

Socio economic status of Minorities in India

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Introduction:

Indian Population is composed of various groups with different ethnic, racial, religious and socio-cultural background. Since time immemorial, these groups arrived in this land from different areas at different points of time. During the long period of their association, which spread over thousands of years, there has been a veritable admixture in the common habitat. Some of the groups underwent sub-divisions and fragmentations and some other groups retained their distinct identity, maintaining a certain measure of their traditional exclusiveness, mainly through cultural institutions religious ideologies. Indian Minorities belong to the latter category.

The minorities proved themselves as an Asset, as they broadened and enriched Indian culture and civilization, and in general played a significant role in the development of the Indian society as a whole. They are scattered along the length and breadth of the country from the great Himalayas to the Indian Ocean and from Arabian Sea to the eastern frontiers.

This paper would assess the socio-economic conditions of the minorities in India.

Minorities in India today are potential catalysts. They constitute nearly 20% of the country's population¹, which amounts to more than

¹ Census of India, 2001 (estimates)

200 millions. Their economic and educational progress is very crucial to the country's progress, which is heading towards a transition from developing to a developed nation in the world.

Minorities in India comprised of the Muslims, the Christians, The Sikhs, The Jains, The Parsis and the Buddhists. The Muslims form the largest minority group in India. More than 70% of minorities are the Muslims.

The importance of minorities the political structure of India is incontestable.

CONCEPT OF MINORITY AND CONSTITUTIONAL PROVISIONS:

The term 'minority' has not been defined in the Constitution or in any other enactment. However, the Human Rights Commission of the United Nations' Organisation in 1950 has defined minority to include "only those non-dominant groups in a population which possess and wish to preserve suitable ethnic, religious and linguistic traditions or characteristics markedly different from the rest of the population". The Sub-Reporter of the Sub-Commission on prevention of discrimination and protection of minorities defined minority as follows: "An ethnic, religious, or linguistic minority is a group numerically smaller than the rest of the population of the State to which it belongs and possessing cultural, physical and historical characteristics, religion or a language different from those of the rest of the population". According to Humayun Kabeer, minority is 'a group on some basis or the other, that has a sense of "alikehood" and of communal unity, which further distinguishes it from the majority of the inhabitants of the area'.

Religion-wise Population in States/Union Territories in 1991

| India/State/Union Territory | Total Population | Religion-wise Total Population | | | | |
|-----------------------------|------------------|--------------------------------|-----------|------------|----------|-----------|
| | | Hindus | Muslims | Christians | Sikhs | Buddhists |
| INDIA | 838583988 | 687646721 | 101596057 | 19640284 | 16165040 | 6319974 |
| Andhra Pradesh | 66508008 | 59281950 | 5923954 | 1216348 | 21910 | 22153 |
| Arunachal Pradesh | 864558 | 320212 | 11922 | 89013 | 1205 | 111372 |
| Assam | 22414322 | 15047293 | 6373204 | 744367 | - | - |
| Bihar | 86374465 | 71193417 | 12787985 | 843717 | - | - |
| Goa | 1169793 | 756621 | 61455 | 349225 | 1087 | 240 |
| Gujarat | 41309582 | 36964228 | 3606920 | 181753 | 33044 | 11615 |
| Haryana | 16463648 | 14686512 | 763775 | 15699 | 956836 | 2058 |
| Himachal Pradesh | 5170877 | 4958560 | 89134 | 4435 | 52050 | 64081 |
| Jammu & Kashmir | | | | | | |
| Karnataka | 44977201 | 38432027 | 5234023 | 859478 | 10101 | 73012 |
| Kerala | 29098518 | 16668587 | 6788364 | 5621510 | 2224 | 223 |
| Madhya Pradesh | 66181170 | 61412898 | 3282800 | 426598 | 161111 | 216667 |
| Maharashtra | 78937187 | 64033213 | 7628755 | 885030 | 161184 | 5040785 |
| Manipur | 1837149 | 1059470 | 133535 | 626669 | 1301 | 711 |
| Meghalaya | 1774778 | 260306 | 61462 | 1146092 | 2612 | 2934 |
| Mizoram | 689756 | 34788 | 4538 | 591342 | 299 | 54024 |
| Nagaland | 1209546 | 122473 | 20642 | 1057940 | 732 | 581 |
| Orissa | 31659736 | 29971257 | 577775 | 666220 | 17296 | 9153 |
| Punjab | 20281969 | 6989226 | 239401 | 225163 | 12767697 | 24930 |
| Rajasthan | 44005990 | 39201099 | 3525339 | 47989 | 649174 | 4467 |
| Sikkim | 406457 | 277881 | 3849 | 13413 | 375 | 110371 |
| Tamil Nadu | 55858946 | 49532052 | 305271 | 3179410 | 5449 | 2128 |
| Tripura | 2757205 | 2284934 | 196495 | 46472 | 740 | 128260 |
| Uttar Pradesh | 139112287 | 113712829 | 24109684 | 199575 | 675775 | 221433 |
| West Bengal | 68077965 | 50866624 | 16075836 | 383477 | 55392 | 203578 |
| UNION TERRITORIES | | | | | | |
| Andaman & Nicobar Islands | 280661 | 189521 | 21354 | 67211 | 1350 | 322 |
| Chandigarh | 642015 | 486895 | 17477 | 5030 | 130288 | 699 |
| Dadra and Nagar Haveli | 138477 | 132213 | 3341 | 2092 | 20 | 200 |
| Daman and Diu | 101586 | 89153 | 9048 | 2904 | 101 | 31 |
| Delhi | 9420644 | 7882164 | 889641 | 83152 | 455657 | 13906 |
| Lakshadweep | 51707 | 2337 | 48765 | 598 | 1 | 1 |
| Pondicherry | 807785 | 695981 | 52867 | 58362 | 29 | 39 |

Distribution of population according to religious affiliation for major states 1991

(Population in Lakhs)

| States | Total Population | SCs Population | Percentage | STs Population | Percentage | Hindu Population | Percentage | Muslim Population | Percentage | Christian Population | Percentage | Sikh Percentage |
|-------------|------------------|----------------|------------|----------------|------------|------------------|------------|-------------------|------------|----------------------|------------|-----------------|
| AP | 665 | 106 | 15.9 | 42 | 6.3 | 593 | 89.1 | 59 | 8.9 | 12.2 | 1.8 | - |
| Karnataka | 450 | 74 | 16.4 | 19 | 4.3 | 384 | 85.4 | 52 | 11.6 | 8.6 | 1.9 | - |
| Kerala | 291 | 29 | 9.9 | 3 | 1.1 | 167 | 57.3 | 68 | 23.3 | 56.2 | 19.3 | - |
| Maharashtra | 789 | 88 | 11.1 | 73 | 9.3 | 640 | 81.1 | 76 | 9.7 | 8.9 | 1.1 | - |
| Tamil Nadu | 559 | 107 | 19.2 | 6 | 1.0 | 495 | 88.7 | 31 | 5.5 | 31.8 | 5.7 | - |
| Gujarat | 413 | 31 | 7.4 | 62 | 14.9 | 370 | 89.5 | 36 | 8.7 | 1.8 | 0.4 | - |
| Rajasthan | 440 | 76 | 17.3 | 55 | 12.4 | 392 | 89.1 | 35 | 8.0 | 0.5 | 0.1 | - |
| Punjab | 203 | 57 | 28.3 | - | - | 70 | 34.5 | 2 | 1.2 | 2.3 | 1.1 | 2.5 |
| Haryana | 165 | 33 | 19.8 | - | - | 147 | 89.2 | 8 | 4.6 | 0.2 | 0.1 | 0.1 |
| U.P | 1391 | 293 | 21.1 | 3 | 0.2 | 1137 | 81.7 | 241 | 17.3 | 1.9 | 0.1 | - |
| Bihar | 864 | 126 | 14.6 | 66 | 7.7 | 712 | 82.4 | 143 | 16.6 | 8.4 | 1.0 | - |
| M.P. | 662 | 96 | 14.6 | 154 | 23.3 | 614 | 92.8 | 33 | 4.9 | 4.2 | 0.6 | - |
| Orissa | 317 | 51 | 16.3 | 70 | 22.2 | 300 | 94.7 | 6 | 1.8 | 6.7 | 2.1 | - |
| West Bengal | 681 | 161 | 23.6 | 38 | 5.6 | 509 | 74.7 | 161 | 23.6 | 3.8 | 0.6 | - |
| J&K | 60 | 50 | 8.3 | - | - | 19 | 32.2 | 39 | 64.2 | 0.1 | - | - |
| All India | 8386 | 1382 | 16.5 | 678 | 8.1 | 6877 | 82.0 | 1016 | 12.1 | 196.4 | 2.3 | 2.1 |

DEMOGRAPHIC FEATURES

Population by religions in India (in Percentage)

| <u>CENSUS</u> <u>YEAR</u> | <u>HINDU</u> | <u>MUSLIM</u> | <u>CHRISTIAN</u> |
|------------------------------|--------------|---------------|------------------|
| 1921 | 84.40 | 9.57 | 1.79 |
| 1931 | 84.34 | 9.86 | 2.11 |
| 1951 | 86.89 | 9.09 | 2.35 |
| 1961 | 83.51 | 10.70 | 2.44 |
| 1971 | 83.00 | 10.84 | 2.59 |
| 1981 | 83.09 | 10.88 | 2.45 |
| 1991 | 82.41 | 11.67 | 2.32 |

Source: census of India, 1991.

Note: *it is seen from the above data that in a span of 70 years (from 1921 to 1991), the population of Muslims has increased 2.1% only.

* If we see the data from 1951 to 1991, in a span of 40 years, the Muslim population has increased 2.58% only.

HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE:

We can understand contemporary Indian Politics only in the light of our freedom movement, which was to set the course for contemporary Indian Politics. After all, the main pillars of the constitution – **democracy, secularism, social justice and fundamental and minority rights** – were forged in, and through sustained political mobilisation. And the decision of inclusive social movements, as opposed to exclusivist and narrow ones deserve respect.

Historically speaking, the rights of minorities to their culture and religion and the right to be protected against majoritarianism were recognized as far back as 1928 in the Motilal Nehru draft constitution. Subsequently, Jawaharlal Nehru, writing a note on minorities in 'Young India', on May 15, 1930 was to state " the history of India, and of many of the countries of Europe have demonstrated that there can be no stable equilibrium in any country so long as an attempt is made to crush a minority, or force it to conform to the ways of the majority. It matters little whether logic is on its side or whether its own particular brand of culture is worthwhile or not. The mere fact of losing it makes it clear. Therefore, we in India must make it clear to all that our policy is based on granting this freedom to the minorities and that under no circumstance will any coercion or repression of them be tolerated. We can also lay down as our deliberate policy that there shall be no unfair treatment of any minority."¹

The Karachi charter of 1931 on fundamental rights also reiterated this principle. The report of the Sapru committee, which was set up by the non-party conference in November 1944, recommended full religious tolerance, non-interference in religious beliefs, practices and institutions and protection of culture and languages of all communities. The Sapru committee also recommended political representation. However it created some controversy and the report could not be adopted.

A true democracy ensures not only individual rights but also rights of minorities as a community. Our constitution has laid down in Articles from 25 to 30, the rights religious, linguistic and cultural minorities will enjoy. These rights make India a truly democratic and secular nation. The minorities are free to profess, practice and propagate their religion

¹ Jawahar Lal Nehru, Young India, May 15, 1930.

but also to establish institutions of their choice. These rights are such as to make even the most modern nation in the world proud.

Articles of the constitution of India Relating to Religious Minorities:

The following are the articles in the Constitution of India relating to religious minorities which prohibit discrimination on grounds of religion, race, caste, sex or place of birth, provide for equality of opportunity in matters of public employment, envisage freedom to practice and propagate religion, and provide for freedom to manage religious affairs, freedom as to payment of taxes for any particular religion and freedom as to attendance at religious instruction or religious worship in certain educational institutions. While these articles are important in their own right, the articles 29 and 30 are of greater importance to minorities which provide them right to conserve their language, script or culture and the right to establish and administer educational institutions. The following are the Articles.

Article 15: Prohibition of discrimination on grounds of religion, race, caste, sex or place of birth

Article 16: Equality of opportunity in matters of public employment

Article 25: Freedom of conscience and free profession practice and propagation of religion

Article 26: Freedom to manage religious affairs: Subject to public order, morality and health, every religious denomination or any section.

Article 27: Freedom as to payment of taxes for promotion of any particular religion: No person shall be compelled to pay any taxes, the

proceeds of which are specifically appropriated in payment of expenses for the promotion or maintenance of any particular religion or religious denomination.

Article 29: Protection of interests of minorities:

1. Any section of the citizens residing in the territory of India or any part thereof having a distinct language, script or culture of its own shall have the right to conserve the same.
2. No citizen shall be denied admission into any educational institution maintained by the State or receiving aid out of State funds on grounds only of religion, race, caste, language or any of them.

Article 30: Right to minorities to establish and administer educational institutions:

Socio-Economic census data on Religious Minorities:

The practice of publication of community-wise data related to socio-economic and educational level of each group of the Indian people has been discontinued since 1951 census. Though relevant data have been collected during each decennial enumeration operation after independence, their cross tabulation and publication have been discontinued presumably under the notion that they are divisive and undermine national integration.

However data on population and differential rate of growth of each religious community are officially published leading to wide publicity about higher rate of growth of a religious community, say Muslims. Coupled with lack of information about the same groups' socio-

economic status makes people believe that it is their religion which is causing their faster growth and not their relative poverty and illiteracy.

Information and awareness about the socio-economic conditions of all segments on Indian people will, on the other hand reduce inter group conflict by making more advanced and affluent sections realize and accept the need for affirmative action programmes for comparatively backward sections. By the same token, the latter will be inspired to strive harder for their uplift.

The policy of non-publication of socio-economic and educational condition of religious minorities does not enjoy any constitutional sanctions. Minorities based on religion are a constitutionally recognized group of the Indian people with guaranteed rights.

The government of India has established a national commission for minorities under an Act (1992) of Parliament, entrusting it with the responsibility, inter alia, of "evaluating the progress and the development of minorities under Union and the States". The commission finds difficulty in performing this basic function of evaluation of progress of development of religious minorities, without public availability of the periodically collected data by the census commissioner on each religious community's socio-economic conditions.

The assessment necessarily involves majority-minority and minority-minority comparison. All official and constitutional agencies/bodies should recognize our social diversities and disparity as a part of national life. Which must be objectively studied and the findings, widely disseminated so that due measures be taken by the governments, the NGOs and the concerned committees. By giving wide publicity to the

ground realities about all religious communities alone, we can hope to secure justice to all sections of the people and promote genuine national integration.

The 1984-UN sub commission on prevention, discrimination and protection of minorities, marks a growing realization that "Minority groups' cultural autonomy is as absolute as the sovereignty of the state". The increasing world wide attention focused on Human rights, including cultural rights, is a mark of recognition of supreme value of the individual and of homogeneous cultural groups in a state system.

India as a democratic state claims to be one of the politically stable countries with world's largest written constitution and a forerunner in the human rights, The constitution of India provides scope for maintaining the secular and democratic character of Indian society, and to promote spirit of tolerance among different religious sections of society. Every religion has been given scope to develop. The state will not support any religion officially. There is separation of religion and politics. The state will try to establish national integration among different religious communities for the harmonious socioeconomic development of the country. Others often describe India as a country of unity in diversity.

The **UNDPs Human Development Report 2004**, released world wide on, July 15, 2004 argued that cultural freedom and protection of cultural diversity is essential to prevent conflict. It is not cultural differences which promote violence, it cautions, it is when these differences are not allowed to be expressed – be it in Sri Lanka or in Bosnia – that societies and even countries might erupt. Globalization cannot succeed, the UN warns, unless "xenophobic resistance to cultural diversity" is fought and overcome.

PAT FOR INDIA

In the 285 page report peppered with examples from and references to India, the United Nations cautions developed countries that the fact that new immigrants can “maintain multiple, complementary cultural identities” poses no threat to them. “Identity is not a zero-sum game ”, writes principal author Sakiko Fukuda-Parr. “ Some groups of immigrants may want to retain their cultural identities, but that does not mean they do not develop loyalties to their new country.”

In a landmark report which challenges head on the concept of a “clash of civilizations, the United Nations has, despite the horrors of Gujarat 2002, held multicultural India up as an example of how to promote unity in “the 21st century's increasingly diverse societies.”

In a ringing endorsement of the affirmative action and reservation policies pursued by India since Independence, the report said these were an example of how ethnic, linguistic and other minorities could enjoy full participation in “multicultural democracies.”

It approvingly notes how of the 14 “religious” national holidays in predominantly Hindu India, only five are of Hindu festivals, while nine others relate to other faiths (4 Muslim, 2 Christian, 3 others); whereas in officially secular France, all six religious holidays celebrate events on the Christian calendar, this despite the fact that seven per cent of the population is Muslim and one per cent Jewish.

Source; From Kaushik Mitter, July 16, 2004, Deccan Chronicle.

Minorities in India enjoy equal Rights on par with the Majority community as its citizens. The reservation facilities have been provided

in employment and education in government sector in the central government as well as in certain states to some sections of minorities. All the shrines and places of worship are well protected by the government. The Government has been accorded certain benefits towards Muslims in the form of Haj subsidy, funding madrasas, shielding personal laws as much as it can from judicial scrutiny.

We feel proud that our Prime Minister and our President are also from the minority community. The representation of Minorities in Union Cabinet is also quite appreciable in number. In the present UPA government there are 7 Muslims ministers, out of 67 Ministers in DR. Man Mohan Singh's cabinet. Similar is the case with respective state governments like Jammu & Kashmir, West Bengal, Uttar Pradesh, Karnataka etc.

In most cases, the state gives selective benefits to groups to integrate and to co-opt them into a wider process of assimilation. In promotion of Urdu language, the government has taken various constructive steps. In some of the states, the Urdu is recognized as second official language particularly in Jammu & Kashmir, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar and Andhra Pradesh. At the central government level the government has established a '**Council for the promotion of Urdu**' under the ministry of Human Resource Development. The government has sanctioned liberal grants for taking various literary and academic activities for the promotion of Urdu language. It is doing a wonderful work of compiling of terminology in different disciplines of science and technology, which helps in translating of academic material into other languages. It has its separate translation Bureau that has good number of textbooks and classical work of Urdu literature. Each state has established its own Urdu academics for promotions of Urdu language in their respective region

like Delhi Urdu Academy, Maharashtra Urdu Academy and Andhra Pradesh Urdu Academy.

As it was pointed by many survey reports the Indian Muslim Minority is educationally backward. The government of India has established Maulana Azad Education Foundation with heavy budgetary allocations, which sanction grants to generally private managed Urdu schools in different parts of the country. This Maulana Azad Foundation extends its financial assistance to NGOs, which undertakes any upliftment work for minorities.

Some of the state governments sanctions grants to Dini Madrasas. Especially in Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Andhra Pradesh etc. these Dini Madrasas, which are teaching government syllabus, Government will give salary to the teachers who teach English, Science and Mathematics. In Maharashtra the private managed Urdu schools run by different societies and Anjuman get 100 per cent grant from the government not only for teacher's salary but also maintenance grant and construction grants for buildings.

Indian constitution accepted secularism to promote cultural coexistence and religious tolerance. Indian leaders had anticipated that acceptance of the goal of secularism would stimulate a process of cultural osmosis in the country and bring about better understanding among the different religious communities. The Hindus, on the one hand, accept the entire Indian tradition to which all sections of the Indian population have contributed and this would provide assurance to minority groups that they would be treated as equal citizens in a predominantly Hindu India. On the other hand, the Muslims and other minority groups would accept some aspects of the Hindu culture as

their own to find a place for themselves within the nation as religious and cultural units.²

India has been a pluralist democracy from day one. Pluralism has been a proud heritage for India. While pluralism is a matter of great pride for the modern secular nation, it is also a matter of complex problems. A sizeable section of Minorities are found to be socially, educationally, politically and economically backward. In this type of scenario no country can boast of development, if its sizeable minority is illiterate and poor, as it lags behind in all aspects of life.

Many of the challenges that face them are ones they have in common with others: education, poverty, unemployment and lack of public investment.

One of the issues, which is more important and contentious in discussion, is the social reform. Historically there was reluctance on the part of Government and the minority community regarding the debate of reforms.

There are two central problems that are needed to be answered in a veritable way.

- i) The representation of Muslims in civic and Political life of India.
- ii) The question of reforms

MINORITIES IN GOVERNMENT JOBS

² Imtiyaz Ahmad, The Hindu, April 2003

Muslim representation from all spheres of public life be it in Parliament, Press, Army, Civil service, big business is low, even in Agriculture they are faring poorly, in the co-operative sector they don't count at all, In the police force, in no state or the centre do they have any significant presence. In educational field, while in some cities there has been an appreciable effort to educate them, but in villages the position has been negligible. Their number still remains far below than the rest in every field. This resulted in alienation of Muslims. Consequently they start turning their own inwards to tradition; the more isolation, the more inward turn towards tradition.

The educational, economic and social backwardness of Muslim community in India has been established and highlighted by a number of official reports such as Gopal Singh Minority panel report, the Report of the 43rd Round, the National Sample Survey and Programme of Action, New Educational Policy, 1986.

The Gopal Singh Minority Panel Report reveals that Muslim Minority share is decreasing in government services. This panel has suggested various measures under 15-point Programme, which was launched by Mrs Indira Gandhi the then Prime Minister of India in 1980. This could be of help to improve their economic plight. First and foremost preamble of the 15 point Programme is to establish special coaching Center for the training of minority students to compete in various competitive examinations conducted by UPSC and State Public Service Commissions. As a result under Social Welfare Department of Government of India, the government has established special coaching center for the preparation of IAS, IPS and other groups service examinations. This attempt has given encouraging positive results. The coaching center has been mostly established in Universities and leading colleges throughout the country with special government

grants. The 15-Point programme provides for a satisfactory share of minorities in the developmental programmes being operated by the Government.

Andhra Pradesh Minorities Commission report¹ say that the Participation and performance of minorities in different competitive examinations is abysmally low. The performance of these communities is still worse in the examinations conducted by staff Selection Commission, Railway Recruitment board, Banking Service Recruitment board, etc. Coaching centers have been established with the financial assistance of University Grants Commission, New Delhi and union Ministry of Welfare to prepare candidates appearing in various competitive examinations. However, these coaching centers, which are confined mainly to Hyderabad, have failed to attract rural-based students and also female candidates. Lastly, it has been seen that the minority girls find it difficult to attend the co-educational classes due to their customs and traditions. It is, therefore, advisable to offer "distance coaching (postal)" too for different competitive examinations, with a view to ensuring wider participation of rural minorities and also girls in different competitive examinations

The share of minorities in the Police force in general and its law and order wings in particular is crucially important for creating confidence among the minorities regarding their security. However, the share of minorities in the **Police force is dwindling at a very fast pace and it has become almost nil at the top rungs of the hierarchy. It has also been noted that officers belonging to minorities are generally not posted to law and order wings, which involve direct face-to-face**

¹ *Andhra Pradesh Minorities Commission, Annual general report, 1993- 94, Abdul Kareem Khan, Chairman, chapter xv,p102.*

contact with the public. Instead, they are posted in less important departments like training, office administration, vigilance, etc. During the recent past, recruitments have been made for the posts of Constables in A.P.Special Police, District Armed Reserve Police and Civil Police, and also those of Reserve Sub-Inspectors and Civil Sub-Inspectors. However, in these recruitments the number of minorities who ultimately figured in the list of selected candidates is very low. In view of this, the government should make sure that a minority representative is included in the selection panel. Secondly, some of the officers belonging to minority communities who are presently attached to other wings should be brought back and posted in the law and order wings. This will go a long way in creating a sense of confidence among minorities regarding their security.

The Government has issued instructions for making the selection committees representative and for giving special consideration to minorities for ensuring their adequate share in Government jobs. However, these instructions have not been implemented in actual practice in letter and spirit. There is no monitoring system for evaluating the progress made in providing adequate intake of minorities in jobs by taking periodical recruitment profiles. Religion-wise figures of recruitment are not maintained. However, a scrutiny of names of persons recruited in Government sector indicates that the position regarding recruitment of minorities needs improvement. In order to rectify the situation, the minorities may be shown 'special consideration' in recruitment as envisaged by the 15-Point programme. To avoid confusing interpretation, the term 'special consideration' has to be defined clearly and the Government should issue suitable administrative instructions. In addition, there is a lot of ground to be covered in the area of making selection committees representative by including representatives of minorities.

The A.P.Public Service Commission is charged with the responsibility of making recruitments to a large number of vacancies. However, the representation of minorities on this commission has been generally confined to only one member. Considering the important role played by the Commission, the Government may appoint two members belonging to minorities as its members, instead of appointing a mere one member. This would create greater confidence among minorities so essential for their enhanced participation and better performance in different competitive examinations.

There are hardly any one or two secretaries in the states or the centre, there is no chief secretary in any state, one High court judge or so in some states; no chief justice in any state. The number of district judges and Magistrates does not exceed even two percent. In the armed forces, their position is still worse. In Industry they have a marginal existence. The lack of awakening has neither bothered the authorities nor the community. The result is their condition has become worse than that of the SCs and STs.

MUSLIMS SHARE IN GOVERNMENT JOBS

| Name of Service | Years/ Number of Establishments | Total | Muslims | percentage |
|---|--|--------------|----------------|-------------------|
| IAS | Total in 1980 | 3,883 | 116 | 2.99 |
| IPS | DO | 1,753 | 50 | 2.85 |
| Income Tax I | Intake during 1971-80 | 881 | 27 | 3.06 |
| Railway Traffic & Accounts Service | Do | 415 | 11 | 2.65 |
| Banks | 1,317 branches | 1,13,772 | 2,479 | 2.18 |
| Central Govt. Offices | 105 Offices in 13 | 75,951 | 3,346 | 4.41 |
| State Govt. Offices | States | 8,26,669 | 49,718 | 6.01 |
| Public Sectors Undertaking (Central & States) | States 876 offices 13 168 undertaking in 13 states | 4,76,972 | 51,755 | 10.85 |
| Total | | 15,81,296 | 1,07,492 | 6.80 |

Source: Saxena, N. C., "Public Employment and Educational Backwardness among Muslims in India", Man and Development, December 1983 (vol. V, No.4).

PERCENTAGE OF MUSLIMS EMPLOYEES OF THE TOTAL IN VARIOUS CATEGORIES OF SERVICES

| Employer | Class I/ Executive Cadre | Class II/Supervisory Cadre | Class III/Supervisory Cadre (Non- Technical) | Class IV/workers |
|----------------------------------|--------------------------------|----------------------------------|---|---------------------|
| Central Govt. State Govts. | 1.61 | 3.00 | 4.41 | 5.12 |
| Central & State Public Sector | 3.30 | 4.48 | 4.62 | 6.35 |
| Undertaking | 3.19 | 4.30 | 12.14 | 10.46 |

Source: Saxena, N. C., "Public Employment and Educational Backwardness among Muslims in India", Man and Development, December 1983 (vol. V, No.4).

CLASS III AND CLASS IV JOBS IN VARIOUS ORGANIZATIONS

| | | CLASS III | | | CLASS IV | |
|----------------------------|-----------------|-----------|------------|-----------------|----------|------------|
| | Total Employees | Muslims | Percentage | Total Employees | Muslims | Percentage |
| Banks | 61,151 | 1,295 | 2.12 | 26,305 | 587 | 2.13 |
| Central Govt. | 52,000 | 2,294 | 4.41 | 17,669 | 904 | 5.12 |
| State Govt. | 4,98,327 | 32,032 | 6.43 | 2,26,558 | 14,381 | 6.35 |
| Public Sector Undertakings | 2,20,235 | 26,745 | 12.14 | 2,29,129 | 23,970 | 16.46 |
| Private enterprises | 50,464 | 4,180 | 8.28 | 66,796 | 5,297 | 7.93 |
| Total | 8,82,117 | 66,546 | 7.54 | 5,66,457 | 44,139 | 7.79 |

Source: Saxena, N. C., "Public Employment and Educational Backwardness among Muslims in India", Man and Development, December 1983 (vol. V, No.4).

MUSLIM ENROLMENT IN SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES

| Category | No Of | % of | Total No | Muslims | Percentage | Ration of |
|----------|-------|------|----------|---------|------------|-----------|
|----------|-------|------|----------|---------|------------|-----------|

| | districts surveyed | Muslims in the surveyed districts | of Students | Students | | 6&3= Education index |
|-------------------|---------------------------|--|--------------------|-----------------|-------|---------------------------------|
| Elementary School | 45 districts /12 States | 17.32 | 98.48 Lakhs | 12.20 | 12.39 | 0.72 |

Source: Saxena, N. C., "Public Employment and Educational Backwardness among Muslims in India", Man and Development, December 1983 (vol. V, No.4).

EMPLOYMENT OF MUSLIMS UNDER THE CENTRAL GOVERNMENT

| S.No | State (Sample districts) | Total No Of Employees | Muslims Employees | Percentage | Population proportion of Muslims in Sample Districts |
|------|--------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------|------------|--|
| 1 | Andhra Pradesh | 258 | 27 | 10.47 | 26.45 |
| 2 | Assam | 3155 | 255 | 8.13 | 36.72 |
| 3 | Bihar | 6617 | 359 | 5.43 | -- |
| 4 | Gujarat | 10361 | 494 | 4.77 | 8.48 |
| 5 | UT of Chandigarh | 1479 | 8 | 0.54 | 1.45 |
| 6 | Haryana | 897 | 6 | 0.67 | 33.62 |
| 7 | Kerala | 8898 | 337 | 3.79 | 24.89 |
| 8 | Madhya Pradesh | 2811 | 179 | 6.37 | 5.34 |
| 9 | Maharashtra | 4384 | 184 | 4.20 | 9.93 |
| 10 | Orissa | 13040 | 205 | 1.57 | 1.07 |
| 11 | Rajasthan | 6674 | 229 | 3.45 | 11.54 |
| 12 | Tamil Nadu | 200 | 8 | 4.00 | 7.02 |
| 13 | Uttar Pradesh | 12307 | 929 | 7.55 | 17.29 |
| 14 | West Bengal | 4782 | 136 | 2.81 | 26.22 |
| | GRAND TOTAL | 75951 | 3346 | 4.41 | 5.93 |

CLASS-WISE EMPLOYMENT OF MUSLIMS IN THE CENTRAL GOVERNMENT (CLASS I & II)

| S.No | State (Sample Districts) | Class I | | | Class II | | | Population proportion of Muslims in sample districts |
|------|--------------------------|---------|---------|----|----------|---------|-------|--|
| | | Total | Muslims | % | Total | Muslims | % | |
| 1 | Andhra Pradesh | 8 | -- | -- | 10 | 2 | 20.00 | 26.45 |

| | | | | | | | | |
|----|----------------|------|----|-------|------|-----|-------|-------|
| 2 | Assam | 2 | -- | -- | 470 | 22 | 4.68 | 36.72 |
| 3 | Bihar | 28 | -- | -- | 995 | 27 | 2.71 | -- |
| 4 | Gujarat | 371 | -- | 0.27 | 470 | 5 | 1.05 | 8.48 |
| 5 | Chandigarh | 33 | -- | -- | 28 | -- | -- | 1.45 |
| 6 | Haryana | 27 | -- | -- | 28 | -- | -- | 33.62 |
| 7 | Kerela | 1143 | 22 | 1.92 | 739 | 22 | 2.98 | 24.89 |
| 8 | Madhya Pradesh | 20 | -- | -- | 69 | 8 | 11.76 | 5.34 |
| 9 | Maharashtra | 17 | 1 | 5.88 | 27 | -- | -- | 9.93 |
| 10 | Orissa | 30 | -- | -- | 512 | 16 | 3.12 | 1.07 |
| 11 | Rajasthan | 401 | -- | -- | 132 | 6 | 3.03 | 11.54 |
| 12 | Tamil Nadu | 3 | 1 | 33.33 | 25 | 1 | 4.00 | 7.02 |
| 13 | Uttar Pradesh | 134 | 11 | 8.21 | 335 | 15 | 4.48 | 17.29 |
| 14 | West Bengal | 15 | -- | -- | 212 | - | -- | 26.22 |
| | GRAND TOTAL | 2232 | 36 | 1.61 | 4060 | 122 | 3.00 | 5.93 |

**CLASS-WISE EMPLOYMENT OF MUSLIMS IN THE CENTRAL
GOVERNMENT (CLASS III & IV)**

| S.No | State (Sample Districts) | Class III | | | Class IV | | | Population proportion of Muslims in sample districts |
|------|--------------------------------|-----------|---------|-------|----------|---------|-------|--|
| | | Total | Muslims | % | Total | Muslims | % | |
| 1 | Andhra Pradesh | 187 | 19 | 10.16 | 53 | 6 | 11.32 | 26.45 |
| 2 | Assam | 2205 | 192 | 8.71 | 458 | 41 | 8.95 | 36.72 |
| 3 | Bihar | 2950 | 237 | 6.00 | 1644 | 95 | 5.78 | -- |
| 4 | Gujarat | 6864 | 373 | 5.46 | 2649 | 115 | 4.34 | 8.48 |
| 5 | Chandigarh | 1200 | 6 | 2.50 | 218 | 2 | 0.92 | 1.45 |
| 6 | Haryana | 750 | 4 | 0.53 | 147 | 2 | 1.36 | 33.62 |
| 7 | Kerala | 5609 | 224 | 3.99 | 1407 | 69 | 4.90 | 24.89 |
| 8 | Madhya Pradesh | 1942 | 119 | 9.12 | 781 | 52 | 6.66 | 5.34 |
| 9 | Maharashtra | 3230 | 121 | 3.74 | 1110 | 62 | 5.59 | 9.93 |
| 10 | Orissa | 10031 | 160 | 1.60 | 2466 | 29 | 1.18 | 1.07 |
| 11 | Rajasthan | 4821 | 199 | 4.14 | 1330 | 26 | 1.95 | 11.54 |
| 12 | Tamil Nadu | 133 | 5 | 3.76 | 39 | 1 | 2.59 | 7.02 |
| 13 | Uttar Pradesh | 7295 | 550 | 7.54 | 4549 | 353 | 7.77 | 17.29 |
| 14 | West Bengal | 3740 | 85 | 2.25 | 814 | 51 | 6.26 | 26.22 |
| | GRAND TOTAL | 52000 | 2294 | 4.14 | 17669 | 904 | 5.12 | 5.93 |

**SHARE OF MINORITIES IN THE COMPETITIVE EXAMINATIONS
CONDUCTED BY A.P. PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION**

| Sl. No | Name of the Post | Total Number Of Recruitments | Muslims | Christians |
|--------|---|------------------------------|---------|------------|
| 1 | AEE in AP Panchayat Raj Engineering Service | 539 | 18 | 10 |
| 2 | AEE In AP Public Health & Municipal Engineering | 48 | 2 | 1 |
| 3 | Asst. Audit Officers (LF Audit) | 48 | -- | 1 |
| 4 | Dist. Munsifs in AP (State Judicial Service) | 30 | -- | -- |
| 5 | Associate Lecturers in Commerce & Computer practice | 29 | -- | -- |
| 6 | Asst. Hydro Geologist | 31 | -- | 2 |
| 7 | Heads of Sections in Mining and Architecture | 5 | 1 | -- |
| 8 | Lay Secretary and Treasurer | 5 | -- | -- |
| 9 | DSP | 5 | -- | -- |
| 10 | Asst. Research Officer | 4 | 1 | 1 |
| 11 | Asst. Hydrologist | 15 | -- | 1 |
| 12 | Junior Medical Officer | 36 | 7 | 1 |
| 13 | Lecturer In Govt. Polytechnic | 83 | -- | 3 |
| 14 | Asst. Director, Industries | 25 | -- | -- |
| 15 | AEE in Irrigation | 430 | 11 | 6 |
| 16 | AEE in Roads and Buildings | 210 | 3 | 4 |
| 17 | Asst. Commissioner Labour | 7 | -- | 1 |
| 18 | Jr. Asst./Jr.Accountant in Ministerial Service | 535 | 6 | 3 |
| 19 | Senior Accountant in AP | 145 | 1 | 1 |
| 20 | Typist & Stenos in AP Ministerial Service | 446 | 8 | 11 |
| 21 | School Asst.(Grade II) in AP Edu. Subordinate Service | 210 | 28 | 5 |
| 22 | Dy. Statistical Officer in AP Medical & Health Subordinate Service | 5 | -- | -- |
| 23 | Asst.Engineer in AP Public Health & Municipal Engineering | 10 | -- | -- |
| 24 | Asst. Engineer, Roads & Buildings AE Panchayati Raj Engineering | 1 | -- | -- |
| 25 | Technical Asst. Hydrology, AP Ground water subordinate services Tech. Asst. Hydrology, AP | 4 | -- | -- |

| | | | | |
|----|---|------|----|----|
| 26 | Ground Water Subordinate service technical Asst. Geo-Physics in | 8 | -- | -- |
| 27 | AP Ground Water Subordinate service | 4 | -- | -- |
| 28 | Statisticians in AP Economics services | 10 | -- | -- |
| 29 | Statistics Subordinate Service | 364 | 3 | 7 |
| | Total | 3291 | 89 | 58 |

*1992-93

L

SHARE OF MINORITIES IN THE LIVE REGISTER OF EMPLOYMENT EXCHANGE AND IN THE PLACEMENT IN A.P 1991-92.

| | State Total | Muslims | Other Minorities |
|--------------------------|-------------|---------------------|-------------------|
| Live Register | 32,21,427 | 2,28,614 (7.1%) | 47,008 (1.48%) |
| Placements | 17,789 | 837 (4.71%) | 190 (1.07%) |
| Balance on Live Register | 32,03,638 | 2,25,865 | 46,818 |
| 1992-93 | | | |
| Total Live Register | 33,02,708 | 2,25,865 (6.84%) | 36,764 (1.11%) |
| Placements | 21,770 | 1,010 (4.64%) | 331 (1.11%) |
| Balance on Live Register | 32,80,938 | 2,24,885 (6.85%) | 36,433 (1.11%) |

Source Commissioner, Employment & Training, A.P., Hyderabad.

SHARE OF MINORITIES IN THE RECRUITMENTS MADE BY THE POLICE DEPARTMENT IN A.P., (1991-92)

| | Total No of Recruitments | Muslims | Christians & Other Minorities |
|-------------------------------|--------------------------|----------------|-------------------------------|
| Police Constables | 5,311 | 28372 | 75 |
| Civil / Armed Reserve | | (7%) | (1.41%) |
| Sub-Inspectors Civil, Reserve | 597 | 28 | 6 |
| Sub-inspectors-Armed Reserve | | (4.7%) | (1%) |
| Balance on Live Register | 5,908 | 400 (6.77%) | 81 (81%) |

Source Director General & Inspector General of Police, Hyderabad.

**SHARE OF MINORITIES IN THE SCHEME OF SELF-EMPLOYMENT OF
EDUCATED YOUTH IN URBAN AREAS OF A.P., (1991-92)**

| Total number of Units Grounded | Total Cost of the Units grounded (Rs in lakhs) | No of Unities Grounded by Minorities | Costs of the Units Grounded by Minorities (Rs in lakhs) |
|--------------------------------|--|--------------------------------------|---|
| 4,839 | 1038.23 | 289 | 69.65 |

Source: *Commissioner of Industries A.P., Hyderabad*

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|--------------------------------|--|--------------------------------------|---|
| 4,839 | 1038.23 | 289 | 69.65 |

Source: *Commissioner of Industries A.P., Hyderabad*

**SHARE OF MINORITIES I THE INDUSTRIAL UNITS ESTABLISHED WITH THE
ASSISTANCE OF DEPT. OF INDUSTRIES IN THE ENTIRE STATE**

| 1990-91 | | | |
|--------------------------|----------------------------|--|---------------------|
| Total No of units set up | Units set up By Minorities | Total margin Money Sanctioned (Rs. In lakhs) | Share of Minorities |
| 14,836 | 1,084 (7.31%) | 16,824 | 142,426 (0.87%) |

| 1991-92 | | | |
|---------|------------------|--------|------------------|
| 16,625 | 1,322 (7.95%) | 14,148 | 120.72 (0.85) |
| 1992-93 | | | |
| 13,051 | 157 (1.20%) | 10,644 | 18.33 (0.18%) |

National Sample Survey Organization (NSSO), Department of Statistics, Government of India, *Employment and Unemployment Situation Among Religious Groups in India: 1993-94* (Fifth Quinquennial Survey, NSS 50th Round, July 1993 – June 1994), Report No: June 1998.

(1) Proportion (Per 1000) Of Persons Belonging To The *Self-Employed And Rural Labour* Households By Major religions (Rural):

| | Household Type | Hinduism | Islam | Christianity | All Religions |
|-----------|----------------|----------|-------|--------------|---------------|
| A.P. | Self-employed | 470 | 482 | 176 | 462 |
| | Rural labour | 476 | 390 | 702 | 478 |
| All-India | Self-employed | 557 | 567 | 454 | 554 |
| | Rural | 352 | 318 | 350 | 350 |

(2) Proportion (Per 1000) Of Persons Belonging To The *Self-Employed, Regular Wage / Salaried And Casual Labour* Households (Urban):

| | Hhs Type | Hinduism | Islam | Christianity | All Religions |
|-----------|-------------------|----------|-------|--------------|---------------|
| A.P. | Self-employed | 346 | 460 | 108 | 356 |
| | Reg.Wage/salaried | 427 | 330 | 758 | 419 |
| | Casual labour | 178 | 155 | 81 | 172 |
| All India | Self-Employed | 360 | 543 | 236 | 388 |
| | Reg.Wage/salaried | 459 | 256 | 551 | 428 |
| | Casual labour | 127 | 144 | 141 | 129 |

(3) Proportion (Per 1000) Of Persons Reporting Land Cultivated Up to 1.00 Hectares (Rural):

| | Size Class Land cultivated (0.00 hectares) | Hinduism | Islam | Christianity | All Religions |
|-----------|--|----------|-------|--------------|---------------|
| A.P. | 0.00 | 418 | 563 | 699 | 433 |
| | 0.01-1.00 | 319 | 234 | 210 | 312 |
| All-India | 0.00 | 311 | 439 | 471 | 331 |

| | | | | | |
|--|-----------|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| | 0.01-10.. | 361 | 357 | 357 | 357 |
|--|-----------|-----|-----|-----|-----|

(4) Proportion (Per 1000) Of Persons Reporting Monthly Per Capita Expenditure (MPCE) Less Than Rs.165 And Mote Than Rs.355 (Rural):

| | MPCE in Rs | Hinduism | Islam | Christianity | All Religions |
|-----------|-------------|----------|-------|--------------|---------------|
| A.P. | 165 or less | 160 | 133 | 228 | 160 |
| | 355 or more | 193 | 169 | 170 | 191 |
| All-India | 165 or less | 193 | 198 | 155 | 190 |
| | 355 or more | 189 | 152 | 306 | 195 |

(5) Proportion (Per 1000) Of Persons Reporting Monthly Per Capita Expenditure (MPCE) Less Than Rs.230 And Mote Than Rs.605 (Urban):

| | MPCE in Rs | Hinduism | Islam | Christianity | All Religions |
|-----------|-------------|----------|-------|--------------|---------------|
| A.P. | 230 or less | 217 | 271 | 143 | 223 |
| | 605 or more | 193 | 169 | 170 | 191 |
| All-India | 230 or less | 172 | 304 | 121 | 189 |
| | 605 or more | 209 | 95 | 289 | 197 |

Educational Aspects – Report in Deccan Chronicle August 19, 2004, Hyderabad.

In Andhra Pradesh according to the official sources, 30,286 took admission under the open category for engineering stream. For the admissions in the year 2004-05 of these 749, or 2.47% are Muslims. In medicine, of the 1,755 open seats, the total number of Muslims candidate who got admission are about 40. It works about 2.2% .

Minorities do not and cannot have their wills prevail all the time. There is a double dilemma in the concept of a minority “first in our society identifiable and separate minority groups are regarded as both politically and sociologically unhealthy. Yet, somehow these groupings are essential to our sense of community, personal identity and perhaps even the functioning of the political system itself. Second, minority groupings are almost always associated with positions of subordination,

perhaps of exploitation, and certainly of disadvantage. We concede the necessity for elite minorities.

But now, some of the members of the 'majority' community or 'dominant section' of the society opine that Minorities are too preoccupied with their distinctive identity, and therefore they can't come in the cultural main stream. They also consider that Minorities won't keep pace with other groups in responding social transformation. As to the question of 'identity', generally Minorities tend to feel it in a different connotation. Though identity is of primary importance in the formation of a nation itself, the basis of identity is explained in a shared sense of history, shared linguistic and cultural heritage and future mutual relations (i.e. economic, social and political).

They also consider Minorities as too much religious and desolate and their religious interpretations are not in consonance with ground realities. On the other hand, Minorities feel that their 'image' is being changed or destroyed by these dominant forces. So they are not accepting social changes because they can't change their very culture, which forms a base for them. It is vital that the truly crucial issues should not be sacrificed over the insignificant and ephemeral ones. In any Plural society the weight of promoting secularism falls on the dominant groups i.e. the majority community. They have to judge minorities in a veritable way in a big brotherly attitude. They should accept the entire Indian culture as their own. The confusion inherent in attitudes toward minorities is not limited to India alone, it surpasses the continents.

One of the greatest dangers to the presentation of Muslim identity in India is the Political behaviour of many of the Muslim leaders who by their obstructionist attitude have messed up the position of Muslims as a

whole. Those who talk of forming a united forum of Indian Muslims, fail to understand the implications of India's constitutional set up under the Parliamentary system, which we have adopted, it is well nigh impossible, except in four or five Lok Sabha constituencies, for any Muslim to get elected without obtaining substantial Hindu Votes; The same is true of state assemblies and local bodies. Collaboration with Hindus alone will help Muslims politically. They must therefore work with established political parties and through them get grievances redressed and their rights protected. The more broad based a political party is, the more fair and just it will be even to Minorities.

The Muslims feel that a hostile environment, which is being subjected to discrimination and deprivation, and who are relatively powerless in making any change in their condition, surrounds them. As minorities, they feel themselves to be alone, even though other minorities have existed in this country for a long time. Muslims have been in India for the past one thousand years. Yet that advantage in time has not produced the degree of assimilation that exists, like that of other ethnic groups, like Sikhs. Apart from the cultural determinations, the reasons for the differences in the degree of which minorities are assimilated are no doubt partly historical. Although shared aspirations did not present anger, resistance and resentment on the part of the 'dominant' group, which expresses this in different ways and in different tongues. But there is a striking familiarity that both share the same set of values.

The disparity raises certain serious queries regarding the political aspects of Muslims in India. We are facing a situation in which the role of minorities in the political system poses questions that we have done little to answer in the past and that we are ill equipped to answer now.

One query is why are some people privileged and in control and others underprivileged and controlled? Here, what can be inferred from this is, one man's social stability is another man's social discrimination, especially if such stability freezes into law and political behaviour a historical pattern of deprivation, prejudice and isolation.

Another question is whether a minority community like Muslims has the strength to undertake political action successfully. Is the political aspiration of Muslims/minority community work successfully in an atmosphere of hostility like what is felt by every one? The answer may be both depending on the kind of political styles, goals; strategies they choose for themselves will have an effect. They can choose to play by the established rules of the political game or can attempt to create a new game that they believe is better suited to their handicaps and aspirations. The minorities are thinking both the ways.

Another equally important question pertains to the overall effect of the new minority politic on the Indian political system. There is already seen an effect and the ramifications are to be seen in the future.

These types of questions can be assured only in (the) future. But without doubt it is self-evident that the new political conditions sets in whenever there is a desire to express the needs of the minorities.

Now there is self-consciousness evident in the psyche of Muslims that they are lagging behind with other dominant groups in each and every sphere. It is also being realized that nothing is immutable and change can be brought about by deliberate action. The disparity between expectation and reality is painful enough if it is between human wants and economic capacity. It is even more agonizing if it is between segments of a population, such as dominant group and a minority set of interests.

Minorities may demand much from the state, at the very least, protection. But these demands must focus more on those things that will make them more effective agents in politics and society and not those that cater to investments of religious identity. Any movement a Minority want to establish, there should be non-separatist, moreover they have to be non-communal aimed at acceptance with in the existing politico-economic system.

But it seems that, paradoxically, Minority politics can now play a historic role in saving our constitutional values, if it chooses to focus on disentangling religion from the state wherever it can. .

There are 3 questions, to be discussed in this context, which are somewhat interrelated. Firstly, the 'label' that the Minorities have, and as a result of that they suffer from a sense of powerlessness, Minority status is not just statistical or numerical; it includes economic, social, legal deprivation as well as subtle forms of psychological deprivation.

Secondly, the cutting edge of minority politics has been and continues to be group politics. If the minorities have to come up and overcome the problems, they have to be organised, more cohesive with a sense of unified purpose. Some of the minorities did get varying degree of success in Indian politics, when they responded in this way.

Thirdly the politics of powerlessness has led the Minority elite to think in new ways about the political system, which in turn has produced new sets of goals, strategies and tactics.

However, the problems being faced by minorities in India are more of a transitory rather than permanent nature. As the quality of democracy

improves, the minorities will get all opportunities for their own creative contribution to the process of nation building. The minorities will also have to adopt a more positive and constructive approach. Democratic culture should prevail among all sections of society. Pluralism should be respected and women too should have a sense of equality and dignity, necessary reforms will have to be ushered in, but it has to be a democratic process without coercion

Minority rights should be respected because of 3 important reasons. First, these rights were drawn in and through the processes of political mobilisation. And historical pacts have to be respected, for we all know what happens to people who forget their history.

Second, these rights have been enshrined in the constitution, which is the Supreme Law of the Land.

Third, minority rights are a part of the democratic imagination in as much as democracy is about individual rights to faith.

Unless the large proportion of minorities gets progress, the country also lags behind.

To conclude, the redressing of minority community grievances and socio-cultural modernization process on secular line should go hand in hand. It should neither demoralize minority nor disrupt the solidarity or the secularist character of the country. The secular fabric of Indian society has to be sustained, keeping in tact the pluralistic features of Indian culture.

The extremists have to realize that a modern nation state has its own logic, and majoritarian attitudes weaken rather than strengthen it. A modern Nation-state can be run only on the basis of a constitution and secular laws. A majoritarian mindset can be destructive for the healthy

spirit of nationalism. A modern democracy cannot succeed until the minorities feel completely secure.

The 21st century will be the century of democracy and human rights. India can be justly proud of being democratic, right from the day of its independence. The task now is, to further deeper and consolidate democracy. And this certainly depends on the treatment of minorities. In real democratic governance, minorities should be treated with justice and dignity.

The majority and the minority shall have to reconcile their interests within the framework of existing situations. Other wise a nation can't emerge on modern lines without this basic national cohesion and mutual cooperation.

The just solution would be to democratise Muslims for such as the Muslim personal law board so that all issues relevant to this debate can be effectively articulated. The issue of representation in public life is more intractable because there is no direct way of addressing it. Indian society will have to work at too many levels simultaneously to address this issue.

The 21st century will be a century of mutual dialogue. The culture of dialogue will be essential for democracy and for creating mutual trust. The majority should realize that the more secure the minorities' feel, the more they will contribute to nation building. And the minorities should realize that the more they contribute to nation building, the more they will be respected. Both the majority and the minorities will have to realize that confrontation leads to destruction and dialogue promotes mutual trust and understanding. Only both together can ensure better quality of democratic governance in the next century.

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