

Chapter 5.2

Linguistic and Religious Minorities: Social, Political and Economic Status.

United Nations Commission on Human Rights had defined minorities as - "only those communities other than the ruling national community can be termed as minorities, who want to have a language, religion or race different from the language, religion or race of the national community. It is essential for being recognised as minorities that they should be sufficient in number and their constituents should be faithful to nation in which they live".

In Indian context many scholars use the term minority narrowly which means those who are not Hindu, which considered Indian identity is Hinduism. However it is not just Religion who regard themselves as minorities in India. Caste, tribal, linguistic as well as religious communities can be considered as minority for the reason of -

(i) They have distinct group identity

- (i) They regard themselves as socially and economically subordinate to others
- (ii) They believe that they suffer from discrimination either from others in society or state.

In India minority and majority is a matter of self-ascription. What is a majority from one perspective is a minority for other. Consider, the Muslims are India's largest religious minority, but in Jammu and Kashmir it is Hindu who regard themselves as minority.

In India emergence of minority concept is outcome of its history of over two thousand years. Some of these minorities migrated from abroad, but large part of it emerged out of the majority in the country.

The Constitution of India uses the term minority but does not define it. Sumanta Banerjee adding important dimension to the meaning and interpretation of minority says that "In context of human rights today minority is no longer a numerical concept, but has come to signify a non-dominant and disadvantaged group in a state or society, be it ethnic, religious or linguistic".

Though Constitution of India does not define the term minority yet it recognizes two type of minorities based on religion and language. Constitution uses term minority in four articles - Art. 29, 30, 350A and 350B.

Religious Minorities

In India Hinduism is considered as religion of majority population. In the societies like India minority religions provides each group with focal point of identity and social solidarity, and large areas of its culture are associated with its religion. Religion and cultural aspect such as language, art, literature and social institutions become intertwined and to the development of powerful group identities that often inhibit the development of cohesive political community or nation. In India most of the non-Hindu religions are come under the category of minorities. Government of India recognise/gave status to 6 religious communities as-minority religious community — Muslims, Sikhs, Christians, Jains, Buddhists and Zoroastrians.

Today religious minorities (6) constitute nearly 20% of country's population according to 2011 census. Muslims form the largest minority group in India. Minorities economic and educational progress is very crucial to country's progress.

We will see various constitutional provisions for minorities, socio-economic profile of various minorities, problem faced by various minorities and various welfare measures taken by government.

Minority	Population (2011 census) % of total population
① Muslims	14.2%
② Christians	2.3%
③ Sikhs	1.7%
④ Buddhists	0.7%
⑤ Jains	0.4%
⑥ Parsis	0.005%

Constitutional provisions for Religious minorities.

Article 29(1) :- Any section of citizens residing in the territory of India or any part thereof having distinct language, script or culture of its own have right to conserve the same.

Article 29(2) :- No citizen shall be denied admission into any educational institution maintained by the State or receiving aid out of State funds on grounds of religion, race, caste, language or any of them.

Article 30(1) :- All minorities, whether based on religion or language, shall have right to establish and administer educational institutions of their choice.

Article 30(2) :- State shall not, in granting aid to educational institutions, discriminate against any educational institution on the ground that it is under the management of minority, whether based on religion or language.

These constitutional provisions in Article 29 & 30 are to protect the rights of the minorities. They have provision to protect the culture, language of minorities. These article also provides for promotion and progress of minorities through various means like securing their educational right through minority educational institutes.

Other constitutional articles related to minorities

- ↳ Article 15
 - ↳ Article 25
 - ↳ Article 16.
 - ↳ Article 26
 - ↳ Various DPSP articles
 - ↳ Article 27
- Religious freedom.

Institutions/Act for minorities

- ① National Commission for minorities under Nation Commission for Minorities Act 1992
- ② Ministry of minority Affairs.
- ③ National minorities development and finance Corporation.
- ④ National Human Right Commission
- ⑤ Ranganath Mishra Commission 2004-07.
Sachar Committee 2005-06.

Muslim Minority

Muslim population in India is the largest and most important religious minority of the country. Though it is considered as minority in India, it is so big as to make it the second biggest muslim population in the world, after Indonesia. Indian muslims are not homogenous group, divided as they by language, ethnicity, culture and economic position.

Geographic distribution :-

- ↳ Muslims are in majority in Jammu and Kashmir and Lakshdweep and also constitute significant minority in several other states.
- ↳ More than 20% of total population of Assam, Kerala and West Bengal
- ↳ 10-20% in Uttar Pradesh, Bihar and Karnataka
- ↳ In term of numerical strength they are concentrated in UP and Bihar.
- ↳ Large portion of muslim population lives in the urban area (more than 35%). Cities like Hyderabad, Mumbai, Delhi, Kapoor, etc-- shows large concentration of muslim population.

Demography :-

- ↳ According to Census 2011, muslims constituted 14.2% of Indian population. (second-largest religion in India). The decadal growth rate of muslims is 24.6% (2001-2011) is higher than average.
- ↳ Sex ratio of muslim population - 951/1000 (Higher than national average).
- ↳ Literacy rate among muslim population is around 60% (less than national average specially in muslim womens)

Social Condition :-

Indian muslims are not culturally homogenous. as they do not have similar (common) language, they do not occupy common geographical space.

"They born, live and die in different parts of India and speak a multiplicity of languages. what is however common to them is their Religion, which they share with fellow muslims all over the world. Therefore, to identify religion as the sole basis of their identity is incorrect and illogical." (T.K. Oomen, 1998).

Indian muslims are steeped in the Caste based Stratification like that of Hindus, which is against the true ideology of Islam.

Muslims are socially stratified into watertight compartment and divided the muslim communities. Membership by birth is observes in Indian muslims which is similar to Hindu Society. Muslims also have Caste groups - Ashraf is referred to the higher castes such as Saiyyed and Shaikh and Ajlaf referred to lower castes mostly occupationally specialised groups like Qasai, weavers, vegetable vendors, Bangle setters, ...etc. Hence in India Caste system is more social than religious in nature.

muslim caste in India are mostly endogamous and rarely follow hypergamy in marriage. There are two major categories amongst Indian muslims. The majority of muslims are belongs to Sunni branch (nearly 85%) and substantial minority belongs to Shia muslims (nearly 13%). Along with these two major branches, tiny minorities of Ahmadiyya, Bohara, wahabis, Khojas are present across country.

Muslim society like that of majority Indian communities also follows Patriarchy in family (more male dominated). It is said that male dominated society taken away what Islam gave to muslim womens. Lower status of women also seen in the Shariat Laws (muslim personal laws), educational status

and women participation in socioeconomic sphere. Another social characteristics of muslim community is Polygamy practices. It is general perception that polygamy is very high in muslim religion. However empirical data from various studies show that Islam is not prominent one with Polygamy. For example Polygamy incidences in tribal communities - 15.2%, Buddhist - 7.8%. Compare to muslim - 5.7%. Hence it is not the Religion but status and role of women in their respective societies which determine incidence of Polygyny.

Birth rate in muslim community is higher than national average due to high Total fertility rate (deradal growth rate 24% during 2001- 2011). However Religion is not the primary determining factor in population growth, As in malabar region of Kerala, birth rate is lower than Uttar Pradesh (^(more muslim percentage) _(lower muslim popul'n percentage)). The acceptance of family planning programmes and birth rates depends on factors like occupation, income, access to technology, child survival, education, economic value of children and status of women. Though the Religion is not primary factor in high birth rate, muslims shows higher

birth rate. The factors for muslim community showing higher birth rates are:

- ↳ Practice of remarriage (widow remarriage)
- ↳ Literacy is lower in muslims specially muslim womens
- ↳ Failure of state to provide contraception and to persuade muslims to adopt family planning programmes.

Among the muslims specially in rural area, many have adopted jajmani system similar to Hindus. There are Untouchability practices present in the Indian muslims despite religion propagated equality and brotherhood principle. One may find the Caste Panchayat in muslims similar to that of Hindus.

Ghettoisation of Indian muslims had increased after various communal riots. In major cities and towns segregated area developed with muslim majority population for better secure environment due to communal tensions occurs in many part of India. These segregation further strengthened stereotype due to lack of cross-cultural interaction and education in economic and education opportunities to muslim communities at large.

Educational Status :-

Education is both a challenge and solution to most of the problems faced by Indian muslims. Indian muslims are below the national average in literacy and education. [59% according to Census 2001 compare to national average 64.8%]. Female literacy rate is specially a cause of concern for community & India at large. The dropout rate is also higher in muslim community. and their percentage in higher education is also low. Considering population strength. There are various factors which attributed to this condition but one of the major reason is economic backwardness.

The madarsas have played an major role in muslim education specially in rural area. Islamic theology, logic, philosophy and history have been the traditional areas of madarsa education. modern and secular education are now being added to them. Many states like Karnataka, Maharashtra, Kerala, Andhra Pradesh had already started teaching of science, mathematics, computer education in madarsa curriculum. However sometimes madarsas have been condemn for their orthodox, conservative, dogmatic and outdated syllabi.

Economic status :-

According to Sachar Committee report the muslim population living below poverty line is more than national average. The per capita consumption is found to be lower than average Indians. In rural area muslims are mostly landless and lack the access to employment opportunities. (except in some part of UP, Bihar & West Bengal) Majority muslim population engaged in self employment and earn livelihood through petty business (Bidi, chicken work) and small scale enterprise & low paid jobs (Bangle, glasswork, wool, leather and craft work).

In urban area they are artisans and industrial workers. However recent mechanisation & automation in industries led to decrease in employment opportunities. According to 2011 census muslims have lowest share of employed people among all religions.

women representation in workplace is lower in the muslim community. There is discrimination in private jobs in hiring, at work and also while getting loan from banks.

According to Sachar Committee report muslims are poorly represented in civil services (govt. jobs) also with only around 4% are muslims compare to their 14.2% population in country. muslims are also poorly represented in medical and engineering professions. very few have successful in industrial sectors like Azim Premji (Wipro), UPLA, etc. Some of the highly educated muslims are migrated to western countries.

Political Status :-

- ↳ Indian muslims enjoyed all the civil and political rights enshrined in Constitution as like all Indian citizens.
- ↳ Their electoral behaviour has been matter of interest for majority of political parties while contesting election in muslim majority areas.
In general muslims have preferred non communal political parties. However due to mixing of religion with politics some of the communal organisation and parties now plays role in Indian politics as they considered themselves as the protector of muslim's rights.

Leadership role in India is very limited for muslim [only 5% muslim mp in Lok Sabha (27) Considering 14.2% population proportion]. However few muslims have been held top positions in India for example A.P.J Abdul Kalam.

Many muslim organisations actively participated in democratic politics for example movement against triple talaq, Against entry ban in Hazrat Ali Dargah, etc.

Ghettoisation led to decreased free interaction between Hindu neighbour and this led to distance between communities and some time led to tension in society. It has been captured by communal interest groups which led to further growth of religion based politics.

Uniform civil Code :-

After the Shah Bano case discussion emerged for need of common Civil Code, as also envisaged in article 44 of Constitution. This led to split of muslims into two groups of progressivists and fundamentalists. However the support to uniform civil code even among muslim intelligentsia is weak as many gives reasons that

Islamic laws of marriage, divorce and successions are considered as part and parcel of their Islam religion and Muslim personal law is no different from Quran and Sunna. However recent legislation on Triple talaq have opened new dimension to this uniform civil code in Muslims.

Problems of Muslim minorities :-

- ① Low literacy level, lack of family planning participation,
- ② Higher level of poverty, lower participation in employment, govt. job & women employment
- ③ Limited political participation, increase in the communal politics
- ④ Issues related to Muslim personal laws and uniform civil code.
- ⑤ Effect of two nation theory, many times Muslim citizens have to prove their loyalty towards India.
- ⑥ Incidences of communal violence in various regions of country., fear of marginalisation.

Welfare measures

↳ Similar to all minorities.

Christian Minority

Christianity is one of the oldest and 3rd largest religion in India after the Hinduism and Islam. According to 2011 census Christians constituting 2.3% of Indian population (second largest minority after muslims). Christianity came to India However actual spread was during the British colonial period. Christian missionary activities helped in spreading Christianity in various regions special in tribal areas. Christian community is considered as most advanced religious minority in India.

Geographical distribution

- ↳ Christian population is in majority in states like Nagaland (88%), Mizoram (88%) and Meghalaya (75%). They are in plural majority Community in Manipur (41%) and Arunachal Pradesh (30%). Also there is significant population in states like Goa, Kerala and Tamil Nadu.
- ↳ They are found mostly in urban centres like Mumbai, Chennai, Kolkata etc.
- ↳ In central Indian tribal groups :- Amongst the Oraon, Munda, Santhals, Khond, etc.

- ↳ more than 50% of Christian population lives in 4 Southern states.
- ↳ other concentrated area is North East India
- ↳ Southern & North East India - Rural
western & North India - Urban

Social status :-

similar to Islam Indian Christian population is also non homogenous and non-uniform in region, language, lifestyle and the socio-economic status.

- ↳ There are five main groups from which various subbranches have emerged :
 - Syrian Christian (St. Thomas)
 - Roman Catholic (Latin)
 - Protestant Christian
 - Dalit Christian] Converts
 - Tribal Christian] Converts
- ↳ Roman Catholics constitute major chunk of India's Christian population. large number of rural and tribal Christians are converts from lower Hindu castes.
- ↳ During British Raj, Christian missions had influenced political decisions related to Indian societal issues.

notably - Abolition of sati, passing Prevention of female infanticide Act, widow remarriage Act, Introducing modern formal education and establishing schools for girls. They also influenced to draft Indian Penal code.

- ↳ They . . . influenced various government Policies which were helpful to bring equality, and decreasing untouchability practices.
- ↳ Due to these types of influences and missionary activities many Dalits & Tribals had participated in conversion movement and this is how Christianity spread in Dalits & tribals.

Economic status :-

Large number of rural Christians, converts from lower caste Hindus and tribals, follow their pre-conversion occupation pattern.

- ↳ Kerala, Converts from untouchable Caste like Pulayars and Parayars are largely landless labourer and work for Christian (other landed upper caste).
- ↳ small section of urban middle class group of Christian (mostly Catholic & Protestant) engaged in modern professions like education, health, bureaucracy and specially service sectors.

↳

- ↳ missionary work in tribal area enabled with better employability and employment opportunities due to better education, health, skill development and co-operative society efforts.
- ↳ Due to efforts from missionary activities and better economic condition, Christian minority shows highest literacy and better sex ratio.

Political status :-

Christians in India are not organised into one political group, pressure groups because — [According to T. K. Oomen]

- ↳ Their sociocultural fragmentation based on denomination and language.
- ↳ They follow trend of western polity where religion and state are two separate entities.
- ↳ This led to absence of Christian organisation at political platform at all India basis. [except some part of Goa, Kerala & North East India].
- ↳ Also small size of population and physically distance of Christian population does not favour them to acquire political clout.

Religious status :-

Spread of Christianity owes much to the dedicated social work of missionaries in area of Education and Healthcare (specially in remote tribal areas).

- ↳ Even today church is not free from caste Prejudices , they (christian) are still segregated in settlement according to social status.
- ↳ whenever group conversion took place, convert carried their previous social identities with them even as they shed their religious affiliations.
- ↳ There is no question of interdining or intermarriage between Syrian Christian and untouchable converts in South Indian Christians.
- ↳ Andee Beteille studies of Sriperumbudur in Tanjor:- In church services s.c. convert christian segregated in right wing and not allow to read scriptural pieces during services or to assist the priest . They are last to receive the holy Sacrament during Baptism and marriage . Such discrimination also observed in marriage and funeral ceremonies.

Problems of Christian minorities :-

- ① Incidences of attack on christian minorities and churchescreat fear among minorities.
- ② lower caste (Dalits) convert to Christianity are still victim of caste related discrimination and untouchability.
- ③ Allegation by dominant religious groups that Christian missionaries are forcefully convert the lower caste , tribals... this creat the tension in social sphere and can harm the social order & peace.
- ④ Many a time due to low political clout and pressure groups of Christian communities , gort. does not consider socio-religious dimension of Christianity while formulating policies .

welfare programme :-

↳

Buddhist Minority

Buddhism started in India over 2600 years ago as a way of life. Buddhism is based on the teaching and life experience of Gautam Buddha. Buddhism is divided into several schools like Mahayana, Hinayana, Theravada and Vajrayana. In India with the 0.7% of population Buddhist community is one of the religious minority in India.

Distribution :-

Though born in India, very less population of traditional Buddhist people present in India. They are near to Himalaya (Ladakh, Himachal, Uttarakhand, Sikkim and Arunachal) and some southern Indian region.

↳ the non-traditional neoBuddhist population which is nearly 85% of total Buddhist community is concentrated in Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, U.P. and urban part of other cities.

Demography :-

According to 2011 Census Buddhist constitute of 0.7% (nearly 84 lakh) of total population. In this nearly 85% are neoBuddhist.

↳ literacy rate (81.3%) higher than national average
↳ sex ratio - 965/1000 better than national average.

Social Status :-

Buddhist in India are mainly consist of two tier division and not social structure of conventional four fold varna system. In upper tier includes Brahmin, Kshatriyas and some Gotihapatis. Lower tier consist of tribals and other marginal groups.

Division of Buddhist Population into Hinayana, Mahayana, theravada were based on doctrinal differences and not represent a gradation in society, also regionwise they varied.

Many who convert to Buddhism during Ambedkar (neoBuddhist) are still follow many traditional practices, culture, customs & occupation. Social untouchability did not go away even after conversion into new religion.

Economic status :-

Buddhists are not homogenous community in Economic sphere. Many Buddhist people in North East India and Himalaya follows traditional occupations like agriculture, food gathering, artisan work, etc.

- ↳ In neobuddhist few have entered in formal sector for example mahars in Maharashtra. However majority follows traditional occupation like agri. labourers, daily wage earners, jobs like leather work, cleaning,..etc.
- ↳ The access to land and Capital resources is very limited among Buddhist community. Recently Dalit capitalism started emerging due to various govt. policy decision and increase access to economic sector.

Political Status :-

Politically active Buddhist population is particularly neobuddhist one. After the Ambedkar's Diksha, Buddhist conversion happen periodically in mass scale in Maharashtra, M.P., U.P. states. These neobuddhist formed political clout in form of Dalit movement and later parties like Republic party of India, BSP uses these Buddhist groups in political sphere. However Buddhist of NE India and Himalaya region have very less influence on political sphere in country.

Issue of Conversion :-

- ↳ Many from lower caste converted to Buddhism to escape caste oppression and ritual degradation.
- ↳ Buddhist conversion is largely episodic in nature as there is absence of missionary activities.
- ↳ Conversion is not just related to religious act but it also involves political move (Dalit Panther).

Problems of Buddhist minority :-

- ① Declining population of Buddhist [0.8% of total population in 2001 to 0.7% in 2011].
- ② Fear of emergence of Buddhist extremism in India considering scenario of ethnic conflict in myanmar and sri lanka.
- ③ Poverty , lack of access to land , resources , occupation (limited) .
- ④ Dalits even after conversion also faces all the caste related discrimination

Welfare measures :-

Sikh minority

Sikhism is a monotheistic religion originated in North West India around the end of 15th century. It is considered as the middle path between Hinduism and Islam. Sikh community is 3rd major religious minority in India.

Distribution :-

- ↳ The overwhelming majority of Sikhs are still concentrated in Punjab.
- ↳ Other concentrated areas are Haryana, Delhi, Jammu region, etc.
- ↳ In other part of India they are mostly observed in urban areas of various states.
- ↳ International migration - Canada, UK, USA.

Demography :-

- ↳ According to 2011 Census 1.7% (2.08cr) of total population of India.
- ↳ Nearly 78% of total Sikhs population lives in Punjab.
- ↳ Sex ratio - 903 / 1000, Child sex ratio - 828 / 1000
- ↳ Literacy rate - 75.4% (2011 census).

Social status :-

The creator of Sikhism tried to abolish some of the evil practices such as Caste discrimination, Sati, etc. In Sikhism everyone has equal rights irrespective of caste, creed, colour, race, sex or religion. (This is mostly theoretical, like other Religion Sikhs are also internally segmented. They are divided into caste, class and urban-rural divide. The urban Sikh trading community popularly known as bhatas (Khatris, Aroras, etc) on one hand and daily wage earning Sikhs are generally of lower caste.

- ↳ In Punjab Sikhs are dominant agriculture community (Jat Sikhs). Land Reform led to further change in social status in various stratas of Sikh society.
- ↳ Sikhs are not a monolith Community as they consist of several sects such as Namdhavis, Nihangs, Udasis, Nirankaris, Nirajanis, Nanak Panthis, etc. Sikh Gurudwara is the religio-cultural hub of the Sikh Community, and even used for some secular activities also.
- ↳ Sikhism emphasis community services and helping the needy [for example Common Kitchen-Langar]

Economic status :-

In rural areas, they are excellent cultivators, and substantial section of them are rich farmers specially Jat Sikhs. These Sikhs have played a important role in the Green Revolution of country. In Urban area most of them earn their livelihood in trade and commerce sector. They have the substantial presence in transport, automobile service sectors. They also maintained a larger share in defence forces, larger in ratio compare to population. Many Sikhs have migrated towards western countries for livelihood and better opportunities.

Political status :-

- ↳ Main political clout is concentrated in Punjab. There is close link of Religion-politics and some of the political parties have their existence with religious appeal e.g. Akali Dal
- ↳ Linguistic division of State was one the outcome of political movement in Sikhs.
- ↳ There is good representation of Sikh minority in national politics compare to population ratio but mostly concentrated in Punjab and urban areas of other part of country.

Problems of Sikh minority :-

- ① Sikhs suffer from a fear psychosis of social extinction and cultural assimilation by Hindus
- ② Although started as a protest against Hindu caste system, the Sikhs themselves have been entrapped into caste system, rendering Sikh social structure less distinct from that of Hindu social structure.
- ③ Separatist movement in past (Khaliqan movement)
- ④ Anti-Sikh violence in Delhi and other parts had created trauma & fear psychosis in Sikhs.
- ⑤ Decreasing child sex ratio is a concern for Sikh community.
- ⑥ Agricultural distress and uncertainty in agriculture sector affecting Sikh community.

Welfare measures :-

Jain minority]

Jainism is one of the 3 major ancient Indian religions. Earlier it was considered as Hindu section or sect. But Jainism is considered to be legally distinct religion in India. In 2014 govt. of India explicitly awarded minority status to Jain community as per sect. 2 of National Commission for Minorities Act 1992. Before the national level minority status Jains already had minority status in 11 states.

Distribution :-

majority Jains living in western region of country in states like Maharashtra, Gujarat and Rajasthan. (major proportion in Maharashtra) Jains are specially more concentrated in urban areas. They are also present in other states as traders, businessmen etc.

Demography :-

According to census 2011, Jains population is only about 0.4% of total population of India (44.5 Lakhs). Best literacy rate 94.9% and sex ratio of 954/1000.

Social Status :-

Jains are considered as peaceful community & hence their is absence of conflict with other religious communities. They shows strong community connection in socioeconomic sphere. Jainism propagated ascetic life, fasting and donation for community services. Jains have rich cultural heritage with various literatures. and Jainism have contributed in spreading and generating various regional languages like Gujarati, Marathi, ...etc.

↳ Jainism social structure is divided into 2 sects namely Digamber and Shvetambar. These are religio-spiritual differences but not the stratification in Jain society.

↳ Jain society is not a self sufficient community as all kinds of castes and occupations are not available in it.

Political Status :-

↳ small number of Jains are active politically due to devotion to trading and commerce

↳ They mainly acts as pressure group in politics as they have good hold on trade & commerce.

Economic Status :-

for centuries Jain community is famous for trade and merchants. Religious philosophy suits them to perform this profession. Jains are leading community in service sector and industries.

Problems of Jain minority :-

- (1) Jain population has decreased greatly in many regions in India for example in Karnataka.
- (2) Women participation in workforce is low despite better literacy and education.
- (3) Problem of Dowry system in Jain religion has caused spinsterhood in unmarried girls.
- (4) To maintain separate ethnic identity from Hindu majority is one of the concern for them.
- (5) Erosion of Jain values among the new generation due to westernization and modernisation is concerning the community.

Welfare measures :-

- ↳ similar for all minorities.
- ↳ survival of Jain religion despite many issues is due to its strict principle (Identity) and strong community connection among Jains.

Zoroastrian Minority

Zoroastrian religion was originated in Iran. Zoroastrian community was migrated to India in 8th century after escaping the religious persecution in Iran. Later India became the home for most of the Zoroastrian community. They are popularly known as Parsis.

Distribution :-

There are nearly 1 lakh Zoroastrian peoples in the world, and nearly 75% out of that are settled in India. Parsis are mainly concentrated in Maharashtra (80%) and Gujarat (20%) and in Maharashtra too nearly 90% lives in Mumbai and near areas.

Demography :-

According to 2011 census there are 57,264 Parsis people are in India. Their population is decreasing continuously and it become main concern for their existence & survival of religion.

↳ 2001 census - 69,601 → 2011 census - 57,264

Social Status / Economic Status :-

- ↳ Despite their small population parsis contribution to economic, education and advanced field is very important.
- ↳ Many famous parsis provided national leadership at the time of freedom struggle e.g. Dadabhai Naoroji, Firoj Shah Mehta, etc.
- ↳ Their successful enterprises in India makes their presence felt in India economy.
- ↳ Many parsi business houses who liberally contribute to educational and social institutions regardless of their sponsorship.

Problems of Zoroastrian Minority :-

- ① Population of parsi community is declining in India. The birth rate in parsis has almost reduced to replacement level.

Welfare programme :-

- ↳ Jiyo parsi scheme to increase population of parsi community.

Problems of Minorities.

- ① Problem of definition of minority. Constitution only mentioned term minority but does not defined it. Many section in society like tribals are in minority but does not get desire recognition due to absence of definition.
- ② Government recognise only 6 religious Community, hence other religious communities and sects are not getting desired benefits of minorities.
e.g. Jews in India.
- ③ Allegation of conversion from various religious groups specially allegation on the Christians, muslims and Buddhist communities.
- ④ These minorities are not free from the caste like division in their social structure. hence there are segregation and stratification observed in most of the minorities.
- ⑤ Because of lack of homogenous nature each religious minority, there is less political clout and therefore less voice in demanding their shares in national resources.

- ⑥ Problem of providing protection to minorities:
Issues of social tension, communal violence
riots affecting social order as well as
creating fearful environment, which
ultimately affecting the development and
overall progress of society.
- ⑦ Stereotyping and prejudices towards the
minorities in many fields. for example
in finding new house in society is very
difficult for minorities (In urban society),
discrimination & prejudices in employment
and political field.
- ⑧ Problem of preserving distinct culture, social
life including language and religious practices.
Religious places of minorities are also faces
many problems in various part of country.
- ⑨ Lower level of educational status (specially
muslims - Sachar Committee)
- ⑩ Low level of political representation
according to their population proportion.
- ⑪ Lower level of share in formal employ-
ment, higher education specially muslims.
- ⑫ Less representation in government services.
- ⑬ Low level of capital asset holding and land
rights.
- ⑭ Declining population :- Parsis, Jains.

Welfare Measures for minorities

→ Sachar Committee Report

- ① Set up Institutions : National commission for minorities, National minorities development and financial corporation, Wakf Board, etc.
- ② 15 point programme for welfare of minorities.
- ③ Maulana Azad Education foundation to promote educational standard
- ④ Wakf Board to promote muslim interest
- ⑤ self employment and wage employment schemes
↳ MANREGA
- ⑥ Enhance & upgradation of skill through the technical training.
- ⑦ Enhance credit support to economic activities through NMDFC.
- ⑧ scholarship programme for prematric, postmatric and padho pardes scheme.
- ⑨ modernization of madarsas.
- ⑩ Hamari Dharohar - preserving rich Heritage
- ⑪ Jiyo Parsi - Scheme to increase population in Parsis
- ⑫ Nai Roshni, Nai Manzil schemes
- ⑬ Ustad scheme - upgrading skill & training in traditional Art & craft.
- ⑭ Udaan - Jammu & Kashmir to improve skill

Challenges → Implementation.

Solution → Role of state govt, NGO, civil society and Good governance & use of technology.

Linguistic Minorities

Language is one of the greatest treasures of human civilization. It is the greatest achievement of humankind, as it is most important part of human culture and cultural expression. Language gives the identity to group and also preserve the all components of culture through literature and myths.

India is the land of great language diversity and linguistic pluralism. According to Aijazuddin Ahmed (1999), "the prevailing situation in country is not pluralistic but that of a continuum. One dialect merges into other almost imperceptibly; one language replaces the other language gradually. Thus languages do not exist in watertight compartments and therefore many people are bilingual!"

Grierson in his work Linguistic Survey of India enumerated 179 languages and as many as 544 dialects in country.

Post Independence various types of groups and communities in India were craving for fulfillment of their aspirations,

this led to several language related problems in first two decades of independence. These problems included official language issue, demands for the linguistic reorganization of the provinces of India whose boundaries does not match with language and the status of minority languages within newly formed states.

Linguistic minority term is mentioned in the Constitution article 30, 350A, 350B. This term means minorities residing in the territory of India or any part of thereof having distinct language or script of their own. The language of minority groups need not be one of the 22 languages mentioned in 8th schedule of constitution.

Linguistic minority at state level means any group of people whose mother tongue is different from the principle language of the state, and at the district and taluka level different from main language of district or taluka.
(Report of the Commissioner for linguistic minorities in India 1988)

Constitutional provisions

Linguistic minorities are entitled to reasonable safeguards to protect their educational,

cultural and other interests.

- ① Article 29 (1)
- ② Article 29 (2)
- ③ Article 30 (1)
- ④ Article 30 (2)

⑤ Article 350(A): It shall be the endeavour of every state and of every local authority within state to provide adequate facilities for instruction in the mother tongue at the Primary stage of education to children belonging to linguistic minority groups and the president may issue such directions to any state as he considers necessary or proper for securing the provision of such facilities.

⑥ Article 350 (B) (1): There shall be special officer for linguistic minorities to be appointed by president.

↳ 350(B)(2): It shall be the duty of the special officer to investigate all matters related to the safeguards provided for linguistic minorities under this Constitution and report to the president upon those matters at such interval as the president shall cause all such reports to be laid before each House of parliament, and send to the government of the state concerned.

Problems of Linguistic minorities.

- ① Lack of recognition of language as minority language to avail protection and benefit in various states.
- ② Central government is unable to protect the linguistic minorities against state's discrimination example: Bengali in Assam, kannada in Andhra Pradesh
- ③ Even after the recognition in state discriminatory policies and practices continues for example Urdu in U.P. and Bihar, Maithili in North Bihar
- ④ Discrimination and hostile attitude of dominant class in job competition and other economic activities in various state observes in India for example movement in Mumbai against nonmarathi board on shops and establishments.
- ⑤ When linguistic minority grievances does not addresses easily then it become the political force and sometime led to separatist tendencies.
- ⑥ Problem of Tribal languages : state government should provide elementary education and instruction in mother tongue of tribal. However this is not observed in many

due to lack of script, lack of teachers and textbook in tribal languages. This is become reason for tribal to keep away from formal education.

- ⑦ Problem of minority language in the metro cities, when migrated (temporary) People faces problem for their children's education as instruction medium is generally different than the mother tongue of childrens (e.g. Bangalore).
- ⑧ Issue of official language, recognition of minority language in state.
- ⑨ Report of special officer for linguistic minorities does not take seriously (only mechanical in nature) and these recommendation of these reports are only recommendatory and lack accountability.

Solutions

- ① Proactive role of state government is needed to recognise language and to address the grievances of minorities.
- ② Central government should work with state government to avoid discriminatory and hostile treatment to minority community in other states.

- ③ Need to promote mutual understanding between dominant community and minority group. dominant group should shows accommodative attitude toward linguistic minority.
- ④ To promote instruction in mother tongue various incentives need to provide.
- ⑤ Proper implementation of Right to Education Policy.
- ⑥ Providing script to the tribal language, teachers training and textbook in their mother tongue.
e.g. Devnagari script adopted by Bodo, Munda.
- ⑦ Use of ICT, platform / forum to promote mother tongue in education specially in tribal to improve their literacy.
- ⑧ Special officer for linguistic minorities should work proactively and their report should be discussed in the parliament.
- ⑨ Platform / forums are needed to address the grievances, to avoid separatist tendencies. to treat them with justice and dignity.
 'National integration is not possible without emotional integration? we need to create environment where minorities feel safe & sense of belonging towards Indian society. Cultural pluralism has been the essence of Indian civilization. India's destiny lies in pluralism and Unity in Diversity? with mutual trust and co-operation.