other possible reason could be the fact that along with the collapse of the USSR, the rupee-rouble trading system collapsed as well. All over the rest of the world, the dollar was essential for carrying on trade. Thus, it was essential to have a large stock of foreign exchange, particularly in terms of dollars, in order to carry on trade relations with other countries.

The fact that all governments that have come to power post-1991 have followed and advocated the free market ideology without any hesitation also requires explanation. One possible explanation is the fact that after the Narasimha Rao Government, all other governments till date have been coalition governments supported by a number of ideologically neutral regional parties.

In a democracy it is the people who decide the rise and fall of a regime. They are the foundation on which the political superstructure is built. Also, the various policies pursued in order to effect the economic reforms, at the end of the day, have affected nobody but the common man. Even if political consensus is prevalent among various political parties, it is essential that the vote-bank of these parties also agree to the policies. "Political consensus", therefore, cannot be complete if the consensus of the common man is not taken into consideration.

The trouble is, what the people want, or even need, may not always be what the government considers before defining its policies. The external debt of the nation, while a major cause of concern for the government, is not something ordinary citizens would ever worry about. Similarly, the internal debt of the government, Budget deficit, balance-of-payments situation, financial losses of public sector enterprises, expansion of money supply etc. are economic issues which are of utmost importance to the government of a country, but themes that are very distant from the lives of the people.

However, there is indeed a connection between the economic necessities of ordinary people and the economic compulsions of the state. A person belonging to the middle class of society would need a television, a refrigerator, a car, an air-conditioner, and so on. Economic liberalisation of the country meant that the government allowed foreign investment in and freer imports of consumer goods.

But even among the people, there are differences in what different classes of people desire from the free market. The choice between better cars or better public transport system, cellphones or ploughs and pumpsets, soft drinks or safe drinking water is the choice that has to be made. Now, the production and supply of a product depend to a large extent on its demand and the price it gets in the market. The rich in society have more purchasing power, and thus, it is the cars and the cellphones and the soft drinks that get produced, not the ploughs and buses. Private investment would also, therefore, be attracted towards sectors producing goods to satisfy the needs of richer consumers.

Consensus for economic reforms, therefore, seems to be coming from political parties and the middle and upper classes. The interests of the poor are hardly being taken into

consideration. Such a state of affairs is sure to have backlashes, particularly for the government in terms of votes secured. An example of such an incident was that of the Chandrababu Naidu Government. As reported in the Hindustan Times, "Though the state had made significant progress on the IT front and the reforms process had been initiated by the Chief Minister, the unrest in the interiors of Andhra Pradesh continued. Farmers were committing suicides and hunger and poverty had made life tougher for the common man."

It is but obvious that technological progress alone cannot help a country progress. Liberalisation, privatisation and globalisation may ensure availability of foreign exchange and high quality consumer goods, but it does not necessarily ensure a decent standard of living for the common man. On the other hand, it may lead to loss of livelihood, if policy implementation is not done with sufficient care and consideration.

3.3.3 TRENDS AND CONTRADICTIONS

It is plausible to suggest that the 1990s have witnessed an accentuation of conflict both in economic interests and in political interests. This is bound to make the integration of economics and politics even more complex.

The retreat of state, which is almost a corollary of economic liberalization, hurts the poor in a material sense. And India is no different. The soft options in fiscal adjustment lead to cuts in public expenditure in social sectors, as the resources allocated for poverty alleviation, health care, education and welfare programmes decrease, or do not increase as much as they should, in real terms, so that there is a squeeze on social consumption. Cuts in subsidies are often at the expense of the poor. So are many of the increases in user charges for public utilities. The story does not end there as the state withdraws from investment in infrastructure. It is the poor who go without.

3.3.3.1 Impact on Labour

As in many other countries, market reform has hurt labour. The losses for labour have been particularly immense in the (more patently neoliberal) post- 1991 period, with a painful withering away of the few, limited privileges it had earlier secured within the constraints of Indian capitalism. Besides a more aggressively pro-capital state,

organized labour has had to contend with an acute contraction of formal employment, which has run down its already-meagre numbers. Labour has also been affected by another trend associated with the 1990s, namely, the rise of religion and caste-based politics. While the growth of identity politics is an outcome of democratic expansion in India, and thus should not be viewed as an inherently negative development, it has served to weaken labour's already-tenuous unity as a political movement.

3.3.3.2 Winners and Losers

Market and globalization have a logic of their own, which leads to inclusion for some and exclusion others or affluence for some and poverty for others. There are some winners. There are many losers. It is perhaps necessary to identify, in broad categories, the winners and the losers. If we think of people, asset-owners, profit earners, rentiers, the educated, the mobile and those with professional managerial, or technical skills are the winners, whereas asset-less, wage-earners, debtors, the uneducated, the immobile and the semiskilled or the unskilled are the losers. Globalization has introduced a new dimension to the exclusion of people from consumption possibilities. Exclusion is no longer simply about the inability to satisfy the most basic human needs. It is much more complicated. For the consumption patterns and the lifestyle of the rich associated with globalization have powerful demonstration effects. People everywhere, even the poor and the excluded, are exposed to these consumption possibility frontiers because the electronic media had spread consumerist message far and wide. This creates expectation and aspirations. But the simple fact of life is that those who do have incomes cannot buy goods and services in the market. Thus when the paradise of consumerism is unrealizable or unattainable, which is the case for the common people, it only creates frustration and or alienation.

3.3.3.3 Political Impact of Economic Reforms

Economic Reforms Process

Since July, 1991 India has taken a number of measures to improve the balance of payments position and to structure the economy. The New Economic Policy 1991 introduced reforms in many areas like- monetary & financial policies, fiscal

& budgetary policies, trade policies and pricing & institutional changes. The salient features of New Economic Policy 1991 are (i) Liberalization of economy (internal and external) (ii) Extending privatization (iii) Redirecting the Resources of Public Sector to Areas where the private sector is unlikely to enter. (iv) Globalization of economy (v) To create market friendly state. Different Studies and Research reports reveal that the macro-economic adjustment programme is remarkable for its relatively painless transition compared with similar programmes elsewhere and a large part of the credit for absorption of these shocks is due to the steady increase in agricultural production. The GATT Agreement signed in 1995 will fundamentally change the global trade picture in agricultural sector. Significance of Agriculture in India Highest Employment Provider: More Indians depend directly or indirectly on agriculture for employment than on any other sector. Addresses Malnutrition and provides food security: Agriculture holds a key to reducing India's malnutrition problem, directly affecting public health and worker productivity.

Augmenting Economic Growth:

Agriculture has the potential to spur India's overall gross domestic product (GDP) growth. Agricultural growth of 4%, would add at least a percentage point to GDP, increase exports and improve India's trade deficit. Economic transformation in developing nations is propelled by increases in agricultural incomes underpinning industrial growth. For example, China's economic growth. India's vital land and water resources, which farmers used for agricultural production, assumes more significance especially in the face of mounting scarcity, environmental degradation, and climate change.

Impact of Economic Reforms Process on Indian Agricultural Sector

Agricultural sector is the mainstay of the rural Indian economy around which socio-economic privileges and deprivations revolve, and any change in its structure is likely to have a corresponding impact on the existing pattern of social equality. No strategy of economic reform can succeed without sustained and broad based agricultural development, which is critical for raising living standards, alleviating

poverty, assuring food security, generating buoyant market for expansion of industry and services, and making substantial contribution to the national economic growth. After independence in the early years of planning, land reform policy was the Strategy of agricultural development and green revolution technology became the leading policy in the late 1960s. The planning for agriculture sector had been an outstanding example of indicative planning in India since output decisions as well as investment decisions are independently taken by millions of farmers who were aimed at achieving the goal of self-sufficiency in food grains. Despite remarkable achievement in this area, there is no room for complacency. Meanwhile in July 1991, economic reforms and structural adjustment programmes were initiated for all the sectors, except agriculture. Economic Reforms affected Indian agriculture indirectly. One of the reasons is that unlike industry, Indian agriculture had never been controlled and regulated. As agriculture is the privately dominated sector, the scope for reforms in this sector was limited. Still then, reforms in all sectors including agricultural sector are needed as government intervenes in agriculture in various forms. Above all before 1991, export market of Indian agricultural commodities had not been explored much. At this present juncture, Indian agriculture cannot remain insulated from the international market in the midst of growing globalization and integration of the Indian economy with the global economy. Of the three sectors of economy in India, the tertiary sector has diversified the fastest, the secondary sector the second fastest, while the primary sector, taken as whole, has scarcely diversified at all. Since agriculture continues to be a tradable sector, this economic liberalization and reform policy has far reaching effects on (i) agricultural exports and imports, (ii) investment in new technologies and on rural infrastructure (iii) patterns of agricultural growth, (iv) agriculture income and employment, (v) agricultural policies and (VI) food security.

Reduction in Commercial Bank credit to agriculture, in lieu of this reforms process and recommendations of Khusrao Committee and Narasingham Committee, might lead to a fall in farm investment and impaired agricultural growth. Infrastructure development requires public expenditure which is getting affected due to the new policies of fiscal compression. Liberalization of agriculture and open market

operations will enhance competition in "resource use" and "marketing of agricultural production", which will force the small and marginal farmers (who constitute 76.3% of total farmers) to resort to "distress sale" and seek for off-farm employment for supplementing income. Here are the types of economic reforms that have been initiated in Indian agriculture. Agricultural reform policies may be related to foreign trade as industrial and trade policies hurt the agricultural sector. There were some restrictions and controls in the form of: (i) Protection of industry leading to unfavorable terms of trade against agriculture, (ii) Export restrictions on agricultural products, and (iii) Massive subsidies for food, fertilizer, irrigation, power, credit, etc. In December 1992, after recognizing the crucial role of agriculture in the Indian economy, a Draft Agricultural Policy Resolution was placed. It seeks to unite agricultural development and research programmes to meet the challenges in Indian agriculture and seeks to arrest the declining trends in capital formation in agriculture and step-up public investment. This policy addresses great importance to the problems of poverty and unemployment by promoting employment generating activities through diversification of agriculture and promotion of agro-based industries. Further, growth of Indian agriculture is hindered due to restrictions in both domestic and export market. These restrictions are not only on the movement of commodities across states but also within the states. Apart this, Indian agriculture is not integrated with the world markets externally. Some domestic restrictions and regulations in the reform era have been removed, while some of them still remain. However, there has been significant trade liberalization. Again, excessive protection earlier given to the manufacturing sector has been greatly reduced. Adoption of market-oriented policies is another policy change. Subsidies on various agricultural inputs have been cut. An epoch-making agricultural reform process has been set in motion in February 2002 to remove licensing and stocking requirements and movement restrictions of agricultural crops, enabling free movement and unrestricted stocking and trading in wheat, rice, coarse grains, edible oils, oilseeds and sugar. It is hoped that this would enable farmers to view the entire country as one single market. Over the years, globalisation process for agriculture has been strengthened through both domestic and foreign trade deregulation and market

orientation. In this connection, we intend to consider some provisions relating to agriculture in the WTO agreements. These are reduction and removal of various trade barriers, increased market access and reduction in aggregate measure of support (AMS). These are the direct provisions relating to agriculture. Indirect provisions relate intellectual property rights and particularly patenting of seeds. The impact of economic reform on agriculture is a mixed one. Indian agriculture has attained near self-sufficiency in food grains. Both green revolution and liberalisation of India's agriculture have favourable effects on overall as well as agricultural GDP. But the structural adjustment programme for agriculture has increased the vulnerability of agriculture. Despite being good monsoons for the entire decade of 1990s, the rate of growth of food grains is unsatisfactory in the both reform era and the green revolution era. There is a significant decline in the Growth rates of food grains and non-food grains production over the period 1991-92 to 1999- 2000 and 2000-01 to 2006-07. Average growth rates of area of food grains and non-food grains between 1994-95 and 2006-07 stood at 0.14 percent and 0.86 percent respectively. This may be attributed to growing slackness in agricultural public investment. Plan outlay on agriculture, rural development, special area programme and irrigation and flood control as a proportion of total plan outlay in 1990s has been less than in 1990-91. In the name of reducing fiscal deficit, plan outlay in agriculture as a proportion of total outlay declined from 20.4 percent in 1991-92 to 9.9 percent in 1997-98.This fall in investment in agriculture affects capital formation adversely. It may be pointed out here that trade liberalisation policies and the fast growing middle class families seem to be the two great causes of diversion of cultivated area from food grains to non-food grains and especially high-value horticulture. This in turn raises the issue of food security. The effort to globalize and marketise Indian agriculture has been a serious setback to the food security of the poor and vulnerable people. The rising costs of inputs (e.g., credit, power, etc.), reduction of subsidies, etc. has squeezed the size of these people Liberalisation of agricultural trade was put forward as an important step towards imparting efficiency to Indian agriculture. These arguments were derived primarily from the standpoint of the neo-classical trade theory, in which free trade and

openness would maximise efficiency and gains. It was argued that India has major comparative advantages in diversifying its cropping pattern in favour of high value, export-oriented crops like fruits, vegetables and flowers. Further, restrictions on private stocks and internal trade should be eliminated, which would help to evolve a national market in agriculture. Terms of trade was biased against agriculture also because the policies of input subsidies and output support prices had suppressed domestic prices. According to one author, subsidies in agriculture were "fiscally unsustainable…inefficient and costly to farmers" (Parikh, 1997, p. 11). In this view, the long term decline of public investment could be reversed by cutting down on subsidies (Gulati and Sharma, 1995). The government should gradually retreat from the functions of procurement of food, as "government cannot manage commodity trade in an efficient way" (Parikh, 1997, p. 12). The large buffer stocks of food should be gradually brought down. In its place, private trade could be relied up on to "import or export…, build or shed inventories, as and when they expect tightness or slack in the domestic market" (Parikh, 1997, p. 12). Parikh also argued that optimal private holding of stocks would be greatly assisted by the "creation of futures markets" for agricultural products. It was also argued that food subsidies should not be universally accessible, and need targeting (Jha and Srinivasan, 2004). The agenda for the liberalisation of the agricultural sector included a few additional components. First, as part of the larger programme of financial liberalisation, the policy on agricultural credit underwent significant changes towards deregulation. Secondly, it was argued that the existing laws on agricultural marketing discriminated against farmers by not allowing them to interact directly with the big buyers. Contract farming was seen to be beneficial to farmers in their efforts at crop diversification. It was argued that land ceilings have to be raised so that rich peasants and agri-business firms can freely lease in land. The underlying belief was that if permitted, land leasing could provide economies of scale by attracting potential investors, including corporate players, into agriculture. Thirdly, though the official policy often reaffirmed its commitment to encourage public agricultural research, private sector research was to be promoted in a large number of sectors. An IPR regime was to be endorsed in agricultural research. Fourthly, the agricultural

extension system was to be reorganised by encouraging more public-private ventures as well as NGO-based extension networks.

Agricultural trade liberalisation

Trade liberalisation in Indian agriculture involved a series of policy measures beginning from the rupee devaluation of 1991. First, the subsidies on the exports of a set of commercial crops, such as tea and coffee, were withdrawn. Secondly, consequent to India's signing of the WTO agreement in 1995, export controls on almost all the crops were gradually phased out. Thirdly, quantitative restrictions on the imports of commodities like wheat and wheat products, rice, pulses and oilseeds were removed from 2000 onwards. In fact, the use of quotas as an instrument of trade policy was discontinued. Fourthly, the trade policy began to use tariffs as the primary instrument of regulation. Right through the late-1990s and 2000s, the tariffs on the imports of most crops significantly declined and were kept much below the bound levels of tariffs set by the WTO agreements.

Indeed, one of the most important arguments put forward in support of trade liberalisation was that it would improve the prospects of an export-led growth process in agriculture. However, this promise has remained unfulfilled, as data till 2007-08 show. Driven by a surge in agricultural imports, the difference between rupee value of farm exports and imports significantly narrowed after the mid-1990s, when the WTO agreement was signed (see Figure 3). The Planning Commission's mid-term appraisal of the Ninth Plan provides a different set of estimates, which again supports our argument (GoI, 2005). The ratio of dollar value of agricultural exports and imports fell from about 5 in 1996-97 to 2.2 in 2003-04. The share of agricultural exports in total merchandise exports declined from 21 per cent in 1996-97 to 12 per cent in 2003-04. The ratio of agricultural exports to the GDP from agriculture also fell from 7.6 per cent in 1995-96 to 6.9 per cent in 2003-04. Exports and imports in agriculture also displayed significant instability in the period after 1995-96. Perhaps the most significant impact that trade liberalisation had on Indian agriculture was the sharp fall in domestic prices of many commodities after the mid-1990s. In the background of greater integration between domestic

and international markets, domestic prices of cotton, tea, coffee, spices and many fruits and vegetables fell following a sharp fall in the corresponding international prices. Due to the absence of quota controls as in the pre-WTO period and the ineffectiveness of low tariffs, the surge in the imports of various crops contributed in different degrees to the decline in their domestic prices. The case of fall in cotton and oilseed prices is a good example in this regard. If less than 2 per cent of the domestic cotton production was imported till the late-1990s, more than 10 per cent of the domestic production was imported in the early-2000s. The import of oilseeds increased from 1 million tonnes in 1995-96 to 4 million tonnes in 1999-2000 and has remained at that level since then.

The increased alignment of domestic and world prices after trade liberalisation also effectively imported the volatility of international prices – formed in highly imperfect and monopolised market environments – into Indian agriculture. The volatility of domestic prices created different types of problems in their internal adjustment; while on the one hand, it increased the uncertainties in cultivation, on the other hand, it also provided misleading price signals to domestic producers of specific crops. Such misleading prices signals have encouraged cropping pattern shifts that are ecologically unsound and economically unviable in the medium term. Thus, the fall in prices of crops, combined with price volatility, significantly eroded the competitiveness of Indian farm exports in the post-WTO period.

Indian Agriculture since WTO

The establishment of World Trade organization (WTO) in 1995 – to make the world trade rule-based, transparent and free – had major implications for India and its agriculture. The Agreement on Agriculture (AOA) with its three broad areas viz., market access, export subsidies and domestic support was expected to improve India's agricultural trade under the new regime of multilateral, transparent and nondiscriminatory trade. Although reduction in subsidies is a major feature under WTO, India had nothing to fear as agricultural subsidy was less than 10 per cent, i.e. the ceiling. India could also earn more profit by exporting agricultural produce vis-à-vis the developed countries (having 30-40 per cent subsidies) as

their cost of agricultural production would go up when they reduce subsidies. Also the subsidy reduction was not applicable to consumer subsidies, thus keeping the Public Distribution System (PDS) and the weaker sections of society unaffected. Further, the reduction in terminal charges on agricultural produce would be advantageous for India because with the removal of tariffs, her exports would have favorable competitive environment. With increased competition the poor people benefit from lower real costs of household consumption and production, what trade economists call the "procompetitive effects" of trade. Initially the reforms did result in improvement in terms of trade for agriculture thanks to decontrol of fertilizers and a substantial hike in minimum support prices given by the government. Indian agriculture witnessed a small acceleration in the growth rate. The country had successfully overcome the food crisis.

Policy Measures need to be done

The crisis in agriculture is a crisis of the country as a whole and so needs urgent attention. Some of the suggestions are listed here.

1 A revamping of the agricultural credit system – a pro-farmer approach is needed.

Cooperative farming with coordination, particularly by small and marginal farmers needs to be revitalized.

There is a need for periodic revision of the procurement prices for farm produce, making those remunerative.

The issues regarding Special Economic Zones should be resolved at the earliest taking into account the genuine interests of the farmers.

Our farmers must adopt modern practices of farming with a pinch of salt, not sailing on credentials of green revolution but implementing sustainable agriculture. One cannot simply sail on the credentials of green revolution. Sustainable agriculture should be the objective.

Eco-friendly techniques must be adopted. Empowerment of farmers with social, cultural and spiritual rejuvenation is required to avoid suicidal cases. The balance

between biological, human and physical capital growth must be maintained.

Indian agricultural has been hit hard during post WTO period (1995 – 2003). The share of agro goods in India's global export has declined during this period. During post WTO period, agricultural subsidies of developed countries have been rather increased. Therefore it is very difficult for India to face global agricultural competitiveness. In this scenario, the global agricultural trade would likely to become oligopolistic. The returns of various crops have declined due to increase in cost of production, slow growth of agricultural productivity, weak marketing mechanism, increase in input intensity and fall of water table. As a result farmers have become highly indebted and are resorting to suicides. In the near future also the total quantum of exports particularly agriculture and light manufacturing goods can not be raised significantly in the global market in the near future because of limited and uncertain domestic export surplus and particularly their inelastic demand at world market.

This process is juxtaposed with a politics of segmentation arising out of conflicts in the political process. For one, religion has become a major factor in political mobilization, reflected primarily in the rise of BharatiyaJanta Party. For another, caste process, reflected not only in dalit mobilization by the BahujanSamaj Party but also in the co-option of backward castes into most political parties., sometimes referred to as the' Mandalization' of politics. At the same time, the decline of national political parties is leading to a regionalization of politics, reflected in the fact that regional parties now rule a large proportion of the states in India. This politics of segmentation means that there is no dominant political party and no stable coalition. The reality is constantly shifting coalitions or unstable governments. Yet there is a functional stability in political democracy because each of these segments has a stake in the system and aspires to a share in state power. It is not about empowerment alone. There are the material spoils of office of office, with or without corruption.

These tensions are compounded by conflicts between the sphere of economics and the realm of politics. The people who are excluded by the economics of markets are included by the politics of democracy. Hence inclusion and exclusion are asymmetrical in politics and economics. The distribution of capabilities is also uneven

in the economic and political spheres. The rich dominate the economy now more than earlier, but the poor have a strong voice in the polity now more than earlier. And there is a mismatch.

It is then, plausible to suggest that this third phase in independent India is characterized by an intensification of conflict in the economy, in the polity, and in the interaction between economy and polity. There can be little doubt that the need for conflict resolution is much greater than ever before. But the task has become more difficult. And the effort is much less.

It is more difficult to mediate in the conflicts between economic development and political democracy for two reasons. First there is no consensus. In the sphere of economics, the old consensus has broken down while a new consensus has not emerged. The oft-stated view that there is a political consensus on economic reforms in India is not quite correct because such a consensus exists only among the rich, the literati, and the influential. It extends to most political leaders, whose discourse on the economy has come to strongly influenced by a virus of liberalization without understanding', although not to the rank and file of most political parties. But it does not have an acceptance at the level of the people, most of who are poor or silent and, thus, unheard. In the realm of politics, too, the old consensus has turned into a new dissent as divisive issues such as caste, religion, language and regionalism have multiplied. Second, a short-termism has replaced the long-term perspective of yesteryears. In the sphere of economics, the preoccupation with stabilization in the short term and adjustment or reform in the medium term, which is natural for the IMF and the World Bank respectively, leads to confusion between tactics and strategies or means and ends in the mind of governments. In the realm of politics, where governments are no longer sure about their tenure, a visible myopia has crept in. in this milieu, political parties and political leaders can think only about the next month or the next year or, at most, the next election. The next quinquennium or the next decades simply irrelevant. Such short-termism leads to a neglect of long-term development objective. There are two reasons for this. First, such objectives cannot be defined in terms of performance criterion in the sphere of economics laid down by the multilateral financial institutions. Second, such objectives do not bring tangible gains in the realm of politics which can be exploited by the governments within one

term as they seek to renew their mandate in the next election. This short-termism may also lead to 'hysteresis' - the effect of short term policies or actions which persists over time to influence outcomes in the long term- in both the economy and the polity. The past influences the present, just as the present shapes the future, if economic policies or political actions have consequences which are irreversible. After a time lag.

The effort to mediate in conflicts between economic development and political democracy is also much less. Curiously enough, the willingness and the ability of the state to mediate is not quite here. Its willingness to mediate is dampened by the use of money power to influence, or to use, the state apparatus for particular purposes. In most democracies, governments can be sectarian in their actions as they seek to protect to promote the interests of classes, or groups, whom they represent. The apparatus of governments is often used deliberately to promote the interests of the ruling elite. This does not surprise anyone. In India, however, the governmental system is increasingly being sued to further, sometime crudely and openly, the interests of powerful individuals through corruption and nepotism. In this milieu, people with money lobby hard and exercise influence in the pursuit of their interests. But people without money do not have the voice or resources to support their cause. Thus, the desire of the state to mediate surfaces only in the election season. Its ability to mediate is constrained by the spread markets and the march of globalization. This process is not only eroding the autonomy of the nation-state in the international context, but is also creating a situation where the political process is losing control over the economy in the national context. The credibility of the state as an institution has eroded and the government, it appears, is abdicating its role in reconciling economic and political democracy.

3.3.4 LET US SUM UP

In sum, the economics of liberalization and the politics of empowerment represent an unstable, if not volatile mix. Ultimately, empowerment is a more potent force than liberalization. At present, however, it would seem that these forces are moving the economy and polity, for the first time in independent India, in opposite directions, without any concerted attempt at a reconciliation or a mediation. This is fraught with

risk. And, if the state cannot perform this role, the mediation would have to come through citizens and civil societies.

3.3.5 EXERCISE

1. Write a note on how Economic reforms negotiated with India's democratic politics.
2. Bring out the trends and contradictions involved in the interplay of Democratic Politics and Economic Reforms.

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3.4 IMPACT ON MARGINAL GROUP: AGRARIAN DISTRESS, ORGANIZED AND UNORGANIZED LABOUR

- Rajnish Saryal

STRUCTURE

3.4.0 OBJECTIVES

After going through this lesson, you will be able to:

- Debate the impact of economic reforms, the advantages and disadvantages, how the reforms leave some groups as winners and some as losers;
- Understand the impact of economic reforms marginal groups such as dalits, Muslims, tribals and women;
- Comprehend how elimination of subsidies, reduction in welfare spending, removing trade restrictions are increasingly exposing the marginal sections more to vulnerabilities.

3.4.1 INTRODUCTION

Paradoxical judgments are intrinsic to the idea of development. India, the second fastest growing economy in the world, is also known for the vast majority of people living in acute poverty and impoverishment. Despite the fact that India's neo-liberal economy is backed by experts in global economy and its model of development has indeed reduced economic inequalities, India is still home to more poor people than the whole of Sub-Saharan Africa (455 Million in 2005). However, poverty measurements are not the sole criterion to understand the hurdles which restrict inclusive development. On most of the other social indicators, multiple forms of inequalities still persist. For example, more than one third of women are anemic in India, 42 per cent of children are malnourished and the share of Scheduled Castes/Scheduled Tribes and Religious Minorities in formal and informal sector employments is very low. In such extreme contrast of prevailing living standards in India, this lesson attempt to throw light on impact of liberalization on marginal communities of Indian society.

3.4.2 LIBERALIZATION: IMPACT ON MARGINAL GROUPS

In the 1990s India officially entered the competitive world of emerging economies, opening its borders for the developed countries to improve its economic conditions. The supporters of market economy argued that with the reduction of trade barriers between countries, a large influx of facilities related to industrial production, capital flow through foreign direct investments (FDI), and technological support would modernise industry and create millions of jobs across the sectors of the economy.

The new wave of economic restructuring under the New Economic Policy (NEP) was expected to have a tremendous impact on improving the economic conditions of all citizens, irrespective of gender, regional, social and religious differences. The pro-development literature promises that with the rapid enhancement of capital and swift industrialisation, economic inequalities will be reduced substantially.

With such economic growth, it was thought that the reduction of poverty would be inevitable. Such positive assumptions drew the policy makers to adopt aggressive neo-liberal measures in key sectors of the economy. The state-controlled economic sectors were opened up to private holdings, regulations and welfare measures were reduced considerably and labour laws and policies were restructured, mostly in favour of the market economy and to enhance the productive capacities of the respective sectors.

Globalization-Liberalisation and economic development become synonymous terms, relegating other indicators of inclusive growth (such as agricultural production, literacy, health, education, and children welfare) to supplement the market economy. Rather than the 'people-centric' framework, the new passion for achieving targeted Gross Domestic Product (GDP), economic efficiency and increase in production capacities became the prime assessments of growing economy. There is a merit in the positive contemplation of global market economy, as the Planning Commission data shows that there has been a clear reduction in poverty over the last two decades. It has been consistently argued by the promoters of Globalisation that the actual numbers of people living below the poverty line has decreased (from 54.9 percent in 1973-74 to 26.1 percent in 1999-2000), but these figures are contested and many on the left have argued that the reduction in poverty has been shown by simply replacing the conventional measurements used to study poverty. For example, the 2400 calorie intake-measurement was reduced to 1868 in the 'indirect poverty' method adopted by the Planning Commission.

3.4.2.1 Impact on Agriculture and Rural Poor

In a similar vein to the utopia created by the promoters of state-based welfare economy, the pro-liberalisation camp campaigned for its politics with the rhetoric of reducing inequalities. Whilst the growth story is impressive in the service sector, and in particular in Information Technology, the rural agricultural economy has shown

negative growth and unemployment among the rural poor. The causes of this negative development within the agricultural sector stem from the deflationary policies adopted under WTO dictates and the withdrawal of subsidies to farmers (in the procurement of seeds, fertilizers, pesticides, electric power and bank credits), with the result that farmers have been unable to compete globally amid market price volatility. The seminal rise of cases of starvation and malnutrition in Orissa, the growing numbers of cases of suicide among farmers in Maharashtra and Andhra Pradesh and even Punjab and the prolonged agitations of farmers in West Bengal (Nandigram and Singur) and Uttar Pradesh (UP) (Bhatta-Parasol) for land rights depicts that the agricultural sector is facing severe crises in the postreform era.

The biggest input for farmers is seeds. Before liberalization, farmers across the country had access to seeds from state government institutions and the seed market was well regulated, with liberalization India's seed market opens to global agribusiness. This hit farmers and unregulated market, seed prices shot up and fake seeds made appearance in a big way. This also happens in fertilizers and pesticide market and it effects agriculture in India. The effects of trade liberalization on selected commodities namely rice, maize, rapeseed-mustard and chickpea at the national level and farm level. Liberalization and its resulted government policies had direct and indirect effects upon agriculture. The most significant related to the efforts at reducing subsidies which affected both agricultural producers and consumers, and the reduction of public expenditure which would have benefited cultivation. Thus, both food and fertilizer subsidies were sought to be reduced over this period. However, both of these strategies, which involved raising the prices for consumers of both food and 10 fertilizers, had undesirable and even counter-productive effects, leading to the paradoxical results of reducing consumption and simultaneously increasing subsidies.

In particular, fiscal policies of reducing expenditure on certain areas especially rural spending, trade liberalization, financial liberalization and privatization of important areas of economic activity and service provision had adverse impact on cultivation and rural living conditions. The neo-liberal economic reform strategy involved the following measures which specifically affected the rural areas:

- Actual declines in Central government revenue expenditure on rural development, cuts in particular subsidies such as on fertilizer in real terms, and an the overall decline in per capita government expenditure on rural areas.
- Reduction in public investment in agriculture, including in research and extension.
- Very substantial declines in public infrastructure and energy investments that affect the rural areas, including in irrigation.
- Reduced spread and rising prices of the public distribution system for food. This had a substantial adverse effect on rural household food consumption in most parts of the country.
- Financial liberalization measures, including redefining priority sector lending by banks, which effectively reduced the availability of rural credit, and thus made farm investment more expensive and more difficult, especially for smaller farmers.
- Liberalization and removal of restrictions on internal trade in agricultural commodities, across states within India.
- Liberalization of external trade, first through lifting restrictions on exports of agricultural goods, and then by shifting from quantitative restrictions to tariffs on imports of agricultural commodities. A range of primary imports was decreases and thrown open to private agents. Import tariffs were very substantially lowered over the decade. Exports of important cultivated items, including wheat and rice, were freed from controls and subsequent measures were directed towards promoting the exports of raw and processed agricultural goods.

3.4.2.2 Impact on Muslims

The non-agricultural economy (the growing service sector) mostly benefits the urban middle class groups with access to good education facilities and other resources. In contrast, Dalits, women and other marginalized groups face discrimination in employment and wage payments on the pretext of merit, efficiency and suitability. A

field survey report by Action Aid demonstrated that the labour market usually functions under the aegis of traditionally dominated class/caste groups and elsewhere nepotism, conventional networks, and kinship play a detrimental role. The Dalits, who are otherwise regarded as an 'outsider' to the idea of entrepreneurship are the unwelcomed entrants in the domain of market economy and thus face discrimination, including the practice of untouchability. The market is not 'rational-secular' in an ideal sense but follows these unethical modes to achieve its particular objectives. The state sponsored Sachar Commission Report (2006) thus argued that the benefits of the market (ATM machines, Access to Bank credits, Educational Institutes, Hospitals, etc.) remained out of the reach of Muslim communities that face identical discrimination to Dalits in the labour market. Whereas Dalits and Muslims are substantively excluded from the profits of the global economy, there is a serious attempt to 'include' the Tribals in the course of development without their own consent as it allows the capitalist market to tap the rich minerals mostly located in the areas where tribals are living. The tribals of Orissa and Chhattisgarh have taken to radical means by adopting the Maoist-Naxalite path and have persistently shown opposition to the mega development plans proposed by the state and multinational corporations.

3.4.2.3 Growing Regional Disparities

The market economy further practices the conventional mode of economy and hardly disturbs the status quo of inequalities. The well-off classes and groups have benefitted most from the economic reforms. Globalization as a new world economic order imposed on the world with a promise of more prosperity, progress and freedom for all. On the contrary, evidences show that and a significant number of people have entered into the category of middle class. However, it is difficult to locate whether the classes which were poor, marginalised and oppressed in the past have actually been empowered by the NEP. In addition, the market economy has stratified the status quo in other spheres. Development at the regional level indicates that some of the states were conventionally prioritised over others which resulted in a strict dichotomous relationship between the developed states (Maharashtra, Gujarat, Karnataka and Kerala) and backward states (Orissa, Bihar, Uttar Pradesh (UP) and Madhya Pradesh (MP)); the latter states have shown negative growth rate even in the post liberalisation period. The market economy has not reduced the gap between these states. This regional

disparity is further sanctified by multiple forms of inequalities among different social groups at the national and the state levels. The numbers of illiterate women in the backward regions are more, and their share in education and employment is dismal in comparison to the developed states. The poor tribal population in Orissa are more vulnerable than that of Rajasthan. Urban poverty amongst Muslims is very high in comparison to other social groups in some states including West Bengal (27 percent), UP (44 percent) and Maharashtra (49 percent). The Other Backward Classes (OBCs) amongst the Muslims are also more illiterate (61.9 percent literacy in comparison to the national average of 65.7 percent amongst the Hindu OBCs) and poorer (35 percent of the Muslim population is below poverty line compared to the 28 percent at the national average).

At the macro level, the post-liberalisation economic policies have demonstrated striking improvements in the majority of social development indicators. In the first decade of economic liberalisation experts witnessed the decline of low income households from 65 percent in 1984 to a mere 36 percent in 1999-2000, a rise in the literacy rate to 65.1 percent and sudden growth in the service sector employment owing to the Information Technology Revolution. However, the impact on the removal of obstacles to social and economic mobility for the most deprived groups has been less impressive. The most deprived social groups still suffer under extreme conditions of poverty (rural poverty amongst Dalits remained high with 36 percent compared with non-Dalits with 21 percent); ill health (infant mortality is highest amongst the rural poor Dalits at 90 per 1000 live births); and poor education (the literacy rate among the Dalits is the lowest in India at 52.2 percent).

The theory that the market economy equalises and frees citizens to pursue their economic betterment is not borne out by actual facts in the context of India. The constraints of poverty, gender discrimination, regional inequality, caste oppression and communal stereotypes play a decisive role in excluding sections of society from the spheres of economy. The inaccessibility of the market kept these communities away from the profits of NEP. Inequalities among citizens persist because market practices are determined by unequal and unfair treatment of the people. As a result, wider democratic assertions of affected people have risen significantly in the last decade.

3.4.3 LIBERALIZATION AND SOCIAL PROVISIONING

These reforms led to a decrease in government spending on health programs which have had far reaching consequences for the health and well-being of poor. Poor, it has been argued are especially disadvantaged and have been most affected by structural adjustment programs. Government expenditure on public health care has declined sharply since the beginning of `reforms' and structural adjustment in 1991. The public health investment in the country over the years has been comparatively low, and as a percentage of GDP has declined from 1.3 percent in 1990 to 0.9 percent in 1999. The aggregate expenditure in the Health sector is 5.2 percent of the GDP. Out of this, about 17 % of the aggregate expenditure is public health spending, the balance being out of-pocket expenditure.

This has direct impact on the marginalized groups in India. Extreme inequality and disparities exist across India in terms of access to health care. This highly inequitable health system has denied quality health care to all those who cannot afford it. Privatization has also been extended enormously in health services. Like education health also becomes commodities. Government expenditure is continuously reducing so as to bring the deficits to the controllable level and at the same time, the private players are encouraging to enter and establish their control into these socially important areas. The growing commercialization of health has kept the weaker section out of this vital social service, because the cost of private health services is much more expensive than the public health services. So this private health care is not affordable and accessible to the vast majority of the weaker sections.

The privatization of health care has accelerated since 1991 with the unprecedented expansion of the private medical sector, the entry of private insurance in health care and the introduction of payment for medical services or "user fees" in the government sector. Level of public expenditure in the health sector is the lowest in the world. Of the aggregate expenditure on health 83% is allocated to private spending, while 43% of the poor depend on public sector hospitals for care. Privatization & deregulation have resulted in rising drug prices. New National Health Policy 2002 legitimizes the ongoing privatization of health. The Indian health system is the most privatized health system in the world as per the reports of Citizens Report on Governance and Development 2003, Social Watch India.

3.4.4 GROWING INEQUALITY AND DISCRIMINATION

In this section, we shall study the impact of Globalization-Liberalization particularly on Dalits, Tribal groups and Women who are living on the margins of Indian society. The idea that liberal market reforms will bring prosperity to the majority of citizens has always been a highly contested judgment. A conscious exclusion of categories, mainly of the Dalits, Tribal groups and women, has become an integral part of the contemporary process of development. These excluded categories are commonly termed as marginalized groups of the society. The list, however, is nor exhaustive.

3.4.4.1 Impact on Dalits

After the introduction of free market economy in the early 90's the welfare stance of the Indian State have become gradually ineffective. One of the main tasks of this new paradigm is to force the roll back process of the welfare state and to allow the market forces to operate in an unrestrained manner. The pro-market stance of globalization has led to the widening of the gap between the privileged few and the large mass of the marginalized sections of the society. Globalization further led to marginalization of the already marginalized sections of the society. In other words, globalization process severely affects the dalits and other underprivileged sections that are deprived of jobs, and face enormous difficulties in accessing education, employment, housing, food, healthcare etc. Thus the way globalization affects the lives of dalits differs significantly from that of the non-dalits.

The incidence of poverty among the dalits is also much higher in comparison with all India average. Poverty is a sum total of all deprivations. According to 61st round NSSO (National SampleSurvey Organisation) data, 22.7 per cent of India's population was poor in 2004-05, the SCs and STs are the most poor with a Head Count Ratio (HCR) of 35 per cent. Despite various poverty alleviation programmes and special strategies for their economic development poverty among the dalits is not reducing in a significant manner. In spite of government statistical jugglery, a large number of Indians still live under the poverty line. The high dependence of casual labour, with relatively lower earnings coupled with inadequate exposure of education among dalits induced a high degree of deprivation and poverty among them. In fact increased poverty is an unfolding reality among dalits. Globalization

is leading to mass pauperization and rapidly widening socio-economic inequalities. The free market ethos unleashed by reforms has contributed significantly to the price rise. It is clear from the day to day experiences that the price of the primary articles of consumption has increased enormously. All the studies on the economic reforms are unanimous in their conclusion that the reforms have significantly contributed inflation. It is factually true that inflation hits the poorest the hardest. Because most of their earnings spent on food, shelter and clothing. So any rise in prices has had a direct negative effect on dalits' level of consumption. C.P. Chandrasekhar and Joyati Ghosh rightly pointed out that "….the trend in aggregate poverty incidence …was strongly related to neo-liberal economic policies and consequent macro-economic processes of the 1990s, these policies involved neglect of rural investment and of food security system, resulting in slow agricultural growth, reduced employment opportunities in rural areas, and high food prices. All these would typically be likely to be associated with persistent or even increasing poverty".

The Dalits, who comprise almost 17 percent of the national population, have a negligible presence in the formal economy. They consistently suffer discrimination with respect to land, labour and capital. The greater dependency of Dalits on agriculture for their livelihood - mainly as landless labourers with low wage rates - has created the condition described as 'chronic poverty'. Such discriminatory disparities remain also in the educational sectors. Even though there is a significant rise in the literacy rate among the Dalits, their participation in elementary and higher education has lagged behind significantly in comparison with the non-Dalit counterparts. Market practices further subtle discrimination in allocating resources, employment, loans and other facilities to this particular group. Owing to such conditions, Dalit political and pressure groups have started demanding newer forms of Affirmative Action Policies in the service sector and the extension of reservation policy in private industry.

Globalization process has directly hit the traditional occupations of dalits. It is a well-known fact that the dalits have historically specialized in the production of all kinds of artistic tools and equipments for household and agricultural production. But globalization is adversely impacting their traditional occupations now. Their livelihood and specialized occupation is now being replaced by global capitalistic productions. Easy availability of mass production goods from latest technology based industries at cheap prices has proved to be a big challenge for their traditional occupation.

The most disastrous effects of globalization policy can be seen in the deep agrarian crisis that had afflicted the rural sector. The vast majority of dalits live in rural areas. Some 89 per cent of them still live in villages. More than 50 per cent of them are landless labourers, 26 per cent are marginal farmers. Only a small number of them are cultivators with marginal holdings. Large-scale landlessness on the part of the dalits led to their dependence on the upper caste land owning communities. The land instead of giving it to the landless labours is being given away to the big industries in the name of mega developmental projects or 'SEZ' (Special Economic Zone). In fact, as an integral part of globalization - liberalization policies the marginal people have lost their right over land. Statistics also reveals that the incidence of landlessness has been increasing among dalits during the last two decades of globalization. The acquisition of the land from the people has not only created discontents but also conflicts and violence among the farmers which has seen in the different parts of India. Due to such projects rural employment has sharply fallen and this has hit dalits, adivasis (Tribals) and women the most.

Moreover, the mechanization of agriculture has further compounded the rural employment situation. It is a well-known fact that the globalization leads to capital-intensive mode of production and it requires a greater proportion of highly skilled workers to manage automated production process. So a large number of migrations of unskilled labour to the agricultural sector have led to lower wages for agricultural workers as a whole.

Since after the adoption of New Economic Policy, India has made a significant progress in different areas of technology, infrastructure, machinery, science, space and even in nuclear research. Much of this progress has meant little to dalits; most continue to live without very basic amenities of electricity, sanitation and safe drinking water. According to Madras Institute for Development Studies, only 31 per cent of dalit households are equipped with electricity, as compared to 61 per cent non-dalit households. Only 10 per cent dalit households have sanitation facilities as compared to 27 per cent of non-dalit households.

3.4.4.2 Impact on Tribal Groups

The tribal groups are geographically excluded communities which remain mostly dependent upon the natural resources available in the forests. Under the aegis of

private capital and influenced by the new mantra of development, multiple acres of forest land have been acquired from them and distributed among the industrial classes for various developmental projects, without firmly addressing the basic question of compensation and rehabilitation. World Bank funded Mega-development projects have entailed large-scale displacement of the natives, including the Big Dam Projects at Narmada River valley and Hirakund. Apart from forced displacement, there is danger of ecological destruction (the iron-ore mining has the capacity to contaminate the ground water and natural water falls of the forest, making it unsafe for drinking) as observed in the case of the current Posco project in Orissa. Such developmental models have a capacity to drive many communities to destitution and disempowerment, as shown through the unlawful occupation by the Mining Mafia of mineral and resource-rich land in Andhra Pradesh and Jharkhand. The tribal groups of these areas are mobilised by ultra-left forces (Naxals-Maoists) and have on occasions resorted to violent means to oppose multinational companies from seeking to exert control over natural resources.

In the neo-liberal economy, the rural poor and the tribal communities are at the bottom of the inequality scale. The promoters of development are interested in the controlled utilisation of natural resources (land, raw materials, labour) but show little interest in locating the possibilities by which the affected sections can be integrated into their heightened economic endeavour. In most cases, development projects ignored the essential needs of the poor, misunderstand their socio-economic conditions and hardly bother about the spiritual-cultural bonding that these people attach to the natural resources with themselves. The liberal political project is celebrated by the marginalised and poor as it provides them respectable space to raise their voices against any form of injustice. In India, the growing people's movement against NEP are the responses of the underprivileged sections that were excluded from the process of development.

3.4.4.3 Impact on Women

It was originally contended that with increasing trade and foreign direct investment (FDI), the overall status of women in the developing world would improve. Globalization would be a tool to better women's conditions by providing them with

increased economic freedoms and an enhanced status in society. So much so that different sectors of economy have different experiences about the impact of those reforms. The policies for globalization adopted in India definitely have significant implications for women's health in addition to their impact on the overall economic growth of the country. But the results of unfettered operation of market forces has not been equitable, especially in India, where some groups are likely to be subjected to disadvantage as a result of globalization. Women constitute one such vulnerable group and globalization has both positive and negative effects on their status.

The economic impact of globalization has changed the labour market dynamics and is believed to have played an important role in the upward trend in female employment in waged work. The labour force participation rate of women is 22.7%, less than half of the men's rate of 51.6%. FEAR (Female Employment Activity Rates) for India is 42 per cent (Human Development Report 2001). The female to male ratio of participation in economic activity (F/M) is less than 100 in all countries except China while for India the F/M ratio is 50. Much of the increase in employment arising from globalization has resulted in the movement of female labour from the household and subsistence (agriculture) sector, to paid employment. The feminization of the manufacturing sector is a main feature in India while it is the services sector in all the South Asian countries. Positive effects include increased employment opportunities for women in non-traditional sectors, thus enabling them to earn and control income. This is potentially empowering and contributing in enhancing women's capacity to negotiate their role and status within the household and society. Increase in women's employment is thought to modify the balance of power within the household. By bringing home wage income, women attain a greater say in household expenditure decisions with respect to both consumption and human capital investment. The effects of globalization have been increased labour market flexibility, casualization and informalization of employment & the proliferation of "contingent" jobs which are typically short-hired & unskilled. The feminization of labour occurring as a part of the process of flexiblization of labour has increasingly pushed women out of the core workforce and into marginalized group of workers, consisting of part-time, temporary, casual, and sub-contracted labour. In India the process of informalization of the labour force has taken place broadly in two ways. First, work is pushed out

of the factories and formal work situations into small workshops (sweatshops), the homes and informal situations. Secondly, the workers who remain in the factories or in formal work situations are governed by looser contracts and get fewer social security benefits. New working conditions which include sub contraction, piece-rating, flexible work scheduling and part timing has marginalized them. As a result, they are not recognized as regular workers & their basic rights not guaranteed. According to Vandana Shiva, "Globalization along with the support of organizations such as the World Bank and International Monetary Fund has created slave wages. These wages are not necessarily the result of "unjust" societies, but of the fact that global trade devalues the worth of people's lives and work". While globalization has brought jobs to rural areas where there was previously no employment, these jobs seem to be wolves in sheep's clothing. The work available to women is almost always poorly paid, mentally and physically unhealthy, demeaning, or insecure".

Trade liberalization has also led to loss of employment in the formal sector in India, often with gender differentiated results. The increased competition from low-cost Asian producers has had the effect of displacing workers in labour intensive industries. If export expansion has a positive effect on women's employment in the informal sector the opposite may also be true for import expansion. The direct effects from import expansion tend to be negative. Cheaper imports displace women's employment disproportionately in the informal sector. The poverty and destitution of many families has increased especially among women and children. The declining income and inflation have combined to make it difficult for many households to maintain adequate nutritional levels.

3.4.5 LET US SUM UP

In the 1990s India officially entered the competitive world of emerging economies, opening its borders for the developed countries to improve its economic conditions. The supporters of market economy argued that with the reduction of trade barriers between countries, a large infl ux of facilities related to industrial production, capital flow through foreign direct investments (FDI), and technological support would modernise industry and create millions of jobs across the sectors of the economy. The new wave of economic restructuring under the New Economic Policy (NEP) was

expected to have a tremendous impact on improving the economic conditions of all Indian citizens, irrespective of gender, regional, social and religious differences. The pro-development literature promises that with the rapid enhancement of capital and swift industrialisation, economic inequalities will be reduced substantially.

Contrary to this, the period of liberalisation has produced two economic systems: one represented by the urban economy, based on the service sector and mainly profitable to the smaller but dominant section of the educated middle classes. On the other side is the majority (rural poor, socially deprived groups, tribals, women and Muslims) who have little hope that their situation will be empowered under the changed conditions.

The social and political marginalisation of these groups from the public spaces in general and from the institutions of influence (including the economy) in particular has made them the most vulnerable communities. Their identities are prejudiced and condemned as 'others' in the social life. Moreover, the liberal economy is itself not free from the influence of social and political maladies. In the sphere of the open economy, the participant is not treated as an aspired individual with rational attributes, talent and free choices, but his or her role and calibre is largely determined by his or her possessed social position and status. In this respect, the Dalits, Muslims and tribal groups' social exclusion presages their disadvantaged status in the sphere of modern economy.

3.4.6 EXERCISE

1. Discuss the scenario of Development in India as a result of Liberalization-Globalization.
2. Examine the impact of Globalization-Liberalization particularly on Dalits, Tribal groups and Women in Detail.

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4.1 TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY: LOKPAL, LOKAYUKT AND RIGHT TO INFORMATION (RTI)

- Mamta Sharma

STRUCTURE

4.1.0 OBJECTIVES

After going through this lesson, you will be able to understand;

- Know the importance of democratic governance in India and the challenges faced by Indian government for the establishment of democratic governance institutions.
- Understand the process of establishment of democratic governance through Lokpal, Lokayukta and RTI.

- Know the functioning of Lokpal, Lokayukta and RTI in India for democratic and accountable governance.

4.1.1 INTRODUCTION

Access to official information held by public authorities is the touchstone of a strong and efficient representative democracy. By making maximum disclosure of information in the public domain a rule and secrecy an exception, any country can progress as a strong society of informed citizenry which, as Thomas Jefferson famously said, is the bulwark of a democracy. The importance of right to information, as a basic human right cannot be negated as a potent tool to supplement the concept of checks and balances, to promote transparency and openness in the governance process by infusing a sense of greater accountability. Globally, governance based on freedom of information is evolving from a moral indictment of secrecy to a tool for market regulation, efficient governing structure facilitating economic and technological growth. It is enthralling to have governance which is open and transparent. Proceeding on this premise, the first part of the present paper deals with the principles of 'good governance'; of which an informed citizenry forms the cornerstone. The second part deals with the establishment of institutions of Lokpal and Lokayukt . The third part highlights right to information and the salient features of Right to Information Act of India.

Democracy requires accountability, and transparency is a pre-requite for such accountability. Good governance requires that transparency be promoted through devolution of information, having an accountability mechanism for the public functionaries. The process of consultation with the participation of citizens in decision making would gradually become more pronounced in order to ensure more accountability. At the same time good citizenry would also need to be emphasized for all round development of the society. Besides enjoying their rights, the citizens would need to behave responsibly and perform their duties towards the state. Clearly defined ethical standards would also have to be instilled in the contemporary society. In order to achieve all this, innovative use of information technology would be critical. Democracy, liberty and the rule of law together represent the troika that is universally accepted now as the index of a civil society. The protection of individual liberties follows the notion of democracy as a natural corollary.

Three important features of democratic governance are:

(i) It functions in the interest of the people and not of a class or section of the people.

(ii) It is susceptible to public opinion and respects civil and political liberties.

(iii) It is subordinate to the control of ministers responsible to the legislature.

Good governance implies utmost concern for people's welfare wherein the government and its bureaucracy follow policies and discharge their duties with a deep sense of commitment; respecting the rule of law in a manner which is transparent, ensuring human rights and dignity, probity and public accountability. Governance is not the exclusive preserve of the government. It extends to the other non- political branches such as civil society and the private sector which are performing public functions. Essentially, it encompasses every institution, organization, from family to the state. It has many forms - visible as well as invisible, formal as well as informal, 'state centric' as well as 'citizen centric' and centralizedas well as decentralized. World Bank defines governance as "the manner in which power is exercised in the management of a country's economic and social resources". Good governance entails effective participation in public policy-making, the prevalence of the rule of law and an independent judiciary, besides a system of institutional checks and balances through horizontal and vertical separation of powers, and effective oversight agenies.

4.1.2 CHALLENGES OR ISSUES OF DEMOCRATIC GOVERNANCE

Criminalisation of Politics

The Criminalisation of the political process and the unholy nexus between politicians, civil servants, and business houses are having a baneful influence on public policy formulation and governance. Political class as such is losing respect. The Indian State is facing a serious challenge to its authority from lawless elements. The terrorism in Jammu & Kashmir and its frequent spread to other parts of India, the insurgency in the North-East, and rapidly expanding base of naxalite movement in mainland India constitute grave challenge to democratic governance. Insurgency in India's North-East is largely confined now to Nagaland, Manipur and Assam and these are

being tackled by democratically elected state governments with full support from the Centre. Of late, one sees a political resolve to deal with naxalites as well. Dialogue process alone would provide the final answer but in every eventuality the State has to be continually firm in order that it discharges its basic responsibility of protecting life and property of its citizens.

The more insidious threat to India's democratic governance is from criminals and musclemen who are entering into state legislative assemblies and national Parliament in sizeable numbers. A political culture seems to be taking roots in which membership of state legislatures and Parliament are viewed as offices for seeking private gain and for making money.

Corruption

The high level of corruption in India has been widely perceived as a major obstacle in improving the quality of governance. While human greed is obviously a driver of corruption, it is the structural incentives and poor enforcement system to punish the corrupt that have contributed to the rising curve of graft in India. The complex and non-transparent system of command and control, monopoly of the government as a service provider, underdeveloped legal framework, lack of information and weak notion of citizens rights have provided incentives for corruption in India.

A conscious programme for strengthening of public awareness and also empowering the existing anti-corruption agencies would be required. The statutory right to information has been one of the most significant reforms in public administration. The Right to Information Act provides a strong national framework within which public awareness programmes could take place. Corruption takes place within a frame. Accordingly, basic reforms in file management, government rules and regulations, provision of public expenditure review could provide the concerned citizens the relevant knowledge to hold service providers accountable. This would ensure that the resources that belong to people are used in the right way.

Corruption and Electoral Reforms

The hitherto laissez-faire system of funding of elections is the biggest countervailing factor in the emergence of democratic India as an honest state. It is widely agreed

that state funding of elections/parties will provide a certain degree of financial independence to parties and their candidates and that in turn will help reduce the incentives to raise party/election funds through corrupt means. Public financing holds great promise because it levels the playing field and gives candidates an incentive to accept spending limits. With public financing, poorer candidates can challenge well-funded ones, enlivening the debate and opening up the system. Public financing should be accompanied by free media space.

The state funding of elections regime should be accompanied by strict accounting procedures including rules to internally democratise parties. All these will improve the image of political parties in the eyes of the public and help create a virtuous cycle of democratic competition within political parties for election nominations in which candidates exposed to be corrupt can expect to be weeded out over time. It will also encourage honest persons from various walks of life to join the electoral battlefield. The state funding of elections in India would also go a long way in reducing the clout of religious, ethnic and some business houses on the government.

4.1.3 LOKPAL AND LOKAYUKTA

Modern democratic states are characterised by a welfare orientation. Hence, the government has come to play an important role in the socio-economic development of a nation. This has resulted in the expansion of bureaucracy and the multiplication of administrative process, which in turn increased the administrative power and discretion enjoyed by the civil servants at different levels of the government. The abuse of this power and discretion by civil servants opens up scope for harassment, malpractices, maladministration and corruption. Such a situation gives rise to citizen's grievances against administration .The success of democracy and the realisation of socio-economic development depends on the extent to which the citizen's grievances are redressed.

4.1.3.1 Lokpal in Indian Perspective

The Concept of Lokpal as an institution to probe corruption charges against top echelons was first mooted in year 1960 when K.M. Munshi, (a member of Constituent Assembly) advocated for conferring the status of legal independence with powers of

a court. M.C. Setalvad, a veteran legal luminary joined the issue and vociferously demanded for setting up the institution on the pattern of Ombudsman as prevalent in most of the Scandinavian countries. In year 1966 Administrative Reforms Commission headed by Santhanam also recommended in its favour.

In a welfare State like India, citizens have a variety of interactions with the Government in its myriad forms – as a service provider, a regulator, as a provider of social and physical infrastructure etc. Meeting the expectations of the citizens is a challenging task for any Government. In India, the Ombudsman is known as the Lokpal or Lokayukta. The concept of a Constitutional Ombudsman was first proposed by the Law Minister Ashoke Kumar Sen in Parliament in the early 1960s. The term 'Lokpal' and 'Lokayukta' were coined by Dr. L. M. Singhvi as the Indian model of Ombudsman for redressal of public grievances. The office of the Lokpal is the Indian version of the office of an Ombudsman who is appointed to inquire into complaints made by citizens against public officials. The Lokpal is a forum where the citizen can send a complaint against a public official, which would then be inquired into and the citizen would be provided some redressal. Lokpal is an officer who investigates complaints of citizens of unfair treatment meted out to them by Government Departments and suggests remedy thereof, if he finds that a complaint is justified.

It was after independence when increasing practice of corruption, maladministration and misuse of authority and resource couldn't be curbed by existing measures under the Indian Penal Code, 1860 and the Prevention of Corruption Act, 1988, need for an agency independent of the executive, legislative and judiciary, to look into citizens' grievances and cases of corruption have been widely felt.

The Lokpal Bill provides for constitution of the Lokpal as an independent body to enquire into cases of corruption against public functionaries, with a mechanism for filing complaints and conducting inquiries etc. Dr. L.M. Singhvi moved a resolution in the Lok Sabha on 3 April 1964, reiterating his demand for setting up an officer of Parliament known as People's Procurator. The resolution was discussed in detail by all sections of the House but was withdrawn on the assurance of the Government that it would look into the matter. In pursuance of this assurance, the Government constituted a Special Consultative Group of Members of Parliament on administrative

reforms, in early 1965, which favoured a high powered inquiry commission on administrative reforms. Accordingly, an Administrative Reforms Commission (ARC) was appointed in January 1966, for making recommendations on the reorganization of the administrative system of the country. The First Administrative Reforms Commission in its report submitted in 1966 suggested that:

The special circumstances relating to our country can be fully met by providing for two special institutions for the redress of citizens' grievances. There should be one authority dealing with complaints against the administrative acts of Ministers or Secretaries to the government at the center and in the states. There should be another authority in each state and at the centre for dealing with complaints against the administrative acts of other officials…… The setting up of these authorities should not, however, be taken to be a complete answer to the problem of redress of citizens' grievances. They only provide the ultimate set-up for such redress as has not been available through the normal departmental or governmental machinery and do not absolve the department from fulfilling its obligations to the citizen for administering its affairs without generating, as far as possible, any legitimate sense of grievance. Thus, the administration itself must play the major role in reducing the area of grievances and providing remedies wherever necessary and feasible…… When this machinery (in-built departmental machinery) functions effectively, the number of cases which will have to go to an authority outside the Ministry or the Department should be comparatively small in number.

The Lokpal and Lokayukta bill was first brought before the fourth Lok Sabha in 1968 but before it could be passed, the Lok Sabha was dissolved and therefore the Bill lapsed. The legislation was revived in 1971. Another Bill was introduced in the Lok Sabha in 1971, but again Bill lapsed due to the dissolution of the Lok Sabha. In 1977, a new Bill called Lokpal Bill, 1977 was introduced in the Lok Sabha. This Bill was referred to the Joint Select Committee of the House of Parliament but the Bill again lapsed because of the dissolution of the Lok Sabha. Again, The Lokpal Bill was introduced in the Lok Sabha in 1985 however; the Bill again lapsed because of the dissolution of the Lok Sabha. Thereafter, the Lokpal Bill 1989 was introduced in the Lok Sabha the Bill again lapsed because of the dissolution of the

Lok Sabha. The Lokpal Bill 1996 was introduced in the Lok Sabha. Thereafter, it was referred to the department related Parliamentary Standing Committee on Home Affairs for examination and report. The Standing Committee presented its report to the Parliament on May 9, 1997. Before the Government could finalize its stand on the various recommendations of the committee, unfortunately Lok Sabha was dissolved on December 4, 1997 and Bill

lapsed. The Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee on August 3, 1998 in the Lok Sabha again introduced the Lokpal Bill, 1998. The Prime Minister has also been brought within the jurisdiction of power of Lokpal. This Bill also has not been enacted into an Act. In August 2001, the Lokpal Bill had again been introduced in the Lok Sabha. In 2003, the Lokpal Bill has once again introduced in Parliament. Different versions of the Bill have varied on coverage of public servants as well as scope of offences. Thereafter, the Venktachaliah Commission in 2002 and the Second Administrative Reforms Commission in 2005 recommended that the office of the Lokpal to be established immediately and to setup a mechanism to protect the whistleblowers.

Anti- Corruption Movement 2011

Due to the agitation led by Anna Hazare, the government constituted a Joint Drafting Committee in April 2011. The Committee included government representatives and nominees of Civil Society to draft the Lokpal Bill by June 30, 2011. The Government of India constitutes a Joint Drafting Committee in order to prepare a draft of the Lokpal Bill. It was decided that the Joint Drafting Committee shall consist of five nominee Ministers of the Government of India and five nominees of Anna Hazare (including himself). The Chairperson of the Joint Drafting Committee shall be Pranab Mukherjee. The Co- chairperson of the Joint Drafting Committee shall be Shanti Bhushan. The Convener of the Joint Drafting Committee shall be M. Veerappa Moily. Thereafter, the Joint Drafting Committee shall commence its work in order to prepare the proposed legislation on the Lokpal Bill. The Joint Drafting Committee shall complete its work latest by 30 June 2011.

However, the two groups could not agree on key points and prepared two drafts of the Bill (the draft by Hazare's nominees was known as Jan Lok Pal Bill). The Lokpal Bill, 2011 was introduced in the Lok Sabha on August 4, 2011. Thereafter, this Bill was

referred to the Department Related Parliamentary Standing Committee on Personnel, Public Grievances, Law, and Justice, on August 8, 2011. The Parliamentary Standing Committee tabled its 48th Report on the Lokpal Bill, 2011, on December 9, 2011. In this report, the Committee received various suggestions on the institution of Lokpal.

The Lokpal and Lokayukta Act, 2013

The Government introduced the Lokpal and Lokayukta Bill, 2011 and the Constitution (116th Amendment) Bill, 2011 on December 22, 2011. The government withdrew the Lokpal Bill, 2011 that was introduced in the Lok Sabha on August 4, 2011 upon consideration of the recommendations of the Standing Committee. Thereafter, in May 2012, the bill was referred to a Select Committee of the Rajya Sabha. After the report of the Select Committee was submitted in November 2012, the bill was again introduced in the Rajya Sabha and passed, with several amendments, on December 17, 2013. The amended bill was sent back to the Lok Sabha. The Lok Sabha on December 18, 2013 passed the historic Lokpal and Lokayukta Bill, 2013. The bill received the assent of the President on January1, 2014, thereby becoming the Lokpal and Lokayukta Act of 2014. It aims to set up an independent body at the central level called Lokpal in order to prevent and control corruption.

This Lokpal would receive complaints regarding corruption against most categories of public servants and further ensure that such complaints should be investigated properly. However, "the Lokpal and Lokayukta Act, 2013 did not contain specific provisions for the protection of whistleblowers. Unfortunately, still the Government of India did not notify this. This Act was to provide for the establishment of a body of Lokpal for the Union and Lokayukta for States to inquire into allegations of corruption against certain public functionaries.

In pursuance of the efforts to constitute a mechanism for dealing with complaints on corruption against public functionaries including in high places, the Government introduces the Constitutional bodies as Lokpal and Lokayuktas. India is committed to pursue the policy of "Zero Tolerance against Corruption".

The Lokpal and Lokayukta (Amendment) Bill, 2016

The Lokpal and Lokayuktas (Amendment) Bill, 2016 was introduced in Lok Sabha

on July 27, 2016 by the Minister for Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions, Dr. Jitendra Singh. The Bill amended the Lokpal and Lokayuktas Act, 2013 in relation to declaration of assets and liabilities by public servants. The provisions of the Bill applied retrospectively, from the date of the coming into force . After this, the Lokpal Act requires a public servant to declare his assets and liabilities and also that of his spouse and dependent children. Such declarations must be made to the competent authority within 30 days of entering office. Further, the public servant must file an annual return of such assets and liabilities by July 31st of every year. The Lokpal Act also mandates statements of such declarations be published on the website of the relevant Ministry by August 31 of that year. The Bill replaces these provisions to state that a public servant will be required to declare his assets and liabilities. However, the form and manner of making such a declaration will be prescribed by the central government.

4.1.3.2 Lokayakuta

The idea of a Lokayukta owes its origin to the office of Ombudsman that exists in Scandinavian countries to address issues of governance lapses, such as inordinate delay in obtaining documentation, fixing leakages in the Public Distribution System etc. Lokayuktas are governed by state legislation; their powers vary according to the autonomy afforded them by these legislations, as well as the relationship that exists with the state government, which is often in a position to hamper the effective functioning of Lokayukta's, since the latter depend upon them for assistance with regard to enforcement of orders, directives etc. This has often resulted in the office being rendered nothing more than a parking spot for retired bureaucrat's with little to no real power; however, in certain states like Karnataka, the institution has been really effective, due to there being no dependence on the state government for assistance in enforcing authority.

Need for a Lokayukta

The Anti-corruption agitation in 2012 reflects the existence of institutional corruption in government, and also highlighted the woefully low confidence of the public in their elected leaders. This is further compounded by the poor quality of accountability that

exists in the institutions like the Comptroller and Auditor General and the Election Commission of India that are not being fully insulated from political influence or interference.

While the idea of establishing the office of Lokpal at the Centre remains a distant dream, and seems to be likely to remain so in the near future. But in case of Indian states, there are nineteen states that have till date, adopted the office of Lokayukta. These States are: Orissa (Orissa Lokpal and Lokayukta Act, 1995), Rajasthan (The Rajasthan Lokayukta and Up-Lokayuktas Act, 1973), Maharashtra (The Maharashtra Lokayukta and Up- Lokayuktas Act, 1971), Uttar Pradesh (The U.P Lokayukta and Up-Lokayukta Act, 1975), Bihar (The Bihar Lokayukta Act, 1973), Andhra Pradesh (The Andhra Pradesh Lokayukta and Upa-Lokayuktas Act, 1973), Karnataka (The Karnataka Lokayukta Act, 1984), Madhya Pradesh (The Madhya Pradesh Lokayukta and Upa-Lokayuktas Act 1975), Gujarat (The Gujarat Lokayukta and Upa-Lokayuktas Act, 1975), Delhi (Delhi Lokayukta and Up-Lokayukta Act, 1995), Kerala and Uttarakhand (Uttarakhand Lokayukta Act, 2011), Himachal Pradesh (The H.P Lokayukta and Upa-Lokayuktas Act, 1973), Assam (The Assam Lokatukta and Upa-Lokayuktas Act, 1985), Chattisgarh (Chhatisgarh Lok Aayog Adhyadesh, 2002), Goa (The Goa Lokayukta Act, 2013), Haryana (The Haryana Lokayukta Act, 2002), Jharkhand (Jharkhand Lokayukta Act, 2001), Punjab (Punjab Lokauyukta Act, 1996).

Institutional accountability issues in India have been compounded by the sweeping powers that governments, both at the Centre and in the states, have appropriated in the name of social welfare and economic development; any effort to introduce further checking mechanisms have usually been met with arguments that this hampers the government‘s welfare functions and agenda. This has also resulted in the negation of any sort of moral legitimacy that the government may enjoy in this regard; thus, as a corrective measure, the Administrative Reforms Commission proposed the adoption of the Scandinavian independent Ombudsman system, in light of the ineffectiveness of existing redressal mechanisms.

Structural Organisation

Appointment

The Lokayukta and upalokayukta are appointed by the governor of the state. While appointing, the governor in most of the states consults (a) the chief justice of the state high court, and (b) the leader of Opposition in the state legislative assembly.

Qualifications

Judicial qualifications are prescribed for the Lokayukta in the States of Uttar Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat, Orissa, Karnataka and Assam. But no specific qualifications are prescribed in the states of Bihar, Maharashtra and Rajasthan.

Tenure

In most of the states, the term of office fixed for Lokayukta is of 5 years duration or 65 years of age, whichever is earlier. He is not eligible for reappointment for a second term.

Jurisdiction

There is no uniformity regarding the jurisdiction of Lokayukta in all the states. The following points can be noted in this regard:

a) The chief minister is included within the jurisdiction of Lokayukta in the states of Himachal Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh and Gujarat, while he is excluded from the purview of Lokayukta in the states of Maharashtra, Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan, Bihar and Orissa.

b) Ministers and higher civil servants are included in the purview of Lokayukta in almost all the states. Maharashtra has also included former ministers and civil servants.

c) Members of state legislatures are included in the purview of Lokayukta in the States of Andhra Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh, Gujarat, Uttar Pradesh and Assam.

d) The authorities of the local bodies, corporations, companies and societies are included in the jurisdiction of the Lokayukta in most of the states.

Investigations

In most of the states, the Lokayukta can initiate investigations either on the basis of a complaint received from the citizen against unfair administrative action or suo moto. But he does not enjoy the power to start investigations on his own initiative (suo moto) in the States of Uttar Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh and Assam

Other Features

1. The Lokayukta presents, annually, to the governor of the state a consolidated report on his performance. The governor places this report along with an explanatory memorandum before the state legislature. The Lokayukta is responsible to the state legislature.
2. He takes the help of the state investigating agencies for conducting inquiries.
3. He can call for relevant files and documents from the state government departments.
4. The recommendations made by the Lokayukta are only advisory and not binding on the state government.

Inconsistency in the state Lokayukta Acts

It is a well known fact that there exist different circumstances in every state, these differences arise as a result of demography, size, political party holding office etc. These differences make it extremely difficult for all states to stick to the same Model Bill. Therefore, to ensure efficient functioning, certain changes have been made by individual states. While the intention for modification was to ensure effective functioning, the results have shown us otherwise. There does not exist much information regarding the nature of complaints that the Lokayutkas receive in several states, however from the little information that is available it is evident that police torture, police inertia and accepting illegal gratification are pressing concerns.

An overview of the state laws on Lokayukta shows the lack of uniformity in the provisions in different states. For instance, several states consider complaints against the state administration to be a part of the jurisdiction exercised by the Lokayukta, while many states do not recognize the jurisdiction of the Lokayukta to extend to

include the same. Another point of difference between states is the inclusion of public functionaries within the purview of the Lokayukta, while some states have systemically excluded them, other states go so far as to even extend the scope of the Lokayukta's power to include actions of Registrar's and

Vice chancellors of Universities.

Structural Variations: The structure of the Lokayukta is not same in all the states. Some States like Rajasthan, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh and Maharashtra have created the Lokayukta as well as upalo-kayukta, while some others like Bihar, Uttar Pradesh and Himachal Pradesh have created only the Lokayukta. There are still other states like Punjab and Orissa that have designated officials as Lokpal. This pattern was not suggested by the ARC in the states.

The institution of Lokpal has tried to bring a much needed change in the battle against corruption in the administrative structure of India but at the same time, there are loopholes and lacunae which need to be corrected. The Lokpal act also called upon states to appoint a Lokayukta within a year of its coming to force. But only 19 states have established the Lokayukta. At the same time, Lokpal is not free from political influence as the appointing committee itself consist of members from political parties. The appointment of Lokpal can be manipulated in a way as there is no criterion to decide who is an eminent jurist or a person of integrity. The 2013 Act did not provide concrete immunity to the whistle blowers. The biggest lacuna is the exclusion of judiciary from the ambit of the Lokpal. The Lokpal is not given any constitutional backing and there is no adequate provision for appeal against the Lokpal. The specific details in relation to the appointment of Lokayukta have been left completely on the States. In this way there are many drawbacks that should be removed and resolved by the government.

4.1.4 Right to Information

A nation's progress depends on the free flow of information within the government and to the citizenry. The right to information is a unique human right and is a potent weapon in the hands of the general public who can use it to keep a check on the bodies that govern them. Information is power. 'Sunlight is the best disinfectant' and in the

modern democratic world an informed citizenry forms the bedrock. Armed with information the citizens are capable of participating in the process of government decision making and policy formulation, thereby adhering to the true meaning of a democracy.

The administration of India in last one and half decades has gone through a number of changes because of liberalization, privatization and globalization. On the one hand, the role of market has increased and it entered the field which was earlier completely controlled by the state. On the other hand, the role of the state has somewhat reduced, but not entirely out of the race in providing services of vital importance like health, education, etc. Although some important principles of private sector in the form of efficiency, economy and effectiveness have been applied in the working of government organisation, still the common people think that government administration is working under some kind of secrecy, without sharing the necessary information with them. Thus, it leads to lack of responsive and transparent administration. In this context, the role of right to information (RTI) legislation is an important piece of law in an independent India.

Right to information basically means the citizen's right to get information from government and its various instruments at all levels which are substantially financed directly or indirectly by the government, known as public authority as a matter of right within a stipulated time frame barring exceptions. The United Nations General Assembly in 1946 stressed in clear terminology 'Freedom of Information is a fundamental human right and the touchstone for all freedoms to which the UN is consecrated'. The United Nations Declaration of Human Rights, 1948 in Article 19 states 'Everyone has the right to freedom of opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers'. The Freedom of Information was firstly given by Sweden to its people in 1766 and it took more than one and half centuries for another country to enact it and it was done by the Finland in 1951.

The other major countries who enacted the law are USA (1966), Australia (1982), South Africa (2000), and UK (2000). The various provisions of the law are somewhat different in different countries, depending upon the social, cultural, economic and political situation in the given country.

Right to Information Movement in India

In India, the need for right to information has been felt by the people since the independence because of the existence of Official Secrets Act (OSA) 1923, which was enacted by the British during the colonial era. The law largely deals with matters of security and provides a framework for dealing with espionage, sedition and other assaults on the unity and integrity of the nation. However, given the colonial climate of mistrust of people and the primacy of public officials in dealing with the citizens, OSA created a culture of secrecy, confidentiality became the norm and disclosure the exception. Also, the Civil Service Conduct Rules of 1964 prohibit communication of an official document to anyone without authorization. Even the UK which made the OSA in India during colonial period has taken an initiative in the form of appointing a committee known as Franks Committee in 1971 to look into some aspects of their OSA. The committee observed that "a government which pursues secret aims or which operates in greater secrecy then the effective conduct of its proper functions requires, or which turns information services into propaganda agencies will lose the trust of the people. It will be countered by 'ill informed and destructive criticism'.

There increased a growing public demand in India also, and the first initiative has been taken by the Janata government under the Prime Minister Morarji Desai, who set up a working group to look after the issue of modifications of OSA, 1923. But unfortunately, the working group recommended that there is no need to alter the 1923 Act. Thereafter, several political parties in their various general election manifestos and also the government at the centre highlighted the need for establishing the Right to Information Act in the country but with no success. Only the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) government in the year 2000 introduced the Freedom of Information Bill in the Parliament, which passed by the Lok Sabha on 2002, but it could not be enforced.

However, the central government in the year 1986 made a Consumer Protection Act, which is essentially an important act. It enables the consumers the right to be informed about the quality, quantity, potency, purity standard and prices of goods. But the people started demanding in great vigour that if Consumer Protection Act can be passed by the government then why not the RTI, which will empower the poor and

the weaker sections of society to demand and get information about public policies and actions thereby leading to their welfare. It will help in promoting participative democracy, through citizen's participation in the governance process. James Madison once rightly said, 'A people who mean to be their own governors must arm themselves with power that knowledge gives'. Also, the Supreme

Court of India stated in a 1981 ruling that the 'right to freedom of speech and expression' includes the 'right to receive and impart education'. The apex court has made it clear that the right to information is implicit in the right to free speech and expression. It is an inalienable component of freedom of speech and expression guaranteed by the Article 19 of the constitution.

There are quite few NGOs, which put pressure on the government to make a law on RTI, but one NGO, which leads the way was the Mazdoor Kisan Shakti Sanghathan based in Rajasthan. Since 1994 it waged a relentless struggle on the right of citizens to demand information saying 'the right to know is the right to live'. The movement has resulted into the formation of National Campaign for People's Right to Information, which campaigns for the people's right to information. And finally, in the year 2005, the United Progressive Alliance I (UPA I) government enacted the RTI.

Indian Constitution and the Right to Information

The Preamble to the Constitution describes India as a Sovereign Democratic Republic. The interpretation of the rights conferred by the Constitution thus has to take their colour from the democratic Republic character of our body politic. The Constitution being an instrument designed for securing the country's governance as a Democratic Republic, our rights under the Constitution, have to receive an orientation and meaning which can facilitate and effectuate this fundamental premise. Article 19 (1) (a) of the Constitution, guarantees the fundamental rights to free speech and expression, which, by implication, includes within it the right of access to information. The prerequisite for enjoying this right is knowledge and information. Therefore, the Right to Information becomes a Constitutional right, being an aspect of the right to free speech and expression, which includes the right to receive and collect information. However, Article 19 (2) permits the state to make any law insofar

as such law imposes reasonable restrictions on the exercise of the rights conferred by Article 19 (1) (a) of the Constitution.

The right to information also seems to flow from Article 21 of the Constitution on the right to life and liberty, which includes right to know about things that affect our lives. The expression "right to life and personal liberty" is broad which includes within itself a variety of rights and attributes. For sustaining and nurturing that opinion it becomes necessary to receive information. Thus Article 21 confers on all persons a right to know which includes a right to receive information. The ambit and scope of Article 21 is much wider as compared to Article 19 (1) (a). Article 32 and 226 of the Constitution guarantee 'right to constitutional remedies' whereby a citizen is entitled to seek a remedy in Supreme Court and High Courts, if his or her fundamental rights are violated.

Under Article 253, Parliament has power to make law for giving effect to international agreements and under Article 51 the State is duty bound to foster respect for international law and treaty obligations in the dealings of organized people with one another. The Constitution sets out the duties owed by every citizen under Article 51 A. A fully informed citizen is better equipped for the performance of these duties. Access to information would assist citizens in fulfilling these obligations. Further, Article 361 A which deals with

'Protection of publication and proceedings of Parliament and State Legislatures creates protection against actions for defamation arising from lawful and accurate parliamentary reporting. This implies that the media can inform the people about what is happening in the legislatures without fear of being sued.

As a result of the prolonged Indian national movement against the British imperialist colonial rule the liberal democratic political system with a written Constitution includes rule of law, social justice, development, adult franchise, periodic elections, multiparty system, has come into existence. For the transparent functioning of the democratic political system, the founding fathers of the Constitution include the provisions of the right to expression in part three of the Constitution in the fundamental rights. While there is no specific right to information or even right to freedom of the press in the

Constitution of India, the right to information has been read into the Constitutional guarantees. The Indian Constitution has an impressive array of basic and inalienable rights contained in Chapter three of the Constitution. These include, 1) the Right to Equal Protection of the Laws and the Right to Equality before the Law, 2) the Right to Freedom of Speech and Expression and the Right to

Life and Personal Liberty 3) The Right to Constitution Remedies in Article 32, backs these that is, the Right to approach the Supreme Court in case of infringement of any of these rights.

The development of the right to information as a part of the Constitution Law of the country started with petitions of the press to the Supreme Court for enforcement of certain logistical implications of the right to freedom of speech and expression such as challenging governmental orders for control of newsprint bans on distribution of papers, etc. It was these cases that the concept of the public's right to know developed. The freedom movement, the Constitution of India, Supreme Court and some of the politicians supported for the right to information, but not materialized due to various reasons like policy support, institutional arrangements etc. Therefore, to achieve the right to information act, the strong grassroots level movement was needed. The Mazdoor Kisan Shakti Sangthana, parivarthan etc, fulfilled the gap of grassroots level movement and intellectual pressure and input was given by the

National Campaign for People's Right to Information and Common Wealth Human Rights Initiative.

Salient Features of RTI Act 2005

Some important features of the act are given below:

1. The act gives every citizen to seek information from any public authority, whether owned, controlled or substantially financed by the government.
2. Information means any material in any form, including records, documents, memos, e-mails, opinions, advices, press releases, circulars, orders, logbooks, contracts, reports, papers, samples, models and data material held in any electronic form.

3. A citizen who wants the information just needs to make a request in writing in a plain paper or through electronic means in English or Hindi in the official language of the area in which the application is being made. The citizen can get assistance from the central/state public information officers in writing down the application for request and filing of application.
4. The public authority needs to provide information as asked by the citizen, within 30 days of the receipt of the request. And if the information concerns with the life or liberty of a person, then within 48 h, the information needs to be provided.
5. The act also provides for exemption of certain types of information from disclosures, especially related to security and integrity of the country.
6. The citizen enjoys the redressal mechanism in the form of appeal and complaints if he does not receive the information within the stipulated time period or is aggrieved by a decision of the central or state public information officer.
7. The penalty of 250 rupees per day will be imposed upon the officers who failed to comply with the act. However, the total amount of penalty will be subject to a maximum of 25,000 rupees only.

Surprisingly, the RTI Act 2005 of India was more transparent than the Information Acts of other countries such as Australia, UK, USA, South Africa, etc. For instance, in Australia, policy-related information access is weak; Britain has too many exemptions; and USA law on Freedom of Information Act has problems related to delays and unclear state laws which prevent the citizens ability to examine even the most fundamental actions of government. In South Africa, the law on the promotion of Access to Information Act 2000 did not include in its jurisdiction legislature and judiciary, same is the case with Canada.

Pioneering States in Introducing Right to Information Act

Even before the Freedom of Information Act was passed by the Parliament, several States in India had enacted their own Legislations on Freedom of / Right to Information. The fact that some of the States in the country took a lead in enacting right to

information legislations (or codes of disclosure of certain categories of information), and the lessons that were learnt from the implementation of these various legislations were indeed helpful, in framing the provisions of the Right to Information Act, 2005 in detail.

A brief overview of the State Acts in operation prior to the enactment of the RTI Act is provided below:

- Tamil Nadu was the first State to introduce the Right to Information Act in April 1996. The legislation aimed at ensuring access to information about Government administration. The Bill was modelled on the draft legislation recommended by the Press Council of India. However, the enacted legislation was full of exemptions and inadequacies. So it failed to evoke much response from the public and NGOs and other concerned activists.
- Goa was the second State to enact the Right to Information legislation in 1997. The Goa Act contained several provisions, which allowed the State to withhold information without substantiating reasons for it.
- The grassroots movement led by MKSS compelled the Rajasthan Government to act in the direction to prepare the Right to Information Bill. Several other sister organisations also joined hands with MKSS to start an agitation on a large scale and declared an indefinite strike. It was called off when a high level committee was appointed to work out the modalities of how photocopies could be provided in relation to the order issued in April 1996. The Rajasthan Right to Information Act, 2000, had 13 sections in all, 10 of which established categories of exemptions. It contained a provision for one internal appeal and also for an appeal to an independent body.
- The Karnataka Government took steps to make information available to the public as far back as 1997, starting with many government departments issuing executive orders to provide access to information on development projects undertaken by them and to keep relevant records open for inspection or available for copying for a nominal fee. In August 2000, the executive orders were supplemented by the Right to Information ordinance recognising the necessity to enact a comprehensive legislation. The State Legislative

Assembly was not in session. Hence an ordinance was passed on the matter as a first step. The Karnataka Right to Information Act 2000 was enacted soon after by the State Assembly in December 2000. Unfortunately, however the Act could not be operationalised properly until July 2002, when the Government of Karnataka notified the Karnataka Right to Information Rules.

- The Maharashtra Right to Information Act, 2000 had nine sections in all and 22 categories of exemptions. However, it did not provide for the establishment of an appellate authority which would review refusals. It did not have provisions for providing information proactively, or penalties for withholding or destroying information either.
- The Delhi Legislature passed the Delhi Right to Information Act in 2001. This law had been along the lines of the Goa Act, containing the standard exemptions and provided for an appeal to an independent body, as well as establishing an advisory body, the State Council for Right to Information.
- Assam passed the 'Assam Right to Information Act' in 2001. Section 4(2) provides 11 exemptions from disclosure of information. Even, before a bill was introduced in the Madhya Pradesh Assembly, in certain places like Bilaspur and Korba, the local authorities provided access to information. The Divisional Commissioner, Bilaspur initiated it in the matter of the Public Distribution System (PDS) and allowed the citizens to access details of food grains and commodities allotted to their areas and their distribution. The scheme was soon extended to development programmes and pollution awareness. It was observed that the right to information considerably reduced black-marketing and corruption in the PDS. Moreover, in polluted areas like Korba, the sharing of information on pollution level raised public consciousness. As a result, officials became careful about monitoring and controlling pollution levels. Surprisingly, bowing to popular demand, the Government passed a bouquet of executive orders dealing with right of access to Government records. The Madhya Pradesh Assembly passed the Right to Information Act in 2002.

-Jammu & Kashmir passed the Jammu & Kashmir Right to Information Act in 2004. Section 6 of this Act provides 7 restrictions on right to information.

Amendments in the RTI Act

Since the enactment of RTI Act 2005, there were several instances where both UPA I and II Governments have tried or made intention to amend the RTI Act, but because of timely protest and intervention by RTI activists, the attempts from government side have failed. In few instances, like in 2009, the DoPT has proposed some amendments to the act like: limiting an RTI query to one subject and 250 words; levying a higher charge; exempting the office of the Chief Justice of India from the act; prohibiting applications which could be deemed to be 'frivolous or vexatious'; amendment to Section 8 of the act (relating to exemptions) to slightly modify the provision about disclose of cabinet papers to ensure smooth functioning of the government, etc.

The second instance was in the year 2011, when the 2G spectrum note, which has been written by the Finance Ministry to the Prime Minister Office (PMO) and accessed by the RTI activist from the PMO, brought the war between two union cabinet ministers out in the open. Because of this instance, the other two ministers in the UPA-II Government have been voicing concern over the RTI Act and wanted to review the act so to stop its misuse as it has been apparently affecting government functioning. Even the Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh while speaking at the Sixth Annual Convention of the CIC in 14 October 2011 said 'Even as we recognize and celebrate the efficacy and the effectiveness of the RTI Act, we must take a critical look at it. There are concerns that need to be discussed and addressed honestly'. Also, he said that RTI should not 'adversely affect the deliberative processes in the government'.

Transparency and Accountability under RTI

Democracy requires an informed citizenry and transparency of information which are vital for its functioning and also to contain corruption and to hold governments and their representatives accountable to the governed. The greater the access to the information the greater would be the responsiveness of government to the needs of the people. Without information people cannot exercise their rights and duties.

RTI is major step towards more accountable and transparent government. It will certainly lead to end the culture of governmental secrecy and fulfil its potential as a truly great democracy. The Act provides for setting out the practical regime of right

to information under the control of public authority in order to promote transparency and accountability in the working of every public authority.

The promulgation of this Act set the stage for the transparency in the functioning of the government and its various agencies. Under this Act access to information from public agency has become a statutory right of every citizen. Ordinary citizens do not have much information about how decisions are made and public resources utilizes. Right to Information Act is a vehicle for greater transparency about the manner of functioning of public agencies.

Before this Act, the accountability of public authority was practicably minimal. By this Act the citizens can now question, audit, review, examine, access government records, acts, decisions to ensure that these are consistent with the principles of public interest, good governance and justice. This act promotes transparency and accountability in administration. The act provides for framework for promotion of citizen-government partnership in carrying out the programmes for the welfare of the people.

When the government is transparent, there is less chance for corruption and more room for accountability. People feel more powerful, their bargaining power vis-à-vis public officials has increased manifold. The Act has definitely resulted in a greater transparency in governance. The Act has become powerful instrument for citizens and social activists to access information from the bureaucracy and thereby ensures greater accountability and transparency in decision making.

The Act aimed to concentrate power in the hands of the citizens who may demand, even without giving a reason, any information which they think will help them exercise their rights more effectively and take an informed decision. Furthermore, even the judiciary has liberally interpreted the provisions of the Act, thereby making the public authorities more accountable.

Challenges

The general awareness amongst people about the RTI Act and how it is to be used for their benefits is still low. The cases of misuse of RTI Act are also increasing. The PIOs (Public Information Officer) are not adequately trained about the different

provisions and rules of the Act regarding procedures to be followed in disseminating information. The PIOs has the same old colonial mind set and they try to guard every information and working in secrecy under the Official Secrets Act. These bureaucrats deny information to the citizen to save themselves from criticism and feel uncomfortable with the notion of transparency. Attacks on RTI activists have also been a major deterrent in the RTI movement.

4.1.5 LET US SUM UP

Thus, in order to tackle the problem of corruption, the institution of the ombudsman should be strengthened both in terms of functional autonomy and availability of manpower. Greater transparency, more right to information and empowerment of citizens and citizen groups is required along with a good leadership that is willing to subject itself to public scrutiny. Appointment of Lokpal in itself is not enough. The government should address the issues based on which people are demanding a Lokpal. Merely adding to the strength of investigative agencies will increase the size of the government but not necessarily improve governance. The slogan adopted by the government of "less government and more governance", should be followed in letter and spirit. Moreover, Lokpal and Lokayukta must be financially, administratively and legally independent of those whom they are called upon to investigate and prosecute. Lokpal and Lokayukta appointments must be done transparently so as to minimize the chances of the wrong sorts of people getting in. There is a need for a multiplicity of decentralized institutions with appropriate accountability mechanisms, to avoid the concentration of too much power, in any one institution or authority.

There cannot be any dispute about the fact that the RTI Act has brought a new revolution in the governance of the country from a culture of secrecy into a culture of openness and transparency. It makes an empowered citizenry, where administrations are made accountable towards them. Although the RTI Act was passed in 2005 and still has a long way to go to see its impact, but nonetheless, during these periods, it became popular amongst the people which can be seen from the increase of the RTI application every year. Also, through the use of RTI, many scams in recent times have been unearthed in the country like 2G spectrum scam which has estimated loss of rupees 1.76 crore; Adarsh Housing Society scandal, which led to the resignation of

former Chief Minister of Maharashtra Ashok Chavan; and lastly the Commonwealth Games Fraud which also runs into crores.

Satyanand Mishra, the Chief Information Commissioner, has rightly said that 'The Right to Information has whetted the appetite of the people for more such rights. The rights to employment guarantee, education, public service delivery, food security and a corruption free government are some of the rights we have given to ourselves or are in the process of giving only because the ground was prepared by the Right to Information Act. It can justify claim to be the mother of all such rights'. Thus, right to information has brought new lease of life to the common people, who are starting to use in their day to day activities and intermingle in the culture of the society.

4.1.6 EXERCISE

1. What are the challenges in democratic governance?
2. Discuss the main highlights of Lokpal and Lokayukta in India.
3. Write a short note on Right to Information Act (RTI).

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4.2 MINORITIES: TYPES, STATUS, DEMANDS AND STATE RESPONSE

-Gurshaminder Bajwa

STRUCTURE

4.2.0 OBJECTIVES

After going through this lesson, you will be able to:

- Define who are minorities and understand who constitute as minority under Constitution of India;
- Know problems faced by various minority communities in India, that is Muslims, Christians and Sikhs;
- Indian government responses for the welfare of minorities.

4.2.1 INTRODUCTION

In many Third World nations, nowadays, racial tensions, communal violence and ethnic clashes make headlines almost daily. India, which is known as a peace-loving nation, is also not spared by the problems of minorities. India is a multi-religious country and its society is pluralistic in nature from the religious and other points of view. Since a very long time, people belonging to various religious communities have been living together in this country. Not only major religious communities are spread all over the country, but the people belonging to all religious communities reside in each village and town in the country. India, the secular state, has not transformed the spirit of secularism.

4.2.2 DEFINING MINORITIES

Sociologically the concept of minority groups refers to more than merely a numerical distinction. In sociology, members of minority group are disadvantaged when compared with the dominant group (which may possess more wealth, power and prestige). It refers to a groups' subordinate position within society rather than its numerical connotation. There are many cases in which a 'minority' is in fact a 'majority'. Women are sometimes described as a minority group, while in many countries of the world they form the numerical majority. Because women tend to be disadvantaged in comparison with men (the majority) the term is applied to them. In apartheid period, blacks in South Africa constituted the minority but numerically they were the majority.

This is because the term 'minority' signifies their subordinate and disadvantaged position in society.

Scholars have also used the term 'minorities' to refer collectively to groups that have experienced prejudice and discrimination at the hands of the 'majority' society. However, this over simplification may result in generalizations about discrimination and oppression that do not accurately reflect the experiences of specific groups in society. The prejudices and discrimination faced by the sexual minorities (LGBT), for example, may be completely different from the experiences of Dalits as a minority in India. The way in which a two different minority groups faces discrimination and oppression in society is far from identical. The only commonality between them is that they are treated not only as different but also inferior with the rest of the majority population.

4.2.3 TYPES OF MINORITIES

In common parlance, the expression "minority" means a group comprising less than half of the population and differing from others, especially the predominant section, in race, religion, traditions and culture, language, etc. The Constitution of India uses the word 'minority' or its plural form in some Articles - 29 to 30 and 350A to 350B - but does not define it anywhere. Article 29 has the word "minorities" in its marginal heading but speaks of "any sections of citizens…having a distinct language, script or culture". This may be a whole community generally seen as a minority or a group within a majority community. Article 30 speaks specifically of two categories of minorities - religious and linguistic. The Supreme Court rulings suggest that for the purpose of Article 30 a minority, whether linguistic or religious, is determinable with reference to a state and not by taking into consideration the population of the country as a whole. Incidentally, 'scheduled castes' and 'scheduled tribes' are also to be identified at the state/UT level.

The Constitution of free India has given recognition to a number of languages in the Eighth Schedule and there are five religious groups which have been given the official status of National Minorities, namely, Muslims, Christians, Sikhs, Buddhists and Parsees. The framers of the Constitution bestowed considerable thought and attention

upon the minority problem in all its facets and provided constitutional safeguards; yet the issue has evaded solution till today. Consequently, the progress of minorities in India is beset with problems including those of prejudice and discrimination. The Indian Constitution declared India a democratic republic and the word secular was incorporated by the 42nd Amendment in 1976. The secular provisions of the Indian Constitution envisaged that the state by itself was not to establish or practice any religion, public revenue was not to be used to promote any particular religion and every individual person was to be given an equal right to freedom of conscience and religion. Notwithstanding the spirit of secularism enshrined in the Constitution, the Indian state's practices are very challenging and counterproductive in dealing with minorities.

The principle of non-discrimination and the concept of common citizenship are enshrined in all provisions of the Indian Constitution. The first and foremost is the Right to Equality (Article 14) which is an extension of the rights ensured in the Preamble to the Constitution. Article 14 of our Constitution says: "The State shall not deny to any person equality before the law and shall provide equal protection for every person within the territory of India". Though this Article appears to be very short and simple, it is one of the greatest pillars of democracy. It protects both minority and majority alike against the discriminatory conduct of the government both negatively and positively. This provision embodies a concept which is a hallmark of democracy. However, to the question as to whether the Indian minorities really enjoy this fundamental right to equality, the answer, unfortunately, is 'no'. In the real sense, Indian minorities do not fully enjoy some of the basic fundamental rights.

The discrimination on grounds of religion is very clearly prohibited by Article 15 of our Constitution which says in clause (1): "The state shall not discriminate against any citizen on grounds of religion, race, caste, gender, place of birth etc." This fundamental right against discrimination on ground of religion is one of the most important rights for the flourishing of any religiously pluralistic society as we have in our country. But unfortunately, we are till now unable to implement what Article 15 last down. This mandate of "non-discrimination against any person on grounds of religion" given in Article 15 of the Constitution has still not been enforced

totally, even though the Constitution was promulgated more than 58 years ago. This right, which existed, in whatever little extent, before the promulgation of the Constitution, was lost when our Constitution came into being. The principle of non-discrimination and equality is also upheld in matters of public employment in the Constitution. Article 16 says: "No citizen shall, on grounds of religion, race or caste, be ineligible for, or discriminated against in respect of, any employment or office under the State." Under Article 21, the State is bound to protect the life and liberty of every human being; it has failed to protect this right. There are a lot of violations. Such type of violations threatens the very right to life, physical integrity and health of citizens. Article 25 of the Indian Constitution gives all citizens the "freedom of conscience and the right freely to profess practise and propagate religion". But Christians over a period of time are being denied this fundamental right affecting their right for propagating their faith. Article 26 of our Constitution has given to all the religious minorities the right to establish and maintain institutions for religious and charitable purposes and to manage their own affairs in matters of religion, in any manner they wish to administer and maintain such property in accordance with the law. Article 29 offers protection to the cultural rights of minorities and Article 30 (1) gives them the right to establish and administer educations institutions of their choice. Clause 31(2) states that the state shall not in granting aid to educational institutions discriminate against any educational institution on the ground that it is under the management of a minority, whether based on religion or language. In India the term "minorities" refers to religious communities present in much smaller numbers than Hindus which include Muslims, Christians, Buddhists, Jains, Sikhs, and Parsis/Zoroastrians. According to a 2011 census of India, out of the total Indian population of 121 crore there are 96.62 crore Hindus of various sects, 17.12 crore Muslims, 2.78 crore Christians, and 2.08 crore Sikhs, 84.43 lakhs Buddhist, 44.52 lakh Jains and 79.38 lakhs followers of other traditions. Christians are 2.3 percent of the total population whereas Hindus number about 79.8 percent.

4.2.4 PROBLEMS FACED BY MINORITIES

Any understanding about problems faced by minorities must begin with the following questions. What status has the polity granted to its minorities? What are the problems

faced by the minorities especially in the context of inclusion and exclusion in state-building in post-colonial India? How are they able to assert themselves? What is the role and extent of their participation in politics and socio-economic developments? What is the extent of prejudice and discrimination faced by them? The following sections would delve upon these issues.

4.2.4.1 STATUS OF DEMANDS OF MINORITIES

We have five minorities notified as early as 1993 (the law came into force in 1992). They are Muslims, Christians, Sikhs, Buddhist and the Parsis whereas the Jains became the sixth community to have minority status just before Lok sabha elections of 2014. Each of the minority community faces challenges. For instance the Parsi population is dwindling. The Parsis have total population of 45,000 as per census 2011. That is the threat faced by Parsis due to low fertility rate and inter-religious marriages. In a 2005 judgment the Supreme Court, (Patil versus Union of India on a petition by Jains that they be declared minorities) has held that India is a nation of minorities. The issues of identity, security and equity are some of the main problems that are faced by minorities in India. Historical and socio-cultural practices having followed different trajectory minorities have to deal with the issue of identity in every sphere in their relationship with the majority population.

4.2.4.2 ECONOMIC AND EDUCATIONAL BACKWARDNESS OF MUSLIMS

There are number of problems and grievances of minorities in general and Muslims in particular, some delicate and some complex, some real and some perceptible. The Muslim backwardness in the country can evidently seen as they lack behind the majority community- both educationally and economically.

There are two commonly prevalent explanations regarding educational backwardness among Muslims in contemporary India. One explanation is that they have been slow to take advantage of governmental liberal policy regarding education since the independence due to their particular attitude or cultural ethos. There have been slow tendencies of the Muslims to respond positively to modern technical and professional

education or take advantage of educational developments due to the account of their resistance to modern (scientific and professional education). They generally prefer sending their children to a traditional Islamic educational institution rather than to a modern institution. Such tendencies are gradually vanishing as enlightened Muslims or Muslim institutions are engaged in developing awareness among Muslim parents and their children towards the acquisition of education starting from very basic Islamic traditional schooling to the acquisition of education at college or university level. Presently Muslims in comparison to the other communities in the country are almost proportionally equal in the pursuit of modern education but still Muslims lack behind in terms of the acquisition of professional and technical education. The admission to these courses requires competition, where Muslims generally are not up to the mark in competing with the other communities. It is a matter of reality that Muslims have far below representation proportionately in a composition for professional and technical courses. This is one of the major logical reasons of Muslim educational backwardness. There have been a general outcry from the Muslim minority for the proportional reservation of seats in all walks of life either education or employment.

4.2.4.3 PROBLEMS OF CHRISTIAN MINORITY

The Christians take the Indian Constitution for granted to provide, protect and safeguard the fundamental rights of every citizen and every minority, including the Christians. However, the relevance and effectiveness of the safeguards are eroding fast. There have been instances when extremist organizations especially in tribal heartland accused Christians pastors of forcefully converting tribals. In some case police use their high handedness to register fabricated complaints, sometimes they disrupt their church sessions also. These cases have come across from Raipur in Chhattisgarh, Jabalpur in Madhya Pradesh in recent times. According to the Global Council of Indian Christians, the extremists has stopped funeral procession of Christian, not allowed them to use cementaries.

This is creating a situation where in the minority communities, especially the poor and downtrodden Dalit Christians, are feeling helpless. The third paragraph of the Presidential Order of 1950 was amended by Parliament to extend constitutional

benefits to the 'Dalit Sikhs' (1956) and the 'Buddhists' (1990) along with the 'Hindus', but similar benefit was refused to the Dalit Christians. The denial of justice to the Dalit Christians is also against the letter and spirit of the Constitution of India on equal justice. The Presidential Order, as it was interpreted, was not only communalistic, it was also anti-Dalit. It tended to divide the Dalits on the basis of religion. The denial of justice to the Dalit Christians goes against the letter and spirit of Articles 14, 15, 16 and 25 of the Constitution of India on equal justice, equal opportunities and freedom of religion. If a Scheduled Caste becomes a Christian, he loses all the reservation facilities, and if he produces a certificate of Scheduled Caste he gets back all the benefits. Even the children of the same Scheduled Caste parents, living under the same roof, sharing the same meals are discriminated against on the basis of religion.

4.2.4.4 Problems of Sikh Minority

Sikhism is another important religion in India which is spread in different parts of the country, especially in Punjab, Delhi, Haryana, Bihar, etc. Claiming Punjab as their motherland, the Sikhs have developed a very strong sub-national identity, carrying with them the vital elements of the Punjabi culture. The Sikhs are excellent cultivators in the rural areas; they have played a very significant role in the Green Revolution of the country. In urban areas, most of them earn their livelihood in the trade and commerce sectors. They have always maintained a larger share in defence forces of the country.

Among Sikhs early exposure to education, followed by Social reform movements such as Singh Sabha movement along with their exposure to western value system due to recruitment in army during the two world wars has been important. Recruitment in Army and advancement in education got a flip due to role played by Christian missionaries. After independence the role of large scale emigration promoted education as an asset; rural connectivity along with high per capita income was also one of the reasons for enhancing socio economic status of Sikhs majority of whom live in Punjab. However this is one face of minority, on other hand they being ethnic community have to face problems because of half backed approach by Indian State as a result numerous Sikh sectarian organisations emerged which questioned the distinct Sikh identity.

In recent historical past, two of India's Prime Ministers, Indira Gandhi and Rajiv Gandhi, were killed by terrorists - one by Sikh militants and other by LTEE a group of Sri Lankan Tamils. This single instance of terror killings does not mean that all Sikhs and Tamils are terrorists? However, large scale ethnic killings of Sikhs took place mostly in Delhi but in other parts of the country as well following the killing of Indira Gandhi. This has alienated many of the Sikhs who are otherwise as nationalist as any other community in India. Their contribution to Indian Army and their pan-Indian cultural ethos are known to everyone. Still, they had to face mass genocide in Delhi which had cracked their faith India's liberal and secular democracy.

4.2.4.5 ROLE OF MEDIA

The role of police and media becomes questionable as they create stereotype images of minorities. Any times when there are any terror related incidents being reported people start naming people and organisations having distinct Muslim names, for instance Jamaat etc. This has led to a great sense of threat and insecurity among people belonging to Muslim community. One has to see how in Malegaon blast a Sadhvi Pragya Devi was involved which implies that that terrorism is never precipitated by just one community as it is always assumed. Muslim community has several grievances. Their educational backwardness is attributed to discrimination which they perceive at the hands of education system. Majority of the Muslims are struggling to emerge out of poverty in all spheres of life be it education, employment, or traditional livelihoods in skills and crafts, Indian Muslims find themselves at the bottom of the social rung. Gujrat like incidents followed by communal riots showcase the state involvement and majorities as rioters, thus Muslims facing loss of life and further ghettoisation of the community, both in terms of living conditions and an ideological inwardness. The media, always looks for Muslim face as a terrorist as in case of Mecca Masjid case in Hyderabad 60 were arrested, out of which 22 Muslim youths were caught up in false cases. They had to spent several months in jail. The commission which was set up by state Minority Commission found three police men guilty and responsible for this act on the instance of chairman of national minority commission these innocent youths were rehabilitated.

4.2.4.6 IMPUNITY IN COMMUNAL VIOLENCE CASES

Threats of communal violence increase when local forces wait for orders before acting, or worse, are instructed not to act. These problems are compounded when responsible officials are not held accountable after the fact.

India has suffered three major spates of communal violence in recent history: first, the 1984 attacks on Sikhs in Delhi following the assassination of Prime Minister Indira Gandhi by her Sikh bodyguards, during the uprising by separatist Sikh groups in Punjab; second, the 1992-93 communal violence in Mumbai following the demolition of the Babri Mosque; and third, the 2002 violence against Muslims in Gujarat state after a mob attack on a train killed 59 Hindu activists. Thousands of people were killed in each of these attacks.

In all of these cases above, accountability has proved elusive. Indian authorities have all too often failed to properly investigate and prosecute suspects after major spates of violence, even after reports by independent inquiries implicating officials and members of law enforcement.

The pattern of impunity continues to the present day. There was, for instance, the violence that occurred in Orissa in 2008 after a Hindu leader there was assassinated, allegedly by Maoists. After members of an extremist Hindu group incited violence against the area's Christian population, nearly 40 Christians were killed, thousands of homes were burned, and over 10,000 were displaced. Although many perpetrators were later prosecuted, many were given only minor punishments, such as fines.

The recurring theme in the aftermath of all these tragic events is impunity. When state authorities fail to investigate incidents properly, courts or government human rights commissions step in, document potential complicity, and recommend or order state authorities to redouble efforts to hold people responsible. The results are often anemic-only partial, incomplete justice at best.

4.2.5 STATE RESPONSE FOR WELFARE OF MINORITIES

To understand the socio-economic problems of Muslims, the government of India appointed the Sachar Committee, which submitted its report in November 2006 and

identified that socio-economic indicators show that the Muslim minority lagged far behind in social development. Its economic backwardness, representation in jobs and representation in the political process manifested a gloomy picture. In this backdrop, the Sachar Committee recommended setting up an Equal Opportunity Commission that would take measures to ensure Muslim participation in public bodies in order to promote religious tolerance and a procedure to evaluate text books to incorporate social values among the people.

The Sachar Committee was not the only committee to identify the problems faced by the Muslim minority; earlier in 1982, the Gopal Singh Committee Report, which revealed the socio-economic deprivation of Muslims, was ignored and communal issues such as the Ram Temple matter got attention. Another such attempt was made when the National Commission on Religious and Linguistic Minorities, led by the former Chief Justice (CJ) of India, Ranganath Misra, submitted its report to the Prime Minister (PM) on May 22, 2007. It confirmed the findings of the Sachar Committee on the socio-economic backwardness of Muslims and suggested 10 percent reservation of seats for Muslims in education and employment to improve their condition. Muslims are the most backward community with the lowest employment rate. With such backward economic status, there was hardly any incentive for a modern secular education.

The Kundu Report of 2014, which was given the task of evaluating the implementation of the Sachar recommendations, highlighted that work had been started in this regard but could not gain momentum. The above-mentioned committees did identify the problems but when it comes to implementation of proposals, lack of political will becomes the main hindrance. Though Congress has not been a pro-Muslim political party, its secular orientation did not create such fear and anxiety in minorities as the BJP's policies have been creating. Quite recently, the killing of a man by a Hindu mob on the allegations of eating beef has further enhanced the insecurity of Muslims and has created an environment for communal violence. This led PM Modi to announce that Hindus and Muslims should fight against poverty, not with each other. Such statements are not enough to create communal harmony; the government of India needs to accept that India is a multicultural, multi-religious society and denial of

freedom of speech and expression to minorities could threaten the very existence of the secular state.

Today minority rights have introduced two new dimensions into democracy. First, they made community a legitimate subject of political discourse; and second, they placed the issue of inter-group equality on the agenda. The Indian experience also reveals that minority rights present two important problems for a democratic polity. One, minority rights privilege the community's cultural practices over the principle of equal rights for all citizens. Two, recognised minorities are not always sensitive to the plight of internal minorities. Thus, while special safeguards provided to identify minorities curb the hegemony of any one community or the nation-state, they do not guarantee free and equal status to all groups and communities in society.

To conclude, the trajectory about Indian population reveals composite cultures sometimes do assume majority and minority dimensions. In fact the Muslims, Christians and Sikhs each have their own separate and distinct cultures which have to be preserved and not to create hegemony of any particular religion we all have to strive for better future in this time of change. Thus very foundation of society in India being religion, we have to preserve spiritual values and heritage this would be possible only when one can practise and propagate any religion which is recognised as a fundamental right.

This identity issue and sense of being in a relatively smaller number gives rise to perpetual insecurity that is further enhanced from time to time in the case of communal violence or during strained relations with the majority. The third important issue for minorities in India has been the denial of opportunities in development.

Peaceful coexistence of different communities requires both a vigorous defence of the basic rights of individuals as citizens and an institutional and normative framework that acknowledges and values diverse ways of life. The latter often entails special consideration for members of a community, in the form of exemptions from existing legal codes or recognition for specific cultural institutions and practices. In other words, it is not an either/or situation. If individual rights by themselves provide little protection against forces of cultural homogenization, then accommodating diversity

through special consideration for vulnerable groups also neglects the primary concerns of individuals as citizens. It is only when both sets of concerns are suitably addressed that democracy is deepened and multicultural polities are nurtured and made more sustainable.

4.2.6 LET US SUM UP

India, like many of the countries of the postcolonial world, remains to a great extent an artificial construct of the colonial era. Beneath the surface, it is a country burdened with ethnic, religious and linguistic conflicts. Even so, minority issues are increasingly taking centre stage in Indian politics, whether in the form of separatist movements, demands for increased political representation, or the need to provide protection to its many religions and cultures. Many of these conflicts are yet to be resolved, and the challenge for India will be to put in place processes that enable minority problems to be discussed and resolved for the benefit of the country as a whole, while ensuring the collective survival of the many minority people who form an integral part of the country. Again one of the major challenges to minority-majority relationship in India is the phenomenon of communal violence and ethnic separatism. The periodic outbreak of communal violence has dent the secular image of the country. The strained relations between majority and minority and the insecurity feeling of the minorities in a majority dominated society develop the atmosphere for communal conflicts. Each successive government in India after coming to power has the tendency towards minority bashing and it is escalating towards an upward swing presently. Moreover, ethnic groups living in different parts in India are also not spared from this majority-minority divide. For example, people from North-eastern states of India are always alienated and many a times they are the soft target of violence whenever there is a clash of identity. Thus, basically, the fear psychosis in minorities arising out of this majority-minority divide has increased considerably which is utterly neglected by our State machineries.

4.2.7 EXERCISE

1. Discuss the problems of minorities of India?
2. Examine the role of government for welfare of minorities?

3. Constitution provisions to safeguards the interest of minorities?
4. What do you understand by religious fundamentalism?
5. What are the different committee formed by the government for the welfare of Muslims in India?
6. What do you understand by terms religious conversion?
7. Write a note on Christians in India?
8. Describe the population of religious minorities of India and places they live?

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4.3 SOCIAL MOVEMENTS: HUMAN RIGHTS, WOMEN'S MOVEMENTS AND ENVIRONMENTAL MOVEMENTS

- V. Nagendra Rao & Mamta Sharma

STRUCTURE

4.3.0 OBJECTIVES

After going through this lesson, you will be able to understand:

- How the 'new' social movements are different from the old movements;
- The focus of people's environmental movements and how broader their issues are with sustainable development as the focus.

4.3.1 INTRODUCTION

If all the members of a society are satisfied about everything, there is no possibility of a movement emerging. Thus the emergence of a movement is an indication of dissatisfaction about an un-integrated or ill integrated society. In addition, manmade

deprivations also bring people together to call for a collective action in the form of movement. Further, the conflicts and contradictions in the society also give birth to the movements in any Society. Thus a social movement can be understood as a particular form of collective behaviour in which the motive to act especially springs from the attitudes and aspirations of members typically acting within a loose organizational framework. Such social movement requires a) Purposive Collective Action, b) Ideology and Leadership, c) Organizational Framework. Especially a social movement will have a general orientation or way of approaching to bring about (or to prevent) change. Collective action through social movements is not something new in India. One can find the origin of such micro social movements in India in the 19th century itself. Though, there are different ways of classifying social movements, keeping the Indian context and the current lesson in consideration, it follows the classification of Social Movements into Old and New and this classification is essentially based on the nature and style of functioning of these social movements. In the following section you will study about social movements.

4.3.2 SOCIAL MOVEMENTS: OLD AND NEW

For much of the twentieth century, social movements were either class based like working class movements and peasant movements or anti-colonial in their nature. India witness the anti-colonial national moment as well as class based peasant movements and workers movements. These kinds of early movements are often classified as Old Social Movements and their main aim was the reorganization of power and they often functioned within the frame of political parties.

The social movements that came into being in the post-colonial period, mainly after 1960s, in the Third World are often referred as New Social Movements. In Independent India, the new social movements emerged as important players in regulating society mainly in the wake of the failure of state led model of development in 1970's. Failure of government and government sponsored programmes to achieve the targeted objectives mainly incited these protest and mass movements. Eminent Political Scientist, Rajni Kothari attributes the surge of social movements to the growing dissatisfaction of people with parliamentary democracy. He argues that the institutions of the state have been captured by elites. Due to this, electoral

representation by political parties is no longer an effective way for the poor to get their voices heard. People left out by the formal political system join social movements or non-party political formations in order to put pressure on the state from outside. The surge we have been discussing so far also includes the increased activity of the old social movements often based on class. Peasants, Workers and even Tribal Movement and often represent such traditional movements that already existed but were passive but increased their activity mainly owing to the failure of the democratic institutions after 1970s. Today what we call as Grassroots Movements, include all such new and old social movements. The following section will deal the origins and the nature of Grassroots Movement in India.

4.3.3 HUMAN RIGHTS MOVEMENTS

Basic rights to life which are indispensably required for an individual to lead a life of security, justice and human dignity constitute human rights. Human Rights are central to democracy and form the basis of equality, freedom, and justice without which an individual in the society is reduced to a slave. We all know that slavery has been banned as it has been hostile to human existence in society. No society can claim to be civilized if human rights are grossly violated.

Human rights are norms that help to protect all people everywhere from severe political, legal, and social abuses. Examples of human rights are the right to freedom of religion, the right to a fair trial when charged with a crime, the right not to be tortured, and the right to engage in political activity. These rights exist in morality and in law at the national and international levels. Historical sources for bills of rights include the Magna Carta (1215), the English Bill of Rights (1689), the French Declaration of the Rights of Man and the Citizen (1789), and the Bill of Rights in the United States Constitution (1791). Early philosophical sources of the idea of human rights include Francisco Suarez (1548–1617), Hugo Grotius (1583–1645), Samuel Pufendorf (1632–1694), John Locke (1632–1704), and Immanuel Kant (1724–1804). The main sources of the contemporary conception of human rights are the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (United Nations, 1948) and the many human rights documents and treaties that followed in international organizations such as the United Nations, the Council of Europe, the Organization of American States, and the African Union.

Human Rights have become a global movement to protect the basic rights of man against their violation and to let him live a life of man as man. The origin of this movement dates back to the post-World War II era. The War led to the gross violation of the rights of man, and the colonial rule that covered a larger part of the world denied rights to people and deprived them of justice, as it is historically branded as the rule of oppression and exploitation. The end of World War II led the World to awaken to the necessity of protecting the rights of people and then to render justice to them. The World leaders came to realize that human rights are the inherent, inalienable rights which every individual must enjoy as a human being."Human rights are those conditions of social life without which no person can seek, in general, to be his best." The world leaders laid emphasis on the basic rights of people which need to be protected against violation by the State.

UN Declaration on Human Rights

"On December 10, 1948, the General Assembly of United Nations Organisation (UNO) adopted the UN Declaration on Human Rights, a document outlining tasks for the accomplishment of which all peoples and States should strive. The Declaration contains an enumeration of fundamental human rights such as equality without discrimination, the right to life, liberty and security of person, the right to the inviolability of dignity, reputation and the home, and to the protection of the rights by an impartial tribunal. The Declaration calls upon the States to incorporate in the Constitutions such as civil and political rights and freedom of thought, conscience and religion, freedom of convictions, peaceful assembly and association, and universal and equal suffrage by secret ballot. The Declaration also proclaims social and economic rights: the right to work and to equal pay for equal work, the right to form trade unions, the right to rest and leisure and to social security, the right to education, and the right to participate in the cultural life of the community. Exercise of real human rights depends on the actual conditions of life in society, on its social, economic and political systems".

Human Rights in the context of India

The UN Declaration stresses socialism as the positive principle to protect people's rights and to ensure social justice. It announces its mission to stop exploitation of man

by man. It proclaims moral, political and ideological unity, based on the community of interests and world outlook of the workers in order to usher in a new era of human rights and justice in the world. It stresses the deepening and broadening of socialist democracy with a view to ensuring genuine freedom of development of the individual. A genuine government by people combining with the active participation of working people in running their State takes special initiative in protecting human rights. The legal guarantees are provided by laws that ensure the exercise by citizens of their constitutional rights. The study of the Constitution of India reveals that the Constitution framers had been deeply inspired by the UN Declaration, 1948 on the matters of the "Fundamental Principles" and the "Directive Principles of State Policy." The 'Fundamental Rights' enshrined in the Constitution seem be an echo of the UN Declaration of Human Rights.

In India, the last quarter of the 20th century has been witness to a growing recognition of the place and relevance of human rights due to pressure from various social movements. It is axiomatic that this interest in human rights is rooted in the denial of life and liberty that was a pervasive aspect of the emergency (1975–77). The mass arrests of the leaders of the opposition and the targeted apprehension of those who could present a challenge to an authoritarian state are some of the dominant images that have survived. The imposition of the national emergency in India in 1976 made the articulate and vocal sections of society sensitized to human rights. Absence of democratic rights during those eighteen months galvanised students, intellectuals, political activists, trade unionists, artists into action. The educated middle class of India had thrived on an uninterrupted flow of democracy in its national life since it gained independence in 1947. The emergency rule was marked by detention without trial for a large number of people—students, youth, political personalities—news censorship, trespassing without legal sanction of private premises, taping of telephones, interception of letters and constitutional amendment curtailing basic rights to life and freedom in the name of national security and violation of civil liberties. Television being monopoly of the government was totally controlled by the ruling party. Hundreds of thousands of people joined massive rallies to protest against the anti-democratic acts of the government and to mobilise public opinion to safeguard the Indian democracy. Organisations such as Citizens for Democracy, People's Union

for Civil Liberties (PUCL), People's Union for Civil Liberties and Democratic Rights (PUCLDR) and Chhatra Yuva Sangharsh Vahini were at the forefront of human rights struggles at the national level. Dozens of state-level and city-based groups were also formed during this period. For example, Committee for Protection for Democratic Rights (Mumbai), Association for Protection of Democratic Rights (APDR) and Andhra Pradesh Civil Liberties Committee (APCLC) in Hyderabad. With the national emergency lifted in 1977, horror stories of custodial violence and barbaric acts of torture in the police custody and prisons started pouring into the mainstream newspapers. Bright young men and women opted for investigative journalism as a career. Newly formed civil liberties and democratic rights groups started bringing out their newsletters and journals in English, Hindi and several regional languages. Even in the post-emergency period, the Janata Party Human Rights Movements in India that had earlier raised the slogan of 'Democracy versus Dictatorship', after came to power with popular mandate, brought into force draconian laws such as Preventive Detention Act, Industrial Relations Bill and condoned Essential Services Maintenance Act and Disturbed Areas Act to repress the toiling poor . During 1980s, those who were concerned only about formal democracy confined themselves to 'civil liberties movement'. And organisations working against repression of the workers, poor, peasants, dalits, women and tribal people joined 'democratic rights movement'. This set the tone for human rights movements in India during 1990s that established their networks from local and regional to global level. Now, we have reached a stage where social movements of all ideological hues accept 'emancipatory potential' of human rights. Even the mainstream institutions—universities, print and electronic media, religious organisations and political parties—with mutually exclusive interests talk about 'violation of human rights' in their campaigns. In the 21st century, the state of human rights in a 'post human' and 'machinistic' world is almost overwhelmed by security concerns, 'terrorist threats' and techno-science.

Challenges before Human Rights Movements

The urgent tasks before the human rights community in India are to consistently focus on the root causes of human rights violations both nationally and internationally and its specific political context. The war on terror is an attack on the rights and dignity

of the workers, urban and rural poor. There is also a need to focus on the fact that the human rights violations on a world scale are due to the unfair terms of international trade and have resulted in the destruction of millions of cultures, economies and ecology. Documenting and exposing the growing role of intelligence agencies in the disinformation campaign and their penetration into the ranks of movements, including the human rights movement are also required. The argument that human rights must be sacrificed for national security must be countered. In fact preservation of human rights standards is the only way to ensure our nation remains secure, as violation leads to greater alienation of the victims. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) is a product of thousands of struggles the world over and it needs to be evolved and become more inclusive, especially of collective rights. Human rights movement in India has rallied around fundamental rights guaranteed in the Constitution of India as human rights .

Both top-down and bottom-up approaches are used by people's organisations to promote human rights. We must demand greater transparency from the government in dealing with militancy, which means that all fundamentalists, fascist forces have to be dealt with equal vigour. Those caught for violating the law and committing crimes must be punished but strictly in accordance with the law and human rights standards. The use of the politics of fear for narrow electoral and short-term political gains serves to encourage corruption among the investigating agencies and undermines the criminal justice system. The human rights movements are fighting both religious chauvinism and market fundamentalism politically and ideologically. They are promoting secular humanism and voicing the concerns of the oppressed, suppressed and brutalised human beings. Their commitment to human rights is not based merely on individual rights but that which includes the collective rights of the people.

4.3.4 WOMEN'S MOVEMENTS IN INDIA

Society has been patriarchal for most part of recorded history. It is difficult to talk about the position and status of women, with all women being categorised as uniform. There has been infinite variation on the status of women depending on the culture, class, caste, family structure and property rights. Even while women have right to kinship systems, the entire mechanisms of marriage, descent, residence

and inheritance are rarely organised in such a way as to guarantee women access to resources or to allow them to secure access for other women. In fact under patriarchal order, kinship, conjugal and familial systems tend to construct women in such a way that they hardly live as independent beings and they are seen only in relation to men, thus depriving women of their selfhood and agency.

This section maps the issues concerning the autonomous women's movement in India from its earliest traceable origins to contemporary times. This is an attempt to sketch the evolution of the movement and the transitions within it. There have been and still are several shades and hues to what we broadly refer to as the 'women's movement'. Today, it comprises of both organisations that are working to conserve women's position and those aspiring to change women's position. Some organisations have been small intellectual groups while there have been some that have had mass support. Within the women's movement there have been divergent understandings of patriarchal oppression and its outcomes and, therefore, also varied strategies to combat it. Some have emerged in support of certain causes or for the purpose of a focused campaign, while there are some that have existed for years with evolving agendas. The ideologies also vary from radical, liberal, socialist, Marxist and Gandhian, to the new fundamentalist. The transitions that have taken place within the women's movement in India have not followed a chronological or linear pattern, but have at all stages involved a collage of influences, local, national and international.

Phases of Women's Movements: There are three phases of Women's Movements in India.

(i) Social Reform Movements and Nationalist Movements of the 19th century.

(ii) Post-Independence Women Movements.

(iii) Women Movements after late 1970s.

(iv) Social Reform Movements and Nationalist Movements of the 19th century.

i) Social Reform Movements: Urvashi Butalia (1998) and Ritu Menon and Kamala Bhasin (1998) have discussed the deliberate absence of a record of women's voice and contribution to political situations in pre-independent India and of the patriarchal nature of our documented history. Given the fact that in our history there

is sufficient evidence that women were excluded from the formal education system, it is not surprising that their voices have not been reflected in the written texts that stand as testimonies of our history. The women's movements began as a social reform movement in the 19th century. The new economic system and administrative machinery required a new type of educated persons which resulted in the establishment of Western educational institutions imparting modern education. The Indians who were the beneficiaries of the new economic system were attracted towards this and as a result a new class of intelligentsia evolved in the Indian society. The articulate intelligentsia became the pioneers of all progressive democratic movements: social, political, economic and cultural.

Spurred by new European ideas of rationalism and progress, these reformers tried to create a new society, modern yet rooted in Indian tradition. They began a critical appraisal of Indian society in an attempt to create a new ethos devoid of all overt social aberrations like polytheism, polygamy, casteism, sati, child marriage, illiteracy etc. all of which they believed were impediments to progress of women. All the social reformers shared a belief common to many parts of the world in the 19th century that no society could progress if its women were backward. To the reformers, the position of Indian women, as it was in the 19th century was abysmally low and hence their efforts were directed at an overall improvement in the status of women through legislation, political action and propagation, of education. This was mainly spurred by the first wave feminism of the west and concentrated on basic rights for women. The social reform movement did not radically challenge the existing patriarchal structure of society or question gender relation. They picked up for reform only those issues which the British were pointing out as evidence of degeneration in the Indian society.

Women were seen as passive recipients of a more humanitarian treatment to be given by Western educated elite men. There was thus an attempt to reform women rather than reform the social conditions which opposed them. The attempt was to create a new Indian woman, truly Indian and yet sufficiently educated and tutored in the 19th century values to suit the new emerging society. Thus education for girls was not meant to equip them to be self-sufficient, independent and emancipated and train them to follow some profession but to be good housewives. Women also joined in the

struggle against colonialism, but while they were encouraged to participate by leaders like Gandhi, their work in the struggles was just an extension of their domestic work. In spite of its limitations, it cannot be denied that the social reform movement did help in removing prejudices against women's education and provided a space for women in the public realm.

Various social reform movements and organisations came into existence during this period.

Raja Ram Mohan Roy was the first Indian to initiate a social reform movement and campaign for the cause of women in India. He advocated equality between the two sexes and declared that women were not inferior to men morally and intellectually. Largely because of his effort and persuasion, the East India Company declared the sati practice illegal and a punishable offence in 1829. Raja Ram Mohan Roy also opposed other evils like early marriage, polygamy etc. He supported female education and widow and inter-caste marriage. He wanted that women should have the right of inheritance and property.

Roy's Brahmo Samaj played a significant role in the reform activities concerning women. Ishwara Chandra Vidya Sagar also fought for women cause. He did so by propagating widow remarriage. The child marriage evil resulted in large numbers of young girls ending up as widows whose lives were miserable due to the severe restrictions imposed on them. He argued in favour of widow remarriage and published his work on "Widow Remarriage" in 1853. Dayanand Saraswathi emphasised compulsory education of both boys and girls. A series of schools for women- Arya Kanya Patasalas - were the first concerted effort of the Samaj to promote women's education in a systematic way.

The efforts of Vidya Sagar, Keshub Chandra Sen and D. K. Karve resulted in the enactment of widow remarriage act of 1856. Starting from Raja Ram Mohan Roy including the liberal as well as orthodox reformers supported female education. This resulted in the establishment of schools for girls and homes for widows

Swami Vivekananda, Swami Dayananda Saraswati and Annie Besant were the prominent reformers of the revivalist group who also worked for the cause of Indian women. This group believed in the revival of the Vedic society in modern India.

Dayanand Saraswati, was against child marriage. He encouraged widow remarriages and also set up several rescue homes and orphanages. Annie Besant leader of the theosophical movement was also against child marriage and supported remarriage of child widows. She laid emphasis on the importance of female education.

Nationalist Movements

Women's leadership in the nationalist phase however, emerged from a small section of the urban, middle-class, who had their education in English and invariably was in some way linked to movements or organisations in the west. The expansion of women's education and their admission to educational institutions in the 19th century had produced a sizable number of English educated middle class women by the late 19th century- and they made their presence felt in political activities. In this phase, for the first time many women belonging to the middle class, started taking part in the political activities. The partition of Bengal in 1905 resulted in the launching of Swadeshi movement by the nationalists. Though there was the absence of mass awakening amongst the women, but meetings were arranged and khadi spinning's were taken up by women. The women of Bengal and Punjab took active part in the Swadeshi movement. The women workers of the Arya Samaj were also responsible for arousing national spirit among the people. Swarna Kumari, sister of Rabindranath Tagore and her daughter Sarala Devi were strong supporters of the Swadeshi movement. Important women who participated in the revolutionary activities were Shyamji Krishna Varma, P. Nauroji, M. Chettopadhya, and Madam Bhikaji Rustum, K. R. Kame etc.

The period from 1911-18 is of great significance in the history of Indian national movement because for the first time a woman Annie Besant led the national movement as president of Indian National Congress. The setting up of Home Rule League and organisation of the Home Rule agitation raised the tempo of the movement. It was due to women like Annie Besant that organised movement for the emancipation of women took place and the demand for political rights for women came to be firmly established on the political agenda. Pandita Rama Bai's Sharda Sadan (1892) in Poona, Shri Mahipatram Rupram Anathashram in Ahmedabad (1892), Shri Zorastrian Mandal in Bombay (1903), Maternity and Child Welfare League in Baroda (1914) , Bhagini

Samaj in Poona (1916) all were established and worked with the particular objective of improving women's lives. These regional organisations were followed by national organisations like Women's Indian Association (1917) and The National Council of Women in India (1920). All India Women's Conference (1926) went on to organise 12 women's conferences till 1937 and Federation of University Women in India (1920) stimulated the interests of women in civic and public life and concentrated on the removal of disabilities of women and promoted social, civil, moral and educational welfare of women and children.

The important achievement of the women's movement in India during the second phase was the founding of Women's Indian Association (WIA). The Women's Indian Association was mainly concerned with influencing the government policy on women's suffrage, educational and social reform issues. Its main objectives were spread of women's education, elimination of child marriage and other social evils, franchise for women and establishment of equality of rights between men and women. During the Gandhian era of national movement, women continued their movement for political rights and social reform activities by forming organisations. Gandhi launched an all India Satyagraha in 1919 against the provocative enactment of the Rowlat Act. Women took out processions, propagated the use of Khadi and even courted jail. Though the non-cooperation movement ended in failure, it awakened the women of all sections and imparted first lessons in Satyagraha.

For the first time, Indian women exercised their vote in the elections of 1926. The first woman to stand for election was Kamala Devi Chattopadhaya. Madras was the first state which nominated a woman member, Dr. Muttu Lakshmi Reddy to the legislative Council. She saw to the enactment of the abolition of Devadasi system and protect the minor girls. She brought amendments to the children's act and worked for the creation of health schools. A large number of women including Sarojini Naidu, actively took part in the Dandi March. Women participated by breaking salt laws, forest laws taking out processions, picketing schools, colleges, legislative councils and clubs. During the Civil Disobedience Movement of 1930, Kamala Devi Chattopadhyaya addressed meetings and picketed foreign cloth and liquor shops. The inauguration of provincial autonomy under the India Act of 1935 gave women an opportunity to be elected to

the state legislatures and also become administrators. In the Quit India Movement of 1942, men leaders were arrested in the first round up and in their absence women carried on the movement and bore the burnt of the British wrath, The women not only led processions and held demonstrations but also organised camps in which they were given training in civil duties and first aid and were educated on democracy.

Post-Independence Women Movements:

In the post Independence period during the first few decades, the major concern was for overall economic growth. This was immediately followed by another decade, which witnessed an increased concern for equity and poverty alleviation. Gender issues were subsumed in poverty related concerns and there were no specific programs which aimed at women empowement. Women during this period were involved in such movements like the law and famine relief movement but did not start to pick up issues involving their oppression until the mid 1970s. In this period, Ideals of equal status and important provisions for the welfare of women were incorporated into the Indian constitution, while the pre-independent legislative acts continued to be in force. The constitution guaranteed equal rights to both the sexes. Article 15 and Article 16 (2) of the constitution forbids discrimination and accepts all as equal in the eyes of the law (Article 14). In the early 1950s a series of legislations such as the Hindu Marriage Act, Hindu Succession Act, Dowry Prohibition Act and Equal Remuneration Act were passed.

The period from the late 1960s has been marked by an economic crisis and stagnation, rising prices, increasing landlessness and generalised discontent both in the rural and urban areas. The left parties took interest in the economic crisis and started organising movements. Through women's issues were not taken up, women were mobilised in large number and they participated in the general struggle of the rural poor, tribals and industrial working class. Women's organisations such as Shramik Mahila Sangathana (the working women's organisation) took up the issue of rising prices of essential goods, adulteration etc. This saw its culmination in the anti price movement of 1973 as a united front organisation of women belonging to political parties such as CPI (M), Socialist Party, Congress and even non-political women. The political parties mobilised women to achieve their own political gains. This resulted in the

establishment of National Federation of Indian Women (NFIW) by the Communist Party of India. The economic hardships of the rural masses also drew the attention of some political parties. While pressing for better working conditions for peasant women, issues like wife beating, alcoholism, dowry and sexual harassment from the upper castes were also given attention. Thus in the early 1970s while elite women's organisations were conducting cultural activities and beauty shows, the poor women were getting entrenched into serious movements.

Women's Movements after late 1970s.

From the mid 1970s, NGOs and other such organisations started emphasizing on women's development and provided women avenues of collectively voicing their concerns. These grass root organisations have questioned the welfare approach to women and incorporated an empowerment participatory approach. While questions about the success of these organisations are often raised, it is often seen that women exposed to some amount of mobilisation show great potentialities, receptiveness and defining capacities.

Unlike the women's movements in America and Britain, in India, the concern for women's freedom was first espoused by enlightened males during the British era who had imbibed liberal ideas. Upto the 1920s the struggle was carried on by men. It was only after Mahatma Gandhi's entry into politics, that the nationalist movement under his leadership was transformed from a middle class movement into a mass movement where women for the first time raised their voices against the disabilities that they suffered. It is the women's movement in India that has been the force behind the long struggle of women's advancement from subordination to gender equality and finally to women's empowerment. Though a lot needs to be achieved and there are various impediments in making this reality available to a large section of women, the women's movement has brought women's issues centre stage and made them more visible.

4.3.5 ENVIRONMENTAL MOVEMENTS

In the so-called 'developing' countries, environmentalism has acquired a new meaning. As in the first world, there are many conservation ecologists compiling

information and inculcating sensitivity regarding flora and fauna, through study and appreciation of birds, trees, animals, mountains, rivers, the sea and the entire globe and its atmosphere. For most of the part, such environmentalism is devoid of any social-political linkages. There is also a managerial environmentalism of the political and industrial-urban elite, for whom environmental problems are to be and can be managed and alleviated with other techno-economic interventions, without requiring changes in the basic framework of the system.

The environmentalism in India reflected through people's movements is undoubtedly concerned with the continuous degradation of resources and the need to protect them; but has insisted on the right of communities over natural resources and their equitable distribution and sustainable use. The Pani Panchayat experiment initiated by Vilasrao Salunkhe during the severe drought in the 1970s in Maharashtra represents one of the finest models of this new environmentalism in India. Asserting the first right of the village/group of villages over the water in their stream/river, and its equal distribution and sustainable use, it gave the right to water to the landless, women and dalits in the villages and banned water intensive crops like sugar cane. Though the prevalent model of capitalist-consumerist development along with the commoditization of culture and religion have eroded traditional values and practices, many rural societies and adivasi communities still facilitate the protection of natural resources and encourage community responsibility for the same.

Ecological and environmental values and policies are necessary to enrich the quality of life and the material development of all people. The forests, tree cover, unpolluted water sources, and pure air are necessary for a good life for all, and particularly the depressed sections of the population, and underprivileged people have an equal right to these as human beings and citizens. Moreover, increased sensitivity, love and empathy for and coexistence with other beings are signs of the development of a human being and community.

Along with class and caste based equality of rights and dignity, the new movements have added distributive justice like right over resources – land, forest and water bodies – as a major criterion for equality. The tribals, peasants, dalits, backward castes, fisher-people or the people displaced from their means of livelihood due to large projects,

along with unorganised and organised workers, small entrepreneurs, manufacturers, and all those surviving on land, forests, rivers, ponds, sea and other local resources should become the first and most important beneficiaries of these re- sources. Theirs is the first right over these resources and regional and national aspirations on these come at a subsequent stage.

The crux of equality lies in the changes in the top-down and hegemonic power relations and decision-making processes. Through decentralisation, the new groups have been trying to promote bottom-up decision-making and empowerment at the local or basti level.

Among the main environmental movements are Chipko Andolan and Save the Bhagirathi and Stop Tehri project committee in Uttar Pradesh; Save the Narmada Movement (Narmada Bachao Andolan) in Madhya Pradesh and Gujarat; youth organizations and tribal people in the Gandhamardan Hills whose survival is directly threatened by development of bauxite deposits; the opposition to the Baliapal and Bhogarai test range in Orissa, the Appiko Movement in the Western Ghats; groups opposing the Kaiga nuclear power plant in Karnataka; the campaign against the Silent Valley project; the Rural Women's Advancement Society (Gramin Mahila Shramik Unnayam Samiti), formed to reclaim waste land in Bankura district; and the opposition to the Gumti Dam in Tripura.

In addition, there are local movements against deforestation, waterlog- ging, salinization, and desertification in the command areas of dams on the Kosi, Gandak, and Tungabhadra rivers and in the canal-irrigated areas of Punjab and Haryana. Local movements like Pani Chetna, Pani Panchyat, and Mukti Sangharsh advocate ecological principles for water use. A move- ment in the small fishing communities against ecological destruction exists along the coasts of India.

The movements have established that issues like protection against unjust displacement, employment-oriented decentralised small units, food security, housing rights, environmental sustainability, agricultural-industrial policy and democracy are all intrinsically linked with the quest for equality. The "means of production" must belong to the producers. Unequal and unfair distribution of resources also partly stems from the obsolete process and technology of production, resulting in the loss of natural

resources, money and depriving a large number of workforce of their livelihood. The anti-caste and gender justice organisations and the movements of workers, peasants and agrarian labourers thus have another goal along with distributive justice and democratic rights – of the right over resources and means and production processes.

The new movements have been questioning, not only unequal distribution, but also the very process and technology of production. Drawing from the Gandhi-Kumarappa era to the present day of new environmentalism, they maintain that the production process and its technology have an in-built disposition that determines the ways of utilisation of resources, organisation of labour along with its distribution and consumption. The capital- intensive, centralised projects and their unsustainable technologies encroach upon the livelihood and resources of the victim communities, and also minimise livelihood opportunities for non-affected people. These conventional production processes are harmful even for the consumers.

The movements have brought to light the tremendous loss of resources – forests, land, money, etc, due to development projects and policies. It is a highly subsidised development which glosses over the huge cost the nation pays in the form of loss of green forest, pure air and water, fertile land, livelihood and social disruption. If these costs were computed, these projects would reflect their burden and prove counter-productive for the nation.

Thousands of affordable and sustainable alternatives based on people's knowledge, initiative and participation are being developed in many parts of country – regarding water harvesting, irrigation, decentralised power generation, organic agriculture, indigenous seeds, food and food making, alternative health-systems, alternative education (naitalim), employment generation, alternative industries like the Tiny Tech industries of Rajkot, alternative marketing like Apna Bazaar in Mumbai, and alternative lifestyle, etc.

The new movements have compelled us to think about consumption patterns beyond the cliché of consumerism. It is not "moral policing" as the capitalist media makes out, but rather a matter of economic and political priorities. Sustainable and equitable production and distribution is in turn linked with the consumption pattern within the system – that is the lifestyle of people. The consumption pattern of the society

has a dialectical relation with the production and distribution process and it also interacts with human needs and aspirations. To provide equal basic necessities for all on a sustainable basis, society will have to demarcate the extent of the permissible consumption for the individuals. An upper ceiling needs to be set to consumption – to conserve our scarce natural resources and for distributive justice.

A moderate lifestyle does not mean the "economics of poverty" or the denial of variety and enrichment. It simply means the enjoyment of what is available to the extent it is available for all. Apart from social and economic sustainability, very high consumption seems to be an impediment for the non-material enrichment of individuals and communities. It leaves little space for non-material aspects of life; the happiness one can explore in relations, justice, friendship, cultural and social activities, arts and knowledge which make life meaningful.

4.3.6 LET US SUM UP

The new grassroots social movements that have been started from 1980s challenged almost all the presumptions of the established development paradigm, by the experiences of "development" of people, through advanced scientific and social analysis and increased political activity. The issues were not only proper implementation of programmes or distributive justice, but a crisis of development itself, howsoever well implemented the policy was. The questions asked were fundamental: development at whose cost and at what cost, and what constituted development itself. People's movements resisted increasing commodification and monopolisation of natural resources like land, water and forest, their unsustainable use and unequal distribution, exploitative power relations, the centralisation of decision-making and disempowerment of communities caused by the development process. They asserted people's rights over natural resources and decision-making processes.

There have been various issue-based movements – sometimes known as 'micro-movements', each one of whom brings forth distinct yet interrelated experiences, challenges and strategies to deal with development. Since these challenges were part of the same macro reality, the resistance and creative responses too formed – sometimes unintentionally and sometimes deliberately – an interrelated and multi-

front battle. Different aspects of development were dealt in diverse ways and intensity, yet their diverse responses formed a loosely interrelated chain of policies and strategies, leading towards an undefined common approach, of which many movements themselves may be unaware.

These movements integrated democratic and human rights, equality, justice, and environmental sustainability with the larger concept of development. Development, in turn, has been a political process, as any change in the established development pattern is related to change in the power structure and decision-making in the country. The groups undertaking the constructive work in the rural and tribal hinterlands regarding alternative land, water and energy management, education and science have been working with an understanding of this intrinsic political nature of their work and its linkages with the larger struggle – transforming entrenched power relations.

Social movements in India that have challenged accepted notions of development and political participation have changed since the 1980s. These movements are now centred around people's concerns, but their involvement and impact have perforce been multifaceted given the diversity of constituent population. The challenge has been to counter the new paradigm of modernism and development by proposing alternatives that are not 'archaic or traditional' but rather rely greatly on local cultures, initiatives and knowledge as key driving forces.

relations, justice, friendship, cultural and social activities, arts and knowledge which make life meaningful.

4.3.7 EXERCISE

1. Define Social Movements.
2. Highlight the main differences between old and new social movements.
3. Write a short note on Human Rights movement.
4. Write a short note on Environmental movement.

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4.4 TRIBES IN INDIAN POLITICS: ASPIRATIONS, ISSUES AND STATE'S RESPONSE

- V. Nagendra Rao

STRUCTURE

4.4.0 OBJECTIVES

After going through this lesson, you will be able to understand:

- Who are the tribes and the importance of constitutional recognition as Scheduled Tribes;
- The tribal conditions before independence and the policy of British colonialism towards the tribal communities;
- The post-independence constitutional safeguards, and marking of schedule areas to protect the interests of tribal communities;
- The basic aspirations, issues and problems of tribal communities viz. Indebtedness, land-alienation, lack of educational facilities, tribals organic bonding with the forest, displacement;
- The tribal movements for statehood, identity/separatism, against displacement, etc.;
- The response of the state towards the tribal communities and the new measures/policies initiated to address their problems.

4.4.1 INTRODUCTION

India is the home to large number of indigenous people, who are still untouched by the lifestyle of the modern world. With more than 84.4 million, India has the largest population of the tribal people in the world. These tribal people also known as the adivasi's are the poorest in the country, who are still dependent on haunting, agriculture and fishing.

Since the mid-1970s, a number of tribal groups have emerged in India and tried to become effective instruments for political articulation and political mobilisation. Consequently, a new political consciousness has been underway among the tribals. Questions such as "who we are?" are often raised by such groups in the context of increasing marginalisation and alienation. As mainstream development processes tended to create social spaces of inequality, tribal communities face marginalisation virtually in every sphere of social life.

The establishment of heavy industries, construction of dams and launching of development plans in tribal zones has necessitated displacement of local population. Destruction of forests as a consequence of felling of trees for industrial purposes has threatened the small communities of hunters and food-gathers. A large sections of the tribals, not adequately prepared to deal with new challenges, gradually depressed into poorer sections of the society. Against economic and social disparities, they have raised a collective voice. The protest movements were directed towards freeing their land from all those who exploited them economically and culturally. At the same time, each of these movements put emphasis on revitalisation of their culture, their traditional culture which was swayed under the impact of the outsiders.

4.4.2 DEFINING THE TRIBE

There has been a long and enduring debate among the social scientists to define a tribe. The Imperial Gazetteer of India, 1911, defines a tribe as a "collection of families bearing a common name, speaking a common dialect, occupying or professing to occupy a common territory and is not usually endogamous though originally it might

have been so". Another definition of a tribe by D.N. Majumdar is that "a tribe is a collection of families or group of families bearing a common name, members of which occupy the same territory, speak the same language and observe certain taboos regarding marriage, profession or occupation and have developed a well-assessed system of reciprocity and mutuality of obligations". According to L.P. Vidyarthi; the tribe is a social group with definite territory, common name, common district, common culture, behaviour of an endogamous group, common taboos, and existence of distinctive social and political system, full faith in leaders and self-sufficiency in their distinct economy. P.G. Krishnan defines "tribe is a social group of simple and kind, the members of which speak a common dialect, have a single government act together for common purposes and have a common name, a contiguous territory, a relatively uniform culture or way of life and a tradition of common descent." A.B. Bardhan defines the tribe as "course of socio-cultural entity at a definite historical stage of development. It is a single, endogamous community with a cultural and psychological makeup". Kamala Devi Chatopadhyaya defines "a tribe ordinarily has an ancestor or patron deity. The families or groups composing the larger units are linked through religions and socio-economic functions."

4.4.3 WHO ARE THE TRIBES?

There has been more concern with the identification of tribes than with their definition. In officialdom the twentieth century begins with rigorous works on identification of the tribes. Faced with the complexity, the administrative and census officials produced drastically different lists in different years declaring some as tribes only to exclude them in the next period and then revising the revision again. All the incomplete exercises and complicated sub-categories had to be bulldozed when a list had to be produced in a hurry to meet the political necessities. Yet in 1936 apparently only the backwards among the tribes were enlisted in the order. In independent India the 'backward tribes' became 'scheduled tribes' or simply, the 'tribes' in day-to-day use. Although there were some changes in 1950 and also in 1956 and 1976 there has not been any substantial change. It needs a gigantic effort to effect any change in the list.

The president of India alone has the constitutional power to declare communities as scheduled tribes. Even the state governments are not able to effect any change being guided by local experience. Thus, the groups which are in the Scheduled list of the President of India are defined as Scheduled Tribes.

The Commissioner of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, in its reports (1952) has listed eight features of the tribal groups in India:

- They live always away from the civilized world and are found in the inaccessible parts lying in the forest and hills.
- They generally belong to three stocks such as Negritos, Australoids and Mangoloids.
- They speak the same tribal dialect.
- They prefer primitive occupations such as gleaning, hunting and gathering of forest produce.
- They are mostly carnivorous.
- They live and prefer to be naked and semi-naked.
- They have nomadic habit and are fond of drinking and dancing.
- They prefer primitive religion known as "Animist" in which they worship ghost and spirits as the most important elements
- All the qualities are related to great extent, in a particular groups and villages of tribal India. But the qualities present in them differ in degree.

4.4.3.1 Main Features of the Tribes

The original tribes in India have been divided and sub-divided into large number of sub-tribes. They are mutually exclusive, each having the endogenous and exogamous clan with their own names and culture, customs, locational practice and lifestyle. A well established criterion being followed is based on certain attributes such as:

- Geographical isolation: They live in cloister, exclusive remote and inhospitable areas like hills and forests
- Backwardness: Livelihood based on primitive agriculture, low cost closed economy based on low level of technology which caused of poverty. They have a low level of literacy and poor health
- Distinctive culture, language and religion: They have developed community wise their own distinctive culture, language and religion
- Shyness of contact: They have margin degree of contact with other cultures and people

4.4.3.2 Distribution of Scheduled Tribes

India is one of the few nations in the world with a thriving tribal population in different parts of the country. There are 573 different tribal communities spread all over India. As per official data, only 258 tribal communities speaking about 106 different languages are notified as Scheduled Tribes. About 80 per cent of tribal populations are to be found along the Central belt, starting from Gujarat, Maharashtra, running through Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Orissa, Jharkhand and West Bengal. The rest 20 per cent populations are in the North-Eastern States, Southern states and Island groups. The numerically strong Scheduled tribe groups include Santhals, Gonds, Bhil, and Oraon. The total tribal population of India has been estimated as 84,326,240 that constitutes about 8.2 per cent of the total population of the country (Census 2001).

4.4.4 TRIBAL CONDITIONS BEFORE INDEPENDENCE

The tribal people living in their remote hills and forests for many centuries led a life of their own. During the region of the British people, the entry of the missionaries into these areas leads the officers of British Government paying attention to them. But this contact was superficial and prompted them to come to some equally superficial policies. This simply led to isolate the tribal people from rest of their countrymen and to separate the tribal areas from the purview of the normal administration.

The British policy of isolating the tribal communities resulted in exploitation by zamindars, landlords and contractors. For centuries past the conservation and preservation of forests resulted in a progressive encroachment on the rights enjoyed by these tribal communities for the use of fuel and timber, exploitation of minor forest produce and hunting. They did not take kindly to the policy of intrusion which shook their last foothold of sustenance. Hence, the condition of tribal communities before independence goes to show that the "Policy of Isolation" and drift meant nothing more than maintenance of the status quo. It resulted in reducing them to a state of penury in most part of India.

4.4.5 POST INDEPENDENCE CONSTITUTIONAL SAFEGUARDS

With the dawn of independence and adoption of the Constitution of free India, the British policy of isolation and non-interference was replaced by a policy of integration through development. The Constitution of India has provided many safeguards for the welfare and development of the tribals. The relevant articles can be classified under four major heads: (a) Protective Provisions (Arts. 15, 16, 19, 46, 146, 342, etc.); (b) Developmental Provisions (Arts. 46, 275, etc.); (c) Administrative Provisions (Arts. 244 & 275) and (d) Reservation Provisions (Arts. 330, 332, 334, 335, 340, etc.). The Protective Provisions safeguard tribal people from social injustices and all forms of exploitation, while the Developmental Provisions promote with special care of educational and economic interests of the weaker sections like the Scheduled Tribes and Scheduled Castes. The Administrative Provisions under the Fifth and Sixth Schedules give special powers to the States for the protection and governance of tribal areas and the Reservation Provisions ensure due representation of the Scheduled tribes and Scheduled castes in legislative bodies and government jobs. The salient provisions of different articles are:

4.4.5.1 The Constitution and Scheduled Areas

The tribal people live in contiguous areas unlike other communities. It is, therefore, much simpler to have an area approach for development activities as well as

regulatory provisions to protect their interests. In order to protect their interests; with regard to land and other social issues, various provisions have been enshrined in the Fifth Schedule of the Constitution. The Fifth Schedule under Article 244 (1) of the Constitution defines "Scheduled Areas' as such areas as the "President may by order declare to be Scheduled Areas after consultation with the Governor of that State". The concept of Scheduled Area emerged during Fifth Five Year plan which is defined under Article 244(1) and Article 244(2). The Scheduled Area has been framed to protect the interest of Scheduled Tribes with regard to their land and other social issues.

4.4.6 TRIBAL POLITICS: ISSUES

Though Government of India has taken number of positive steps address the problems faced by the tribal people, still they are the most backward communities and suffering with abject poverty, poor education and numerous diseases. The successive census data shows how badly these communities placed in terms of socio-economic development. The following sections delve upon some of the problems related tribal population of India.

4.4.6.1Indebtedness

The chronic indebtedness has been, and is still, probably the most difficult problem facing almost the entire tribal population in India. Consequently, one of the worst forms of exploitation to which the tribals are exposed is through the traditional moneylender. At the household level it is indicative of poverty, of an imbalance between income and minimum consumption requirements as well as lack of resources for carrying on gainful activity and unemployment. Indebtedness among the tribals may be attributed to the following reasons: (i) abject poverty; (ii) loopholes in the existing money-lending laws; (iii) lack of awareness about sources of institutional finance and existing legal protection; (iv) complicated procedure to obtain loan and consumer credit from institutional resources; (v) indifferent attitude of Government and bank officials; (ví) private money-lender's willingness to advance money to the tribals without any

security. The money-lender's reposeful trust in the 'word of mouth' of the tribals; (vii) absence of alternative credit facility compelling the tribals to compromise their fate with the money-lenders and thus accept indebtedness as almost an inescapable aspect of their existence; (viii) lack of supply of essential commodities and agriculture inputs at fair price; and (ix) lack of employment opportunities.

4.4.6.2 Land-Alienation

Land is the mainstay of the tribals and more than 90% of them are dependent on agriculture and allied activities. Their economy is primarily agro-based. Land is the only tangible asset of a tribal family. Tribals have an emotional attachment to land. However, with the opening up of tribal areas, their land is being alienated from them. With the introduction of commercial orientation of land as a resource, there was a substantial increase in the pressure on the tribal land. Opening of the tribal areas in the wake of developmental processes and setting up of various irrigation power, industrial and mining projects, brought in the problem of land alienation. Due to illiteracy and poverty, the tribals could not take advantage of the legal remedies. Apart from the grabbing of land by private persons and moneylenders, substantial tribal land has been acquired by the Government for various development projects such as setting up of major as well as medium irrigation, power, industrial and other projects. Due to increasing pressure of population coupled with alienation of land, the size of land-holdings in tribal areas had to be reduced in varying degrees from place to place.

4.4.6.3 Lack of Education Facilities

Education is the key catalyst in the development of human resources. For the tribals, education is the pivot on which their success depends. Due to ignorance arising out of illiteracy, the tribals have not been able to take advantage of new economic opportunities. Opening up of the tribal areas in the wake of development process has juxtaposed two distinct value systems - one based on tradition and ignorance and the other on technology and innovations. Harmonious synchronisation of the two systems is essential for the development of the tribals. The tribals, due to lack

of education and requisite skill, are not able to take advantage of the new economic opportunities which have been grabbed by the outsiders migrating to the tribal areas. Many enumerated main causes of lower level of literacy among tribals as: 1. poverty of parents; 2. irrelevant content of education; 3. inadequate educational institutions and supporting services; 4. absenteeism of teachers; 5. medium of instruction; and 6. education policy.

4.4.6.4 Forest and Tribals

There is a symbiotic relationship between the tribals and forests. Forests are closely associated with the tribal economy and culture. Tribals depend on forests for food, fuel wood, housing material, herbal medicines, fodder for their cattle and material for agricultural implements. Their culture is also influenced by forests. The first nationalist policy formulated in 1894 by British introduced state control over forests in public interest which curtailed the rights and privileges of the tribals over the forest resources. Even a new forest policy formulated in 1952 made the tribals, who consider themselves as masters of forests, as subjects. They were placed under the control of the Forest Department. The traditional rights of the tribals were reduced to mere concessions. The tribals who had been traditionally recognized as protectors of forests were now branded as its destroyers. The tribals, in fact, do not even get the minimum need wages and the contractors with the connivance of the forest personnel reap the real benefits. The chronic tribal problems can be attributed to the 'outsiders' and government failure.

4.4.6.5 Displacement

After independence when India launched the task of nation building, it chose the path of planned development. Since economic development was conspicuously poor, planners focused more on economic development defined mainly as the growth of GNP, which was symbolised by new factories, dams, mega projects, mining, etc. Though these mega projects have provided power to growing industries, irrigation to thirsty lands and above all, have brought economic prosperity to the nation, they

have nevertheless, led to forced displacement of tens of thousands of people from their ancestral lands. The temples of modern India have become temples of doom for the uprooted people. People dependent upon the land, forest and other natural resources for their livelihood have been dispossessed of their subsistence through land acquisition and displacement.

Though millions of people have been displaced by various planned development schemes since independence, no reliable data exists on the extent of displacement and rehabilitation. Only a few official statistics are available. Some case studies indicate that official sources, by and large, tend to underestimate the number of persons displaced by development projects. In the absence of firm projectwise data, the estimate of total number of people displaced by planned development intervention from 1951 to 1990 ranges from 110 lakh to 185 lakh. However, according to another estimation, a total of 213 lakh people have been displaced by various development projects. These figures do not include the sizeable number of people who are acknowledged as being 'project affected' (i e, by loss of livelihood caused by natural resources extraction or degradation), those displaced in urban areas and those victimised by the phases of secondary displacement. If these are tallied, the number of displaced since independence would be as high as 4 crore. The number of people permanently uprooted from their homes is equal to or larger than the population of many major sovereign countries.

Thus, backward communities, and more particularly people in tribal regions have been most affected in this process of development since they live in resource-rich regions. Tribal areas produce most of the country's coal, mica, bauxite and other minerals. Due to rapid industrialisation in tribal areas, 3.13 lakh people have been displaced due to mining operations, and a total of 13.3 lakh tribals have been displaced from their ancestral lands. In addition to direct displacement, mining activity also affects the livelihoods of thousands more as water tables get disrupted, an excessive burden is dumped on fertile agricultural land and forests are cut. Not only are communities deprived of their vital subsistence resources, their long-term sustainability is also jeopardised.

Despite large-scale displacement of people by various development projects since independence, the country lacks a comprehensive resettlement and rehabilitation (R and R) policy. Thus, due to the lack of a detailed and comprehensive R and R policy, the process of resettlement and rehabilitation of uprooted people has been minimal and not very successful. It would not be an exaggeration to say that very few resettlement programmes in the country have adequately compensated all those who have been displaced. The question of how oustees will make a living after displacement has been a matter of the lowest concerns of the planners.

A significant number of displaced tribals have historically been dependent on natural and common resources for their subsistence. Their displacement on a massive scale adds a serious dimension to the problem. These tribal communities have an ethos and a way of life based significantly upon their natural resource base. Due to developmental projects, they are forced to move out of areas where they have lived for generations. Apart from depriving them of their lands and livelihood, displacement, other traumatic psychological and socio-cultural consequences, tribals also have been victimised on the basis of their political rights. These include dismantling of the production system, scattering of kinship groups and family systems, disruption of trade and market links.

4.4.7 TRIBAL MOVEMENTS

Long years of colonial and post-colonial subjugation has seen the growing impoverishment and oppression and alienation of these peoples. While history especially the late medieval and early modern history is replete with the tales of their heroic struggles led by their own leaders, the post 1947 era saw a relative lull. The last few years, however, have seen a revival of the movement of the tribal peoples. Broadly, the tribal movements may be classified into four groups: (1) movements due to exploitation by outsiders (like those of the Santhals and Mundas), (2) movements due to economic deprivation (like those of the Gonds in Madhya Pradesh and the Mahars in Andhra Pradesh), (3) movements for statehood (Jharkhand and Chhattisgarh) and (4) movements due to separatist tendencies (like those of the Nagas and Mizos).

If we take into consideration all the tribal movements, including the Naga revolution,

the Mizo movement, the Gond Raj movement, the Naxalite movements, the agrarian movements, and the forest-based movements, it could be said that the tribal unrest and the resultant movements were mainly movements launched for liberation from (i) oppression and discrimination, (ii) neglect and backwardness, and (iii) a government which was callous to the tribals' plight of poverty, hunger, unemployment and exploitation.

4.4.7.1 Statehood Movements

In pockets where tribals are more concentrated and experienced a kind of discrimination, the protest movements gradually turned into demands for separate statehood. The Jharkhand and Chhattisgarh are classic cases for this. Jharkhand movement was started which demanded for the creation of new state due forest alienation, job deprivation, and influx of outsiders etc. The Jharkhand Party founded an Oxford educated Christian of the Munda tribe, Jaipal Singh, had demanded craving out of a new State, spreading from Palaman in Bihar to Keonjhar in Orissa and from Surguja in Madhya Pradesh to Manipur in West Bengal, of the Indian Union of which tribal people would be numerically dominant. The long drawn agitation and protest was culminated and ended with the formation of separate states for these tribals. It remains to be seen if the grant of Statehood for Jharkhand and Chhattisgarh ameliorates the conditions for India's tribals.

4.4.7.2 Identity/Separatist Movements

Different tribal movement can be said to centre around the problem of their identity. Coming to the North-East, the Bodo and Naga movement are good examples of how ethnic identity takes up political route for raising their interests. In all these separatist movement, uneven development and modernisation, concentration of gains in some area and their non-dispersal to other, and urban- oriented models of growth are the chief causes.

Rise of tribal consciousness, tribal regionalism, frontier tribalism, etc. gained currency after the movements in North East Frontier areas. Tribal regionalism,

political in nature, has been said to be a struggle for identity against alienation from basic sources, viz. land, forests and aspiration for preservation of traditional culture Of late the movement in Tripura led by TUJS and Bodoland in Assam. Gorkhaland movements have transcended that stage of aspiration limited in culture. The newly emerged elites in these regions prefer to have a share in the power structure.

4.4.7.3 Narmada Movement

The longest tribal struggle in post-independence India is organised by the displaced persons of Sardar Saroval dam on Narmada Valley. The Government of India and the main fonder of the project, the World Bank, are aware of the environmental and human costs of the project, but still they have gone ahead with the project. The earliest estimate by the Indian government, in 1979, of the number of families to be displaced by flooding created by the dam was around 6,000. By 1992, that figure had grown to 40,000, while local people calculated that 85,000 families containing nearly half a million people would be displaced. A people's group had been formed in each affected states and this subsequently led to a much large alliance called the Narmada Bachao Andolan (NBA, Save the Narmada Campaign). As a result, a national debate on the dam began. In 1987, the government of the state of Gujarat offered an 'improved' resettlement policy. Not happy with policy, the tribals gone ahead with their peaceful protest. The NBA announced that they would drown rather than move. In late 1990 and early 1991, a dedicated group of 6,000 people marched 100 kilometers toward the dam site, with a seven-member sacrifice squad resolved to give their lives for the cause. With their hands tied with yarn to symbolize non-violence, they encountered police and proponent activists before they reached the site. Demanding a halt to the construction and a comprehensive review, the sacrifice squad escalated the pressure by beginning a hunger strike that lasted twenty-six days. As a result of mounting pressure the Japanese government cancelled a loan funding part of the Sardar Sarovar project. Considering the seriousness of the protest at international level, the World Bank also appointed the project review committee in 1992, which said that environmental considerations had not been taken seriously in planning the

project and that there was no possible solution to the resettlement and rehabilitation problems in the valley using the existing approaches. The review recommended that the Bank cease its involvement immediately in order to reassess the situation. After the Bank pulled out, hunger strikes and Gandhian civil disobedience have continued, along with (unsuccessful) appeals to the Supreme Court as the Government of India is going ahead with the project with its own resources.

4.4.7.4 Movements against Multinational Companies

Ever since the entry of multinational companies for bauxite mining and processing in the tribal lands of Orissa, Andhra Pradesh and other states started, the tribals have been apprehensive of displacement and loss of livelihood. Concerned over prospect of having to leave their hearth and home, the tribals in Orissa started organising themselves road blockades and demonstrations in front of Government offices at Kashipar and Rayagada. Survey areas of the companies were denied access to the area. Conflict over the mining of bauxite has taken a violent turn with killing of three innocent tribal people. Since 1993, the police have registered 80 criminal cases against the tribal people and activists. Activists were attacked and offices of the resistance movement were destroyed. The resistances to the alumina project and the police firing have important implications. Successive Governments, various political parties that have been in power, local elites and local businessmen supported the alumina project. At the same time, the struggle of the people and their determination to make any sacrifice in order to protect their civil and political rights, right to livelihood and habitat clearly demonstrate that people at the grassroots are not going to tolerate the onslaught of market force. Many tribals in Andhra Pradesh also similarly agitating against mining activities carried out by various companies in their respective areas.

In August 2010, after years of pressure from tribal activists with support of Indian and international human rights groups, Indian Minister of Environment and Forests Jairam Ramesh rejected a bid by Vedanta Resources to mine bauxite from the sacred Niyamgiri Hills of the Dongria Kondh tribe. Ramesh and state authorities blocked the bid on the grounds that it would be detrimental to the rights and livelihoods of

the nearly 8,000 Dongria Kondh people, result in the loss of habitat of rare flora and fauna, and destroy an elephant corridor.

4.4.8 TRIBAL POLITICS: STATE RESPONSE

The response of the Indian state and various governments to the tribal problems is considerably altering depending on the context and pressure. Before independence, the colonial government's official approach to the tribal welfare was intended to protect them from outside exploitation by isolating them. However, after independence the government's policies towards the tribals were no longer isolationist but designed to combine "the twin elements of protection and development. Seen in the perspective of the Third World, the Indian strategy of tribal development, in spite of its limitations, could be described as a unique experiment".

In 1959 Nehru in his Foreword to Verrier Elwin's Philosophy for NEFA set out the basis of the national policy on tribal development. This has remained its Magna Carta, its 'panchsheel' till today: (a) people should be allowed to develop on the lines of their own genius and nothing should be imposed upon them; (b) tribal rights on land and forests should be respected; (c) induction of too many outsiders into tribal areas should be avoided; (d) there should be no over administration of tribal areas as far as possible, and (e) the results should not be judged by the amount of money spent but by the quality of the human character that is involved.

Following Nehru's 'panchsheel', the idea now was not assimilation by either the Hindu or the colonial mode, but integration into the national mainstream, where their distinctive identity would not be lost, but would make its own unique contribution to the 'unity in diversity', that is India.

By the Sixth Plan governmental agencies had set up a massive infrastructure to implement its programmes: 181 Integrated Tribal Development Agencies, 245 Marginal Areas Development Agencies, 72 projects for primitive communities, covering about 75 per cent of our tribal population.

Similarly, the Constitution of India incorporates several special provisions for the promotion of educational and economic interest of Scheduled Tribes and their protection from social injustice and all forms of exploitation. These objectives are sought to be achieved through a strategy known as the Tribal Sub-Plan strategy, which was adopted at the beginning of the Fifth Five Year Plan. The strategy seeks to ensure adequate flow of funds for tribal development form the State Plan allocations, schemes/programmes of Central Ministries/Departments, financial and Developmental Institutions.

In order to give more focussed attention to the development of Scheduled Tribes, a separate Ministry, known as the Ministry of Tribal Affairs was constituted in October 1999. The new Ministry carved out of the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, is the nodal Ministry for overall policy, planning and coordination of programmes and schemes for the development of Scheduled Tribes. The mandate of the Ministry includes social security and social insurance with respect to the Scheduled Tribes, tribal welfare planning, project formulation research and training, promotion and development of voluntary efforts on tribal welfare and certain matters relating to administration of the Scheduled Areas.

4.4.8.1 PESA

Panchayats (Extension to Scheduled Areas) Act, 1996 or PESA is a law enacted by the Government of India to cover the 'Scheduled areas', which are not covered in the 73rd amendment or Panchayati Raj Act of the Indian Constitution. It is an Act to provide for the extension of the provisions of Part IX of the Constitution relating to the Panchayats and the Scheduled Areas. When it was enacted, PESA was seen as a legislative revolution as it empowered gram sabhas to take decisions on important and contested tribal matters such as enforcing a ban on the sale and consumption of intoxicants, ownership of minor forest produce, power to prevent alienation of land and to restore unlawfully alienated land, management of village markets, control over money-lending, and land acquisition. Along with this, it made it mandatory for all legislation in the scheduled areas to be in conformity with the customary law, social and religious practices and traditional management practices of the community.

4.4.8.2 Forest Rights Act

The Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act, 2006, is a key piece of forest legislation passed in India on 18 December 2006. It has also been called the Forest Rights Act, the Tribal Rights Act. The law concerns the rights of forest-dwelling communities to land and other resources, denied to them over decades as a result of the continuance of colonial forest laws in India. The Act basically does two things:

- Grants legal recognition to the rights of traditional forest dwelling communities, partially correcting the injustice caused by the forest laws.
- Makes a beginning towards giving communities and the public a voice in forest and wildlife conservation.

The law recognises three types of rights:

Land Rights: No one gets rights to any land that they have not been cultivating prior to December 13, 2005 and that they are not cultivating right now. Those who are cultivating land but don't have document can claim up to 4 hectares, as long as they are cultivating the land themselves for a livelihood. Those who have a patta or a government lease, but whose land has been illegally taken by the Forest Department or whose land is the subject of a dispute between Forest and Revenue Departments, can claim those lands. The land cannot be sold or transferred to anyone except by inheritance.

Use Rights: The law secondly provides for rights to use and/or collect the following: a) minor forest produce things that has been traditionally collected; b) grazing grounds and water bodies; c) traditional areas of use by nomadic or pastoralist communities i.e. communities that move with their herds, as opposed to practicing settled agriculture.

Right to Protect and Conserve: Though the forest is supposed to belong to all tribals, till date no one except the Forest Department had a right to protect it. For the first time, this law also gives the community the right to protect and manage the forest.

4.4.9 THE WAY FORWARD

As we have seen above, notwithstanding many policies framed by the government to the welfare of tribals, yet in practice not much has been realized at the ground level. The scholars working on tribal issues identified two reasons for the failure of government policy other than inadequate or inconsistent implementation. The first is the very model of development adopted, i.e., a top-down one, that perpetuates unequal exchange relations between social groups and geographic areas, and marginalises the poor and the powerless. The development debate in the last decade has resulted in an effective critique of this model, though planners and politicians are slow to abandon it because of their own vested interests. For the tribals the top-down interventions have been disastrous.

Secondly, Tribals have long been at a severe disadvantage when the outside world has intruded into their society, whether this was the colonial government or the national state. The clash of cultures that the development process introduces often leaves them worse off than before in many ways. They certainly do need protective discrimination to booster their capacity to absorb these developmental changes more effectively. But any paternalism, however benevolent, only serves to perpetuate further the unequal social relationships between tribals and non-tribals.

Hence, the crux of the matter is the kind of development that Indian society is undergoing and how tribals are to be integrated into, and not be assimilated by it. To this end, the goals of development must be distinguished by three characteristic features: an equity, that opposes all exploitation and inequality; a sustainability, that is ecologically sensitive to, and respectful of the environment; and a participation of people in both, making the decisions that affect their lives and implementing them as well. Indeed, it is the people's participation at all levels that will be able to make the developmental process, equitable and sustainable as well.

Moreover, such an understanding of development makes possible the 'cultural autonomy', which will make all the difference between integration and assimilation for tribals. Since tribes at various stages in their evolution will need different strategies

fine-tuned to their particular situation, only a genuine involvement of the people to be benefited by these strategies can bring an equitable and sustainable process of development. This precisely is what the 74th Amendment to the Constitution on tribal self-rule has promised, but governments still have to deliver on it.

Today the clash of tribal and non-tribal cultures in India is harsher and deeper because the changes the people are undergoing are more rapid and comprehensive than ever before. These major and rapid social changes are associated with: (a) loss of self-esteem; (b) increase in actual and perceived role conflict and ambiguity; (c) increase in the perceived gap between aspiration and achievement.

The tribal question, therefore, raises fundamental issues for Indian society: of social equality and economic equity; of ecological sustainability and peoples' participation; of cultural autonomy and democratic integration. For the tribal problem cannot be isolated from the broader national problems, its solution will have to form part of the overall strategy for the regeneration of Indian society and polity.

4.4.10 EXERCISE

1. How do you define tribe and which tribes are considered as Scheduled Tribes by the Government of India?
2. Briefly state the Constitutional safeguards for India's tribal communities.
3. Critically analyse the issues in contemporary tribal politics.
4. How the Indian state responded to the address the problems faced by tribal communities?

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