AN ENQUIRY INTO INDIA'S MINORITY POLICY

AND

ANALYSIS OF SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS OF MUSLIM COMMUNITY OF INDIA

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to those who prioritize National

Interest over all other Interests

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Preface

This report has been prepared to give a conceptual framework to the steps that are required to address principal concerns of our time, i.e., lack of cohesiveness and rising sub-streaming in the society, at the pretext of various kinds of identities. This report discusses the measures that are required to build an inclusive, cohesive and assimilative society and to discourage countless attempts at sub-streaming of the Indian society.

Since the muslim community is the largest among all the minority groups inIndia, the report has a special focus to study all the factors which are preventing the muslim community from becoming socially and economically inclusive and psychologically assimilative with the mainstream. To do this, it touches on issues ranging from social to theological. It is important to emphasize that this report not only discusses ways to assimilate the muslim community into the mainstream, but also discusses issues and measures to promote social and gender justice within the community, so that Muslim society becomes internally as well as externally inclusive.

The report reveals that problems being faced by India at present may not be new but the perspective required to analyze the problem of the minorities must be new. It primarily deals with three kinds of issues – those related to minorities in general and to the muslim community in particular. those which are hampering relation-ships between the majority and minority community, particularly the Muslims; and, those between the minority community and the government.

This report identifies and analyzes the issues from the perspective of long-term national interests, i.e., with a non-discriminatory and fraternity inculcating approach. While on the one hand, the report affirms that contentious issues of the past must be solved with joint initiatives of the government and society in order to unload India's historical baggage and to remove irritants that are marring the relationship between the Hindus and Muslims. The report deals with the historical baggage of the country with a curative approach and looks at the contemporary problems with a futuristic approach.

This report is the outcome of many years of interactions, observations, research and field surveys (conducted in the first quarter of the current year). It attempts to analyze and assess the nature of the problems and issues of the minorities –particularly those concerning Muslims – from a multi-dimensional perspective. It is hoped that the report helps India's Muslim community to view specific issues and general concerns concerning them in much wider perspective.

Last but not the least, no country can become powerful, peaceful and prosperous, if its social equilibrium gets disturbed. Therefore, it is critical that the government modifies its approach towards the minorities to make it amenable to the larger objectives of the nation. I hope this report will be instrumental in bringing requisite and much desired change in the policy of the government.

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Introduction

Despite being a multi-cultural and multi-ethnic society, India has been beset with the issues related to minorities since the days of the freedom movement. There has always been a considerable gap between the way minorities view themselves and the way they are being looked upon by other communities. From the perception of minorities, their problems are multi-dimensional– they are not only economic but also related to their values, mores and behavioural pattern. But, from the majoritarian perspective, these issues are merely notional, and the real issues are missing from the discourse. In fact, the minority issue and the issues of the minorities, both are entangled between these two perspectives, which need a fresh vision to look upon.

Minorities of India can be classified into two broad groups. The first group of minorities is associated with those religions which are variants of Hinduism or belong to the 'Hindu Family of Religions'. Religions, such as Sikhism, Buddhism and Jainism, had spawned out of reform movements and spiritual churning within Hinduism. The second group of minorities comprise those religions, which are of foreign origin such as Christianity, Islam and Zoroastrianism. While assessing the socio-economic conditions of both groups of minorities, it appears that all minorities of both groups differ sharply from each other in terms of various developmental parameters. But, there is one striking similarity between the two groups: the minority that is smaller in terms of numbers, is more prosperous compared to the one which is larger by way of numbers. From the former, the Jains are the most prosperous and from the latter, the Parsees fall into this category.

As all indications amply show, the biggest minority of India—the Muslims—do not appear to have benefitted much from special protective measures of the Constitution and promotional schemes of the government, as they failed to give a special community-level push for its socio-economic amelioration. It is also a reminder of the fact that it is not special efforts of the government but efforts of the community that make a difference in the lives of the community, in terms of development perform- ance. The most disastrous effect of the 'special exclusion' clause of the Constitution was that it made them accustomed to seeking 'exception' and 'exclusion' at the behest of various excuses. The tendency of seeking 'special

benefits' in every sphere of life made them prone to the vulnerabilities of electoral politics. The overall consequence of this phenomenon has been that the minorities were drawn towards the 'assertion of alienation' as their way of life, which is visible in their attire and attitude. In fact, there are some policies and programmes of the Government of India, which make getting minority status so lucrative that there is a virtual rush to get labelled. If the Government of India itself will put a cost on getting integrated to the mainstream, who else would like to get integrated?

As a matter of fact, if after 68 years of the promulgation of the Constitution, the minorities of India and particularly, the Muslims feel alienated, insecure and dejected despite so many exclusive provisions for them, it puts a question mark on the whole concept, philosophy and manner in which minorities are being dealt with and the governing philosophy of the country.

Culture, Religion and Identity Politics

In the wake of the information revolution, the desire for development and the zeal for education, employment and a good life, involves the whole society, irrespective of caste, creed and beliefs. These aspirations apparently are not restricted to the privileged sections of the societyany more. In fact, no social groups want tofall behind in comparison to other social groups

in respect of collective developmental achievements.

Therefore, when any government report or data points to any hiatus on developmental indices among different social groups, poorly performing social groups create an uproar and demand preferential treatment in order to compete with superior performing social groups. The emergence of such a situation is not new in India; it frequently surfaces on India's political scenario. An almost similar situation was witnessed after the submission of the Sachar Committee Report, which pointed out that Muslims as a community, were not keeping pace with other religious communities and social groups of India.

Admittedly, the process of development is not merely an economic phenomenon; many social and political factors play an important role in it. Skewed distribution of the fruits of development stimulate social unrest and undesirable animosity among various socio-religious groups. It may also give rise to political upheavals, if this is left unaddressed. Such a situation takes a more dangerous shape if it is furthered by a community, in which ghettoisation is rampant. Underlining such pitfalls of development, Prime Minister Narendra Modi has appropriately described the motto of his government in a phrase 'Sabka Sath, Sabka Vikas'. But, this vision cannot be transformed into reality without remedying the situation that creates a gap in the perform-ance of various socio-religious groups.

Current Scenario

As per the 2011 Census, India's religious minority population stands at 20.2 per cent of the total population. Six religious groups altogether constitute the minority: the Muslims, Christians, Sikhs, Buddhists, Jains and Parsees. Among all minority groups, Muslims (14.3 per cent) are an overwhelming majority, followed by Christians, Sikhs, Jains, Buddhists and Parsees. Due to the sheer size of the minority population, the overall well-being of a country like India largely depends on how various minority groups perform on different parameters of development. If they underperform on various parameters of development, the overall development of the country will be adversely affected.

Although India has within its ranks, followers of almost all major religious groups, the Hindus are in an overwhelming majority, approximately four-fifth (79.8 per cent) of its total population. So far as the distribution of the minority population is concerned, the national ratio of majority-minority population does not equally in all states, as they are not evenly distributed all over India. They vary in numbers from state to state and place to place. Apparently, while followers of Hinduism are in majority in most states, in some states, minorities are in majority. For example, in Punjab, Sikhs are in majority, in Jammu and Kashmir Muslims are in majority and in Mizoram and Nagaland, Christians are in majority. Though minorities play a dominant role in their respective majority states, their performance level in respect of most of the development indicators in a state or place where they are few in number,, is important to see.

Among all minorities of India, Parsees are the smallest religious group but they are the most advanced and prosperous among all communities. Similarly, Jains and Sikhs are another group, which is also educationally and economically more advanced than their counterparts. Christians are performing better on various parameters of development. But, the performance of the second largest religious community of India, i.e., the Muslims, is much worse in comparison to other minority groups.

Even among the Muslims, their developmental performance differs sharply from place to place and state to state. While the literacy rate among Muslims of Kerala is almost on the same level as that of other religious groups, in most other states, their literacy rate is lower in comparison to other religious groups. As per 2011 Census, the overall literacy rate of Muslims was 59.1 per cent, which is much lower than the literacy rate of Christians, 80.3 per cent; Sikhs, 69.4 per cent; and Jains, 94.1 per cent. An almost similar trend is also reflected in the case of the work participation rate. While the work participation rate of Christians was 39.7 per cent and that of Sikhs was 37.7 per cent, the rate of Muslims was 31.3 per cent. In this respect too, there is definite

gap between Muslims and other minority groups.

The question that arises, is that if the Muslim community is not performing better than it should, why is it so? Is it just because they are a minority or is there a different reason? If size of a community affects its performance then, why are other communities, which are less in number, performing better on various parameters of development? If size of a community does not matter in terms of the developmental performance, then why is it being assessed in this way? In fact, locational or regional factors are a much more accurate indicator of development performance of a group of the people as compared to religious ones (please see chapter three and four). For example, in Bihar, whether it is Hindu or Muslim or Christian, on an average everybody is economically worse than an average person from Kerala, irrespective of religious affiliation. Then, what is rationale for communalizing the problem of backwardness? In fact, establishment of a committee for a specific community– such as the Sachar Committee, Rangnath Mishra Committee, etc.– can be termed as blatantly communal. In a secular country like India, the government should have avoided communalizing the problem of backwardness.

Contours of the Problem

It is said that when the tide comes it lifts every boat. In the post-reform period, when the growth rate picked up, the fruits of growth trickled down but understandably its impact was not identical on the whole society. Some sections benefitted enormously with the ushering in of liberalization of the economy, but others benefitted only marginally or not at all. The big question here is why is a section of society unable to keep pace with the rest of the society. Are they being discriminated on the basis of their affiliation to a particular religion or is it the inherent fault of that socio-religious group? Is there a problem in their perception? There is a general claim by Muslim community leaders that there are instances of discrimination in all spheres, even in the case of disbursement of loans by nationalized banks. In this regard, it is important to know as to why banks are not inclined to disburse loans to them? If they are hesitating, is it because of difficulties in the recovery of such loans or are there doubts about their credit worthiness, or is it sheer discrimination against them? There are many such issues which merit an in-depth investigation and demand dispassionate answers.

From the perspective of distribution of development, the composition of India's minority community is full of contrasts. There is the Parsee community on the one end, which is the most developed community in India, while on the other extreme there is the Muslim community, which is the most backward in India. All other communities fall in between.

In this regard, the question arises that what are the factors responsible for their dismal performance or what holds the Muslim community backwhile the other religious groups remain impervious to the ill-effects of the same constraints.

Understandably, underdevelopment of a community is a function of various economic and social factors. Though no one can deny the importance of economic factors in development, there are many instances when non-economic factors play a more important role than economic ones. There is a surfeit of literature in economics according to which, development or backwardness both are a state of mind. Accordingly, backwardness of the Muslim community is a consequence of their backward mindset. Though there are many factors– ranging from social, economic and religious to circumstantial– that may be responsible for the relative backwardness of the community but a poor response of the community in the wake of changing times is a prime determinant of its underdevelopment (non-economic factor). The community, which remains unresponsive or wrongly responds to emerging opportunities, naturally lags behind as compared to those communities which act positively and futuristically. Sometimes, one or two factors and sometimes a combination of multiple factors are responsible for the backwardness of a community. Therefore, it is a matter of utmost

importance to make an in-depth inquiry into the real causes responsible for the dismal performance of Muslim community, in order to make India's development religiously neutral and truly inclusive.

Overview of the Report

Chapter one of the Report analyses the minority policy of India. Though there is no such thing as a minority policy in India, its picture can be painted out on the basis of statutory provisions of the Constitution, judgments of courts and schemes and programmes of the central and state government. In this chapter, most of the issues which are relevant for India's minorities, have been discussed in detail. Besides, the need to frame a new minority policy has also been emphasized so that socio-economic inclusiveness and mainstreaming of the minority communities, particularly that of Muslims, can be ensured. In this chapter, inadequacies and fallacies of the traditional approach towards minority communities has been assessed so that when a minority policy is framed, it should contribute in building a strong, prosperous, inclusive and just society. Besides, while framing a minority policy one more precaution is required– it should not be so lucrative that every social group lines up to get entry into this category. It must strike a balance between the interests of the majority and the minority community so that no one community get unduly benefitted at the cost of the other community.

Besides, the anomaly in identification of minorities in the policy has also been discussed and suggestions have been made to close this gap by laying down fresh guidelines so that anomalies of present minority policy can be alleviated.

The second chapter deals with the contours of majority-minority relationships, including complaints and issues that are hampering amicable social relationships between two communities. The irritants of the relationships that have been discussed in the chapter range from historical and cultural to political . While discussing the issues, attempts have been made to see them in their totality, not with a blinkered perspective. Some common misperceptions regarding inclusiveness of minority communities have been dispelled.

The third chapter deals with the difference in developmental performance of the communities. The reasons, which make some communities fare better while others are slow achievers, have been discussed in the chapter. Largely, it depends on how productive the members of the community are, and what is its work participation ratio. If the literacy rate of women remains low, the work participation ratio of the women of the community will remain low; if the community is not highly prosperous, it is bound to remain a low performer in terms of development. If the community wants to improve its lot, it is mandatory that special

emphasis be placed on extension of modern education among women. In this chapter, this has been demonstrated using various government statistics that the backwardness of the Muslim community, to some extent, is an outcome of backwardness of its women. It has been observed that Muslim women are less conscious of their rights and in most cases they live by the whims and at the mercy of their male counterparts. They live under constant fear of either divorce or the possibility of the husband marrying other women. In fact, polygamy becomes much more vicious if it takes place in a low-income family. Therefore, it will not be an exaggeration to say that the overall economic condition of the community will not improve if this situation is not remedied, no matter what efforts are made by the government.

As far as the fourth chapter of this report is concerned, it presents the comparative socio-economic status of the Muslim community vis-à-vis other minority communities, the Hindus, in general, and the SCs and STs, in particular. This chapter in a way contradicts some of the perceptions, which gained prevalence after the submission of the Sachar Committee Report, with regard to the Muslim community. In this chapter, it has been observed that among all minority communities, the Muslim community stands at the lowest ladder of development. But, barring a few states, it is in a better socio-economic condition

than the SCs and STs. The second important observation which has been made in this chapter, is on the internal factors of the community that are constraining its growth potential. Among other reasons, an average large household size of Muslims is adversely affecting the development prospects of the community.

The fifth chapter highlights efforts of the state and central governments, which are reflected in various programmes and schemes of the government. In this chapter, it has been affirmed that programmes and schemes of minorities should be based on its identified needs, not on the basis of political expediency. Since, concentration of illiteracy and poverty is more in lower castes of Muslim community too; hence, this section of the community needs special focus.

The last chapter is basically an enquiry into intra-community relationships of the Muslim community, mainly among three broad categories, namely, Ashraf, Azlaf and Arzal. This categorisation of the community is based on social status, not on a religious one. Admittedly, the Muslim Societytoo is socially stratified one but this has not been properly recognised. This necessitates a balancing act on the part of the government.

Besides, this chapter also analyses the community's 'sense of insecurity' in the political and psychological context. In this regard, issues related to religious radicalization and the increasing trend of de-localization and dissociation from local culture, have also been discussed.

And last but not the least, there is the crux of the whole enquiry and analysis in the form of findings. On the basis of the findings and observations, recommendations are given for further deliberation and action. These are categorized in three separate heads namely, social, economic and legislative (legal). Some recommendations are meant for a respective community only and they can use them for introspection and internal correction. Other reco-mmendations are for deliberation between the state and central governments.

1.

India's Minority Policy

General Scenario

Leaders of the Indian freedom movement admitted to their limitations and helplessness in dealing with India'slargest religious minority, i.e., Muslims, by agreeing to the partition India on religious lines. As a corrolary, while making the Constitution, it was natural for the framers of the Constitution of India to remain wary of the issues related to religious minorities. Their care and concern for minorities got manifested in a number of Articles of the Indian Constitution, particularly from Articles 25 to 30. Besides, non-acceptance of the theocratic form of government was also important in order to limit the role of religion in public life.

After asserting the broader principle of behaviour of the State in Article 15 that there shall be no discrimination on the basis of caste, religion, gender and place of birth, why religious affiliation became the determinant of people's identity (majority, minority) in a non-theocratic country, is quite perplexing. A similar question is, why should numerical strength of a religious community matter at all in a country, which doesn't subscribe to any religion as a state religion?

If a state treats its citizens or a group of citizens or an institution on the basis of its affiliation to a religion, what is the relevance and validity of the great ideals enshrined in the Articles 14 and 15 of the Indian Constitution? Again, is numerical strength of a community important in shaping its collective future? As pre-independent India was divided on the basis of religion, then why instead of a waning role of religious identity, much importance was placed on strengthening the religious identity? Why does religious identity- particularly in the caseof the Muslim Community- has become its so dominant feature that it is overshadowing all other identities?

As far as diversity is concerned, there are various kinds of diversities prevailing in the country. Then, what is the rationale behind conferring an overwhelming importance to the religious identity over all other types of diversities? If religion-based numerical strength puts a community at a disadvantage, why does it do so? To what extent is it true that the deficiency in numbers reduces the bargaining capacity of a community in democratic polity? If numbers of a community are so important, why are the Zoroastrians (Parsees) with a miniscule population playing a

lead role in various fields in India and the Muslim, the largest minority– are laggardly? There are numerous such questions which warrant satisfactory answers.

Diversity and India's Minority

It is widely understood that in respect of diversity India is a continent in itself. Its diversity is reflected in food habits, dress, language, religion, tradition, custom, social values, climate and topography. The question here is how should such a vast diversity be viewed? Should it be viewed as India's strength and richness of its history, culture and geography or as its structural weaknesses?

In fact, whether diversities are boon or bane, largely depends on the fact that how they are being used or looked upon particularly by social and political leaders and also by institutions of the state. The policy of identifying beneficiaries on the basis of the identity in social welfare programmes of the Governments– State and Centre—strengthensthose identities which fetch benefits. On the contrary, had the beneficiaries been selected on the basis of need instead of identity, it would have neutralized the identity factor in public policy. Unfortunately, the policy of the subsequent governments and polity of the country, both appear to be in favour of that path which strengthens identity. Therefore, with the persistence of social and religious fissures in the structure of the country and the

unwillingness of the policy makers to redress them, the social situation is poised to go from bad to worse, if decisive and dispassionate steps are not taken to arrest the trend.

In this regard, one needs to understand that the beauty of diversity of the identity lies in its purpose of use. When during the Republic Day Parade the diversity of our country is displayed, it makes us proud and gives a sense of cultural richness, but when the same identity is used for regimentation of the people to gain or bargain for certain benefits and facilities from the government, it becomes a source of our concern.

It is true that to some extent similarity of identity in certain areas such as language, religion and ethnicity work as an adhesive to unite various groups of people. But, the promotion of interests based on various kinds of identities– if they do not converge with national interests and objectives in the long run– may lead to a divergence of interests and construction of a strong regional or religious identity, which weakens national identity and the emotional integrity of the nation, Therefore, the construction of an identity needs to be carefully monitored and after a certain limit, it should be curbed, lest it becomes too strong and fissiparous. Particularly, in democratic governance, if the polity of a country is not mature and the understanding of national interests is poor; 'identity' may become instrumental in

promoting divisiveness, which in turn may become detrimental to national integrity.

As a matter of fact, diversity, identity and unity, are contextual and sometimes also paradoxical. For example, people of a state may be linguistically and ethnically identical but religiously different. In the same way, similarity of religion does not mean that they belong to the same linguistic and ethnic group. Therefore, identity of the citizen should be immaterial for the state, whether it is social or religious and under any circumstances it should not be the determinant of the behaviour of the state towards its citizen. But, the state must ensure that rules and laws for all are equal, treatment to all citizens is on an equal footing and the opportunity is made available to all in equal measure. If the approach of a government and its institutions is neutral towards diverse groups, despite the multitude of diversities, it can work smoothly. But contrary to this, if the state is unable to coordinate interests of various social and religious groups, it may have to face discontent from the people.

In this context, it is pertinent to underline that among all kinds of diversities, the one relating to religion has emerged as unifying as well as divisive. In India, religion has played a more explosive role in dividing people than any other factor. This is why issues related to minorities assumed so much prominence since pre-independence days. In 1947, India was partitioned on the basis of religion since dominant sections of India's largest minority (Muslims) were uncomfortable living under the dominance of the majority Hindus at that time. This was the first time in the last 1,000 years of interface between Hindus and Muslims, when the Muslims had to live in India under the political domination of the Hindus. Before this, either they lived under co-religionist rule or under the rule of a neutral power– the British.

The political paranoia of Muslims coupled with the fear of cultural assimilation in independent India, pushed a section of the Muslims to demand for a separate nation. Unfortunately, paranoia never dies out, it only becomes dormant. That's why the same forces re-emerge from time to time on India's socio-political scene.

Despite India's partition on religious lines, a large portion of the Muslim population preferred to stay in India, negating the religious division while adhering to cultural and local affinity. But the sentiment of social and cultural affinity was squandered by the 'majority-minority' approach of the government. In fact, on this particular issue, the approach of the Constituent Assembly of India also does not appear to be far-sighted and visionary, because the seed of sub-streaming of minorities was sowed in the Constitution itself. Looking at present policies and programmes of the state and central governments, it appears that they are overwhelmed by the ad-hocist approach and are

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impervious to the lessons of the past, so far as the issues related to minorities are concerned.

Starting from the approach of the Constituent Assembly of India to present-day policies of the Government, numerous measures have been introduced with an objective to assure minorities of their status and also to infuse a sense of certainty in their minds. It is altogether a different debate as to how helpful such measures have been in addressing their issues. The following are the important milestones in India's minority(Muslim) policy:

1. **Haj subsidy** was started in 1954, with flights between Mumbai and Jeddah. In the post-colonial era, the Government of India expanded the programme in 1959 with the Haj Act. The subsidy initially applied to Indian Muslim pilgrims traveling for pilgrimage to Saudi Arabia, Syria, Iraq, Iran and Jordan.

2. **Maulana Azad Education Foundation,** registered under the Societies Registration Act, 1860 on began operations on 6July 1989.

3. Five religious communities, viz; Muslims, Christians, Sikhs, Buddhists and Zoroastrians (Parsees) have been notified as minority communities by the Union Government. Further, through the notification dated 27January 2014, Jains have also been notified as a minority community.

4. The Union Government set up the **National Commission for Minorities** (NCM) under the National Commission for Minorities Act, 1992 passed on dated 17 May 1992, which came into effect on 17 May 1993.

5. **The National Minorities Development & Finance Corporation** (NMDFC) was incorporated on 30 September 1994, as a non-profit company, under Section 25 of the Companies Act 1956. It is a national level apex body for the benefit of Minorities as defined under the National Commission for Minorities Act, 1992.

6. **The National Council for Promotion of Urdu Language** (NCPUL), was setup as an autonomous body, registered as a society on dated 22 June 1994, under the Ministry of Human Resource Development (HRD), Department of Secondary and Higher Education, Government of India, in order to promote, develop and propagate Urdu . The Council started operation in Delhi on April 1, 1996. It is the principal coordinating and monitoring authority for promotion of Urdu language and Urdu education.

7. **The National Commission for Minority Educational Institutions** (NCMEI) was established, to begin with, through the promulgation of an Ordinance. The Department of Secondary and Higher

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Education, Ministry of HRD, Government of India, notified the National Commission for Minority Educational Institutions Ordinance 2004 (No. 6 of 2004) on 11 November 2004.

8. **The Ministry of Minority Affairs** was carved out of Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment and created on 29January, 2006 to ensure a more focused approach towards issues relating to the notified minority communities namely Muslim, Christian, Buddhist, Sikh, Parsee and Jain. The mandate of the Ministry includes formulation of overall policy and planning, coordination, evaluation and review of the regulatory framework and development programmes for the benefit of the minority communities. Later, numerous other programmes and schemes were launched by the Ministry/Department of Minority Affairs, all over the country for their upliftment.

9. Prime Minister Manmohan Singhin his address to the National Development Council meet at New Delhi on 27 December 2006 opined that the Muslims had the "first claim" on resources, which created an uproar.

Minorities of India and Guiding Principles of Minority Policy

India, as a country,has followers of almost all major religions. There are six religions, which have been declared as minorities. These are Islam, Christianity, Zoroastrianism (Parsees), Sikhism, Jainism and Buddhism. While three religions namely, Islam, Christianity, Zoroastrianism have their origins in foreign lands, Sikhism, Jainism and Buddhism are religions of Indian origin and thus are in a way variants of Hinduism. Therefore, on the basis of origin of religions, the minorities may be divided into two categories. Besides, the Government of India has one more category other than a religious one, i.e., linguistic minorities. Since the focus of this report is on religious minorities, linguistic minorities is beyond its purview.

When the probable shape of India's Constitution was being discussed, as it has already been pointed out, issues relating to minorities got special attention of the members of the Constituent Assembly. This is clear from the fact that Articles 25, 26, 27, 28, 29 and 30 specifically focus on various kinds of minority-specific provisions. These rights are in addition to those, which are available to all. The question is why are issues of general nature being viewed obsessively from the minority-majority perspective? What did they have in mind when they were making special provisions for the minorities? And, the most important question is to what extent–whatever was their objective – have they been realized in the last 70 years since 70 years is quite a long time to assess the effectiveness of this policy.

The question is why are issues of general nature being viewed obsessively from the minority-majority perspective?

What are the criteria in the under which the successes and failures of India's minority policy should be assessed? The first and foremost of these are:

- Are they satisfied with their overall conditions?

- Has the minority policy has infused a sense of security among the minorities and has it stopped communal violence?

- Has it created goodwill and communal harmony among various religious groups?

- Has this policy promoted social, economic and political inclusiveness of the minorities?

- Has the minority policy promoted mainstreaming of the minorities or has it encouraged their sub-streaming?

- Has the minority policy worked as an adhesive for majority-minority relationsor has it simply been dismissive of it?

These are the questions in the light of which Indian policy makers can assess the success of their policies. Before assessing what it has achieved, it is important to gauge its primary objectives and what the problems were which were to be addressed through it.

As per the Preamble of the Indian Constitution, justice, liberty, equality and fraternity were identified as guiding principles behind its framing. In this regard, it is important to quote Dr. B. R. Ambedkar about the Preamble:

"It was, indeed, a way of life, which recognizes liberty, equality, and fraternity as the principles of life and which cannot be divorced from each other: Liberty cannot be divorced from equality; equality cannot be divorced from liberty. Nor can liberty and equality be divorced from fraternity. Without equality, liberty would produce the supremacy of the few over the many. Equality without liberty would kill individual initiative. Without fraternity, liberty and equality could not become a natural course of things." (Source: Constituent Assembly Debate)

Apparently, 'fraternity' among various sections of the society had been identified by him as one of the core necessities and objectives for unity and integrity of the nation. Therefore, the 'creation of general atmosphere of fraternity' crucial for 'unity and integrity of the nation', can be paraphrased as social, economic and psychological mainstreaming of the minority, as core criterion to assess India's minority policy. It is an important point to be noted that the term 'fraternity' has been clubbed with 'unity and integrity' of the nation.

Now the question is to what extent has the minority policy of India been successful in promoting 'fraternity' among the people of India?

In order to assess the level of fraternity, it is important to know:

- Whether minorities are enjoying cordial relationships with the majority community?

- Whether approach of the minority communities are cohesive and their behaviours

adhesive towards the majority community?

- Whether majority and minority communities are accommodative to each others just demands and necessities?

- Whether minority and the majority communities nurture any grudge against each others?

It is imperative that the minority policy tooget assessed in the light of the above-cited questions.

First of all, it must have been acknowledged that for the last 1,000 years, most of India had been ruled by the people from the minority communities– irrespective of whether they were foreign invaders or locals. One after another, people from both the Muslim and Christian communities ruled over India. During this long period of Indian history, a number of ignominious incidents occurred, which include desecration of many religious places of the majority community, particularly during Muslim rule. When the majority community became the master of its own destiny– whether it was a sense of responsibility stemming from being wary of sentiments of the Muslim community or whatever else– they eschewed seeking restoration of some important places of worship, which had central importance in day-to-day lives of the majority community. Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel was a great visionary who identified this problem and its implications for the future of Hindu-Muslim relations but because of his early

demise, except Somnath, the three important temples could not be restored and transferred to the Hindus in an amicable manner. The issue, which should have been solved in no time, got protracted and later became an irritant in the relationship between Hindus and Muslims. As a matter of fact, such unresolved issues over the years became the biggest stumbling block in the development of the 'atmosphere of fraternity' between the Hindu and Muslim community. Those issues, which were the 'bone of contention' between two communities, should have been resolved in the larger interest of the nation and its people, long ago. Unfortunately, in the course of protracted disputes over religious places, an impression was created that these issues are the criterion of 'India's secularism'. Had the establishment of fraternity (as per the original preamble of the Indian Constition) been made the criterion to solve these issues, they would have been resolved a long ago. But, unfortunately, a wrong criterion was set to make the matter complicated and it was affirmed that it is the test of India's secularism. In fact, the putative votary of secularism failed to understand that it cannot survive and thrive in a democratic country if the majority community of the country remains aggrieved because of it.

It is certainly not an act of omission by the framers of the Constitution that despite disapproving theocracy, they didn't rush for adoption of the

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word 'secularism' in the Constitution. It was inserted in the Preamble through the 42nd Amendment. (Looking at the timing and circumstance of its insertion in the Preamble, it looks more like a political gimmick than an assertion of a commitment to it). They were quite prophetic and practical in their understanding that in the absence of the fraternity, there will be no future for secularism.

Had 'fraternity' been made the criterion to solve the issue instead of secularism, such kinds of issues would have never arisen. In this regard, one needs to understand that secularism cannot define the nature of the relationship between two communities; it only delineates the neutrality of the approach of the state towards various religious communities. It can in no way, dictate terms of the relationship between two communities. It is a 'feeling of fraternity' that defines the nature of relations between two communities. Therefore, it will not be an exaggeration to state that the protracted dispute, schism and occurrence of riots, between Hindus and Muslims are simply consequences of showing disregard to the fundamental spirit of the Indian Constitution.

Minority Policy, Muslims and Minority Communities

In pre-independence days, despite numerous efforts by the Congress, it was never able to win the confidence of Muslim community for various reasons. This was the situation despite the fact that many top Muslim leaders were part of the Congress and even became its presidents. So far as the Muslim League is concerned, it was primarily an organization of the Muslim landlords concerned about their fate in Hindu majoritarian democratic society. However, its leaders were quite successful in hiding their real concern and claimed to be the real representatives of the entire Muslim community of India and for that purpose, effectively played the 'Islamic card' to actualize their objectives.

One consistent problem with Muslim society, which still exists with the same intensity, is that when a Muslim leader or group of leaders play the Islamic card to serve their interests, a substantial section of the Muslim community stops thinking rationally and throws its weight behind the issue or person. Therefore, in pre-independence India, an almost impossible looking goal, within a few years of assertion was realized in the shape of Pakistan, despite active opposition from Maulana Abul Kalam Azad and many other leaders. All kinds of ethnic dissimilarities among Muslims of various states soon turned irrelevant and got dissipated in the fit of religious fanaticism. Even after the creation of Pakistan the use of the 'Islamic card' for various purposes, ranging from its use as an instrument to inflict injuries to India using Jehad-embedded terrorism and other means, has not stopped.

After reading various provisions of the Indian Constitution along

with articles related to minorities, it is clear that the Constituent Assembly wanted to build a just society with a guarantee of freedom for almost everything required by an individual to lead a dignified life. Despite the fact that people of India were given so many crucial rights as fundamental rights, the need for seeing some issues through the majority-minority perspective, is difficult to understand. A small chink left in 'one India, one people, one policy' by the Constituent Assembly later got converted into a big pothole by the policies of the subsequent governments. For example, whatever rights have been given to minority educational institutions (see the 44 Amendment of the Indian Constitution), had they been extended to all educational institutions, its utility for minorities would not have lessened, instead such provisions would have further strengthened it because of solidarity and support of much larger groups. In fact, such types of divisive policies appear to be either a product of visionless deliberations or simple politicking. It appears that policy makers are unmindful of the fact that separate religion-based provisions would ultimately lead to sub-streaming of minority communities and will weaken the national mainstream of the country.

If one does a situational analysis of the post-independence period, it is clear that there is some sort of schism between the two communities, which sometimes culminates in communal violence. And, the measures, which have been taken up to address the situation and to shield the minority communities from cultural and social domination of the majority are counter-productive as they stop the process of natural amalgamation and their integration into the national mainstream. It appears that the political class of India looked into the interests of the minorities from the perspective of their own political interests and overlooked the dynamics of the interests of the minority communities. They are reluctant to understand the real interests of the minorities in a wider and long-term perspective. The nature of schemes and programmes of the governments (state and central) clearly indicate, they wanted to save minorities particularly Muslims from drifting into the mainstream, whether it is the field of education or any other areas.

In fact, it is difficult to understand as to why policy-makers of India did not take measures that would have controlled narrow and fissiparous tendencies and would have built a cohesive society wherein all would have flourished together– socially and economically. Instead of framing policies on these lines, it is being framed in a way which solidifies the religious divide instead of mitigating it.

The question, therefore is, what is the net outcome of India's minority policy? Minorities are not happy with it and the majority community too is nurturing a

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grudge against it, then, what is the use of continuing it? In fact, it needs a complete overhaul with a recalibrated vision.

So far as the Christian community in India is concerned, areas of their concern are totally different from that of the Muslim community. Though they do not complain of being discriminated against, they want unbridled 'religious freedom', which, in fact, is a euphemism for unrestricted freedom to convert people from Hinduism to Christianity. If the conversion issue is examined, it is seen as the highest form of religious arrogance. It implies that religious practices and beliefs of other people or communities are not correct or good, and, therefore, they should get converted to Christianity. They openly disparage religious practices of the other religions. 'Religious Freedom' is being used as freedom to disparage and demean other communities' religious practices. There is a serious allegation against them that they are exploiting inadequate availability of health and educational facilities in remote rural areas besides many other kinds of temptations to lure people into Christianity. And for this specific reason, sometimes they face stiff opposition for their activities from local people and from anti-conversion groups mainly belonging to the majority community. Both Christianity and Islam firmly believe and indulge in expansion of their respective beliefs. But this gives an awkward feeling to Hindus, who themselves have a variety of spiritual traditions, and firmly adhere to the belief that it is a matter of one's personal choice that by which way one seeks the truth. Hence, when they see organized efforts of conversion from Hinduism to other religions, they feel that other religious groups are taking undue advantage of their religious liberalism. Besides this, there is one more reason behind the antithetical attitude against conversion. As India was divided on the basis of religion, conversion to any religion other than Hinduism is generally frowned upon as it is not seen just from a religious perspective but from the perspective of national integration too.

If the conversion issue is set aside, there is hardly any other issue between the two communities that may be the bone of contention. In general, they are enjoying goodwill and positive relations with the majority community. Admittedly, the level of relations between both communities is so cordial that Christmas has now become an important festival for urban Hindus as well.

As far as Sikhism is concerned, as it is a variant of Hinduism it acquires quite a different status. In fact, despite the difference in attire and appearance, it is so much part of the mainstream that there is hardly any sense of alienation. Besides, the 'Langar Culture of Sikhism' (provisioning of free food for all), gives it a highly humanitarian face among all religions.

Recalibrating India's Minority Policy

In every society or country, there are two kinds of stakeholders– primary and secondary. The primary stakeholder is more concerned, assertive and sensitive about the country's well-being and its future prospects. The secondary stakeholders are obsessed with their own well-being and issues of national interest are a secondary concern for them. For example, the erstwhile USSR comprised many ethnic groups. All of them contributed to USSR's development and prosperity in its heyday. But when the USSR broke up, all ethnic groups separated from it barring the people of the Russian Federation. They are again trying their best to regain lost pride. Similarly, in China, the Han Chinese is the prime stakeholder and torchbearer of China's pride, which comprises of 91.5 per cent of China's population. In the case of India, Hindus are the prime stakeholders of this country. Hence, as a matter of principle, the culture, pride and sentiment of the prime stakeholders of the country must have an edge over all other considerations, in order to nurture, strengthen and define self-image of the country.

It is observed that people from the majority and minority communities instinctively think and behave differently with regard to national interests. Why do both differ in attitudes? There may be many factors behind this but, undeniably, the 'sense of owning and belonging' is a major reason.

From the perspective of national interests, it is important that all groups of people, irrespective of the nature of their diversity get assimilated with the national mainstream. If a stream of a river splinters from the main course, it maintains the flow to a certain extent but loses the flow or ends up drying after some distance and time. This is also true about the communities. The minority policy should be framed with an objective to assimilate it with the national mainstream. If India's current minority policy is assessed from this viewpoint, it appears that it has been framed to woo minoritities through welfare programmes, rather than to fix the problem of their integration into the national mainstream. It only tries to remedy the symptoms with quick-fix measures with no long-term solution in sight.

Constraints of Centralized Concept of Minority

The central government has clearly identified and notified the list of minorities in the country but the state governments have not yet done so. As a result, the states in which Hindus are in a minority, they do not get the status and benefits available to the minorities.

In India, law and order and many other crucial subjects are part of the State list. In fact, people are more directly connected with the state government in their day-to-day life rather than the central government. Hence, the problems faced by the non-Hindu minorities in Hindu majority areas, are similar to the problems faced by

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the Hindus in non-Hindu majority areas. In some states and places, where Hindus are in minority, they face severe discrimination and population erosion. Minority- whether of a state or that of a district– is a minority and there is no rationale behind discrimination on the basis of religion.

In fact, it is surprising to see that despite being a minority in many states, Hindus do not get minority benefits. This situation put the Hindus in a disadvantageous position. In fact, because of a discriminatory approach, the present minority identification policy appears unjust and illogical. Its effects are not only deleterious from the national perspective, but they also breach the fundamental spirit of the Constitution, which affirms that there would be no discrimination on the basis of religion. Therefore, it is imperative that every state notifies its own minorities as in the case of most of the centrally-sponsored programmes, instead of following the central list of minorities.

S. N.	Name of States/UTs	Hindu	Muslim	Christian	Sikha	Buddhist	Jain	Other Religion	Not Stated
1.	Arunachal Pradesh	29.04%	1.95%	30.26%	0.24%	11.77%	0.06%	26.20%	0.48%
2.	Jammu and Kashmir	28.44%	68.31%	0.28%	1.87%	0.90%	0.02%	0.01%	0.16%
3.	Lakshadweep	2.77%	96.58%	0.49%	0.01%	0.02%	0.02%	0.01%	0.10%
4.	Manipur	41.39%	8.40%	41.29%	0.05%	0.25%	0.06%	8.19%	0.38%
5.	Meghalaya	11.53%	4.40%	74.59%	0.10%	0.33%	0.02%	8.71%	0.32%
6.	Mizoram	2.75%	1.35%	87.16%	0.03%	8.51%	0.03%	0.07%	0.09%
7.	Nagaland	8.75%	2.47%	87.93%	0.10%	0.34%	0.13%	0.16%	0.12%
8.	Punjab	38.49%	1.93%	1.26%	57.69%	0.12%	0.16%	0.04%	0.32%

Source: Census Report 2011

Chart -1

States in which Minority is in Majority

Minority Vs Majority Population in % 8 States

Minority
Majority
Linear (Minority)
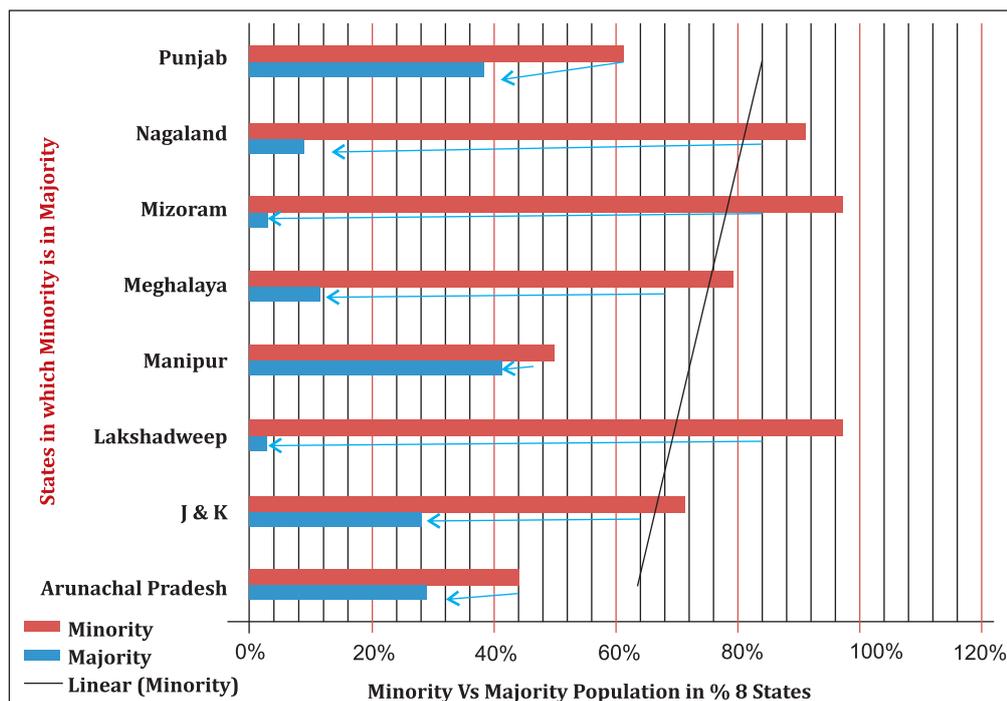
There are altogether eight states where Hindus are less in number than the minorities. Out of the eight, five states are located in the northeast region, namely, Arunachal Pradesh, Mizoram, Nagaland, Manipur and Meghalaya while the other three are Punjab and Jammu & Kashmir (J&K) in the north and Lakshadweep in the south. Out of the eight states, it is only Manipur where Hindus are slightly higher than 40 per cent (41.39 per cent) and in Punjab slightly less than 40 per cent (38.49 per cent). In all other states, they are less than 30 per cent but in Lakshadweep, Nagaland and Mizoram, the percentage of their population is 2.77, 8.75 and 2.75 respectively.

Actually, the distribution of the population is not proportionate in all parts of the state. In fact, in most of the states, if one part is dominated by the followers of particular religion, the other part has followers of different religions. For example, in J&K, which has a majority Muslim population, three different regions have three different types of religious compositions. While the Ladakh region is dominated by the Buddhists, the Kashmir Valley has an overwhelming Muslim population and in the Jammu region, Hindus are in majority. Therefore, the minority of one region is in majority in another region and vice-versa.

As a result, with a change in religious demography from one region to the other, the need and constraints of followers of the particular religion also differ.

Therefore, the region-wise identification of minorities will be more pertinent. And, the role of the central government should be limited to issuing broader guidelines to the states and that of monitoring to see whether special needs of minorities are fully taken care of.

Is India's Minority Policy Divisive and Un-assimilative?

The Constitution of India made some special provisions for minorities so that they can protect their language, culture and traditions. Besides, the central government also runs some minority-specific programmes for their educational and economic upliftment (described in Chapter 5). All minorities are not using the facilities and exclusive rights provided to them in a similar manner to improve their lot. Of the six notified minorities, Christians and Muslims have developed a vast educational network. So far as the educational network developed by the Christian community is concerned, it follows almost a similar educational pattern and syllabus as prescribed by the Government of India. In most of the schools run by Christian missionaries, the number of Hindu children are more compared to their Christian counterparts.

But in the case of educational institutions run by the Muslims, the situation is totally different. In most of the Madrasas, only Muslim children are imparted education. Their syllabus,

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language, teaching style and above all, orientation are totally different. The Madrasas are mostly involved in imparting religious education in which children of other communities are not interested.

It is widely accepted that school is the first place where children start socializing. If the children of diverse communities are educated together, they learn to socialize and grow in a multi-cultural environment. On the contrary, if they are exposed to a mono-religious environment, their minds get conditioned for a particular kind of environment. In such a situation, since, they do not have exposure to a multi-cultural environment. they do not learn to show respect and warmth towards culture and traditions of other communities. Eventually, later in their lives they find it difficult to associate and coordinate with people of different traditions and culture. Therefore, it is important to ensure that children of Muslim families do get their schooling in general schools and development of religious schools should be curbed.

Owing to differences in education and the schooling system, a section of India's population develops a worldview different from another. Besides, the habitation pattern of Muslim community is also different. They want to live in close vicinity of their fellow co-religionists. Therefore, Muslim children who go to religious schools get deprived of the other opportunities too, whereas

children of other communities get opportunities to socialize naturally. Persistence of this kind of situation creates a ghetto-mentality and the pupils who are the products of such an f environment may never be able to assimilate with the mainstream.

If such a situation is considered from the perspective of national interest, it is not a healthy trend. Diversity of religion and language is one thing, but differences in content of teaching and grooming of children in a separate and monolithic atmosphere are different things. And support of such kinds of practices is akin to pampering of divisiveness. Moreover, it impedes the natural progress and modifications in one's culture and tradition, which happens only when they socialise well.

Therefore, while promoting diversity, one should be very careful and clear about its nature and extent. Educational institutions are the best places to promote and propagate 'unity in diversity' but the existence of community-exclusive schools in large numbers is not consistent with the philosophy.

Further, instead of curbing this trend it isinfesting in the institutions of higher learning too. Some institutions have already been declared as minority institutions. What is the logic for taking such a step? It has been claimed that the percentage of Muslim students enrolled in institutions of higher learning are less in number in proportion to its

share in population. This is true but instead of addressing the reasons behind this phenomenon, this demand is more of an effort to control the outcome. The places of higher learning accentuate the process of assimilation of the student and teachers of diverse backgrounds with the churning process of assent, dissent, difference and acceptance. If students of Muslim and other communities remain immune to the multi-religious and multi-cultural environment, they will never be at ease in the face of cultural and religious diversities. Therefore, it is incumbent upon the government to stop such 'social and cultural immunization programmes for minorities', which are segregating minorities from the national mainstream and preventing them from mixing with students of other communities. As a matter of fact, universal education at the national level is the best means to strengthen the national mainstream. What is the rationale for the existence of a separate wing for education of minorities such as 'National Commission for Minority Educational Institutions' in the Ministry of Human Resource Development (HRD)? Aren't such national level regulating bodies compartmentalizing

education on religious lines and weakening the national mainstream? No one can deny the fact that education of minority students is important in order to build an inclusive society but it no way necessitates and justifies the separate existence of minority institutions. Besides, the existence of minority educational institutions is not compatible with the philosophy of 'assimilative diversity', which this report is so ardently advocating. The term 'Assimilative Diversity' can be defined as 'a state in which all diverse elements of identity of a person or that of a community get subsumed in [the] larger identity after a certain limit, in order to construct a larger national identity'. In a country like India, a culture of 'Assimilative Diversity' is the need of the hour.

If the policy of the government will be promotional and rewarding to 'minority status' it will unnecessarily communalize even the problems of a general nature. Besides, every group on the pretext of having even minor differences would rush to get minority status. Therefore, such issues must be seen only in the light of long-term national interests, otherwise it will create unwarranted complications in society.

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Ganga-Jamuna Sanskriti (Composite culture) and Assimilative Diversity

There has been a lot of talk about Ganga-Jamuna Sanskriti in the context of India's culture. While 'Ganga' is used to represent 'Hindus', 'Yamuna' symbolizes Muslims. Is the phrase 'Ganga-Jamuna Culture' appropriate to use with reference to the (Muslim) minorities? It sounds improper, as it discounts the other five important minorities. Therefore, one must avoid using such a phrase, which does not encompass all minorities, so that other minority communities do not feel ignored in India's multi-cultural milieu.

Another important objection against the use of this phrase is of a fundamental nature. For the sake of convenience, the same metaphor – Ganga and Yamuna – needs to be used to make its implication understood. Yamuna merges with Ganga at the southern outskirts of Allahabad. Now after this merger, if Yamuna insists that since the source of its origin is different, the travelling path is different and it passes through Delhi, it is of no less importance and would like to keep its existence independent, now imagine the likely scenario if Yamuna refuses its merger with Ganga, what will be the fate of Yamuna in such a circumstance? In the absence of its direct connection to the sea, it will create havoc in large swathes of land in northern India. The second danger is that it may lose its existence as a river. Therefore, it

may be said that Yamuna's future lies in its unconditional merger with the Ganga and the richness of the flow of the Ganga lies in its whole-hearted acceptance of the same.

Besides, there are many other rivers that merge with the Ganga as it progresses towards its destination. Therefore, what will be the scenario if each river starts insisting on similar demands or on its separate existence? Will we have the same Ganga as we have today? Will water of other rivers get the same respect as they are getting after their merger with the Ganga? The answer is no, not at all.

The example of Ganga is important because as the progression and wider stream of a river depends on unconditional contribution of water from various tributaries, similarly, every culture and civilization develops over time and also in a particular geographical environment, and moves ahead incorporating all kinds of cultural interventions. And once it incorporates any element — local or foreign—everything gets accorded the same status, respect and value. But for this, every tributary needs to forsake its own varied nature and feature in order to get associated with the larger identity. In fact, in the process of adoption of a larger identity, immersion of a separate one is the process through which national culture of a country evolves and takes full shape. As a matter of fact, as every river, after flowing a certain distance separately and keeping its

identity intact, submerges into a larger one, similarly a regional and sectarian culture needs to merge its existence into a larger one in order to enrich it by its own cultural content. For this, every culture must give up its temptation for singularity after a certain limit and must merge with the national mainstream culture.

So far as the objection of a section of the Muslim community towards its mainstreaming is concerned, it does not appear rational or historically supported. Reportedly, Sufi Saints converted some sections of the Hindus to Islam in India. Among all Sufi Saints, KhwajaMoinuddinChisti has been the most influential. When he came to India and found that the attire of the Indian hermit is saffron, he forsook his green attire and adopted a saffron one. Dargah worship is also prevalent only in the Indian subcontinent. Equally, Qawwali is also a Sufi version of 'Kirtan'. In Jharkhand, missionaries present Mother Mary in typical tribal attire to show her proximity with them.

Therefore, in order to spread religion in the Indian sub-continent, if many adjustments have been and are being made, then there should be no hesitation in making some more adjustments to live in a conciliatory and peaceful environment with the majority community.

Besides, though every culture, whether it is regional or religious, has a certain distinguishing identity, it cannot thrive if it is unresponsive to change. In fact, no

religion or culture can afford to resist the 'spirit of time' for long. Moreover, whether it is religion or culture, it does not develop in a vacuum or remain geographically neutral. Therefore, aligning and associating with the culture of an alien and geographically remote region appears to be an absurd act rather than a rational one, even if the genesis of the concerned religion is situated there. Further, this creates a problem of adjustment with local people and the environment. This warrants the need for introducing a disconnection between 'social practices' and 'spiritual messages', because spiritual messages are generally universal in nature but social practices are tied to region and geography. If a community, which follows a foreign religion, decides to remain socially and culturally localized, there is no reason that the community will not remain connected with the people of their surroundings.

Religion and Secularism

Religion in a secular country is a matter of intense and passionate debate. There is no universal form of secularism. Every secular country is secular in its own way and to a varied extent. The secular policy of every country has its roots in the respective country's history, culture, tradition and the guiding principle of governance. Since every country differs in tradition, culture and history, secularism of every country also differs in practice.

So far as secularism in India is concerned, it is in itself a unique

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case worth studying for the students of political science. Though as an idea 'secularism' is ostensibly a Western import in India. But as an ethos, it is truly an Indian concept. Secularism is a part of Indian culture and philosophy, which derives its strength from its old scriptures and its teachings and its openness to new ideas and willingness to respect all ideas – spiritual or material.If India is a secular country, it should not be seen simply as a political decision taken by its political leadership but should be seen in a much larger context, i.e., as an endorsement of India's spiritual culture and traditions. Whether it is enshrined in the Constitution or not, India is a secular country and would remain so in its spirit, as it is its civilizational commitment to the world.

So far as the present state of India's secularism is concerned, the political use of the term has badly bruised its face. Till the 42nd Amendment, it was an article of faith, which was an inherent expression of the Indian ethos. But, with the insertion of the term 'secularism' and 'socialism' in the Preamble, its political misuse started. Now, this term is mostly used for political positioning by political parties aimed at wooing minority votes, particularly Muslims. The blatant political use of secularism– its use as a bulwark against prosecution for corruption charges and also to perpetuate nepotism– hollowed its validity and utility as a public policy. It is not simply a coincidence that the more vociferously a politician talks about secularism, the more he or she is likely to be corrupt.

Besides its blatant misuse, a misconceived perception of secularism mentally incapacitated decision makers of India to solve the problems of a religious nature. Whether it is a matter of civil law such as the Shah Bano case or disputes of religious nature such as the dispute regarding construction of Ram Temple, the misconceived notion of secularism, instead of solving matters, made them unnecessarily complicated.

Secularism is the spirit of Hinduism, which is the pivot of Indian culture and values. Therefore, it is incumbent upon the polity of India to adopt a nurturing attitude towards the culture and values that gives it a philosophical base and spiritual justification. But, Indian secularism took a contrary course, as it disregards its source of strength. As a result, a large section of Hindus became an aggrieved party to the current form of secularism, instead of becoming a big votary for it.

Another important lacuna of Indian secularism has been that instead of preventing religious institutions from dictating their terms, it constrains the role of government from taking necessary steps for social advancement of the community. By limiting the role of the state and giving legitimacy to the role of religious bodies in the realm of the state, Indian secularism has become invidious and irrational. In the

absence of an unwilling State, many important steps particularly in the area of social reforms get stalled and ordinary people live at the mercy and whims of religious authorities.

Last but not the least, an important lacunae is its inability to inculcate an environment of fraternity among various communities. If secularism of a countrydoesn't provide an environment conducive to it, this not only negates the utility of secularism, but also raises a host of questions on the manner in which secularism is being practiced in India.

Secularism and Minorities

So far as secularism as being practiced in India and the interests of minorities is concerned, it put minorities of India on a confrontation course with the majority community, resulting in unfortunate incidents of confrontation from time-to-time on a host of issues ranging from social to religious ones. In fact, the importance of a policy depends on its utility, particularly whether it gives a sense of security or makes day-to-day life of an ordinary person easy or difficult. The type of secularism being practiced in India, fails to build a cohesive society. In fact, the need of the hour is practical and real secularism instead of an impractically perceived notional one. India needs to nurture the natural secularism

of its society, which makes it cohesive rather than one that is awkwardly conceived, which appears to be dismissive of its adhesive culture. Whether it is secularism or the minority policy of India, it needs to be designed in a way so that it promotes fraternity and ensures a dignified place for every person and section of the society, irrespective of its religious affiliation.

Secularism and Culture

'Secularism' in the sense of recognizing various ways of worshipping as well as concept of the God, has been part of India's culture and its incarnation as a policy is simply a manifestation of its civilizational ethos. Therefore, a religion or religious beliefs that do not share such an ethos cannot claim to be a civilizational representative of India. Though this fact does not belittle the legitimacy of any religion in India, it certainly disqualifies it for being its civilizational representative. In this regard, it is important to keep in mind that India is a country where followers of numerous religions reside since centuries. Therefore, it cannot afford to let those religious beliefs occupy a larger than life space, which do not recognize and show respect to all religions. In fact, combined and comprehensive interests of all religions warrant an environment,

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Whether it is secularism or the minority policy of India, it needs to be designed in a way so that it promotes fraternity and ensures a dignified place for every person and section of the society, irrespective of its religious affiliation.

various ways of worshipping as well as concept of the God, has been part of India's culture and its incarnation as a policy is simply a manifestation of its civilizational ethos.

which may be supportive to peaceful existence of all religions. And, the tradition and culture that nurtures and supports it, must occupy all the space in the larger interest of the country.

The perceived crisis of Indian secularism in some senses stems from the misunderstanding of Indian culture and its sources. But, what is 'The Culture of India,' cannot be answered and figured out properly if it is not clear what are the sources of Indian culture. The sources can be understood from cultural traditions, acclaimed values, behavioural norms and the teaching of important scriptures developed here over the centuries. These can be denominated as culture, particularly if they indicate the pattern of thinking and behaviour over a length of time. In fact, the greatness of a culture lies in its quality of being spectacular and its compatibility with the collective interests of the people.

Had the 'concept of secularism' evolved in India, taking a cue from the above-cited sources of Indian culture, it would not have collided with the sentiment of the populace of India. The relevance of secularism in India got eroded because of its misconception and wrong interpretation coupled with the frequent suppression of the sentiment of its major votary – the Hindu.

The biggest beneficiaries of secularism– the minorities of India–appear more interested in taking advantageof liberal religious environment than doing anything substantial to strengthen the spirit of secularism. For example, freedom to practice religion of one's choice is one thing but to have disrespectful attitude towards other religions or use of nonsensical means such as 'changaie sabha' (congregation organized to propagate Christianity by curing ostensibly ill persons) and unfair means such as wooingbyoffering something to followers of the other religions to proselytize, is blatant misuse of secularism.

The growth of Indian civilization is not incessant, as it has been disrupted by scores of foreign invasions. The political and socio-religious outcomes of invasions resulted in cultural disruptions. And these cultural disruptions along with influences of foreign culture, in fact complicated the answer to the question: 'what is Indian culture' and what cannot be considered as 'culture of India'?

At the moment, Indian culture appears to be an amalgamation of its own traditional cultures, influences of foreign cultures as well as traditions developed in resistance to foreign cultural invasions. Therefore, those traditions, which are followed by an overwhelming majority of Indians, irrespective of their origin, should be considered as

part of Indian culture. Region and community-specific traditions and practices, if compatible to the civilizational ethos of India, may also be considered as part of Indian culture.

In this regard, one may be curious to know, what is the civilizational ethos of India? Indian civilizational thought was never compartmentalized; whatever ideas and the thought it produced, it was for all humanity. This means practices or thoughts that are religiously neutral, unbound and beneficial to humanity, are all considered as representing the civilizational ethos of India.

Assessing Special Needs of Minorities

Now, the question to be asked is: what are the special needs of minorities, which are different from those of the people of the majority communityliving in the same place? There may be several special needs of a minority but security is the most important necessity. For example, when Islamic militancy started in J&K, almost the entire Hindu population had to migrate from Kashmir to Jammu and other regions, where there was sufficient Hindu population.

What does this show? It clearly indicates that if a particular community is in numerical minority in one region of a state, the question of security may become a major issue for

them in that region, irrespective of the fact that the concerned community has overwhe-lming majority in other regions and states. This fact underlines security as a special need of the minorities. This also necessitates a region-specific minority identification system, as composition of followers of various religions differs from state-to-state and region-to-region.

Other important factors regarding insecurity of minorities are whether it encompasses all minorities or just one? Are the needs of all minorities similar or do they differ from minority to minority? This is an important factor, because out of the six notified minorities of India, only Muslims talk of insecurity while other communities do not consider it important enough to merit discussion.

In fact, it is interesting to observe that other minorities, despite being less in number, do not grudge and nurture such feelings, but the Muslims, who are substantial in number, do. Why are the Muslims so concerned about their security? Is their sense of insecurity real or notional? This aspect needs an in-depth examination.

In fact, if the 'sense of insecurity' is kept aside, there is no problem as such

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that is specifically related to Muslims. All other problems are of a general nature, which has virtually nothing to do with the numbers—majority or minority.

If the Muslim community of India does not feel secure, it is probably because of its confrontational approach on a number of issues (some issues have already been discussed) with the majority community, resulting sometimes in violent incidents. Lack of positive and cohesive relationships with the majority community gave ground to suspicious attitude or created a 'trust deficit' between them.

Besides, the Muslim community's concept of insecurity is also different from what one can construe generally from use of the term. For example, recently the government tried to enact a law to stop the practice of 'Instant Divorce' to give Muslim women protection against it. This step was publicized as an onslaught on religious freedom. Therefore, to bring the community on board in its effort to stall such reformist measures of the government, a big public rally was organised on April 15, 2018, at Patna. The level of backwardness of Muslim women can be understood from the fact that they too participated in it in large numbers to highlight the extent of male domination over their lives. Therefore, when the

Muslims talk of 'Insecurity', one cannot understand it by its literal meaning, but it needs to be seen in 'proper context' in which the term is being used.

What are the mutual confidence-building measures that are required to remedy the situation? Most of the measures have already been discussed, but one thing that needs special emphasis is that it is lack of goodwill and cohesiveness in the approach that creates a 'trust deficit' which culminates in the 'sense of insecurity' among Muslims in India. In the absence of goodwill and a cohesive attitude along with a confrontational approach, even minor differences create a wide rift.

As a matter of fact, the Muslim community needs to realize that it cannot grow and develop with a sense of despair or by holding a grudge against the majority community. They need to rejoice seeing the level of opportunities available to them, what minorities of any other country can hardly dream of. If a Muslim can become the President of India, the Vice President, the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, the Chief of the Intelligence Bureau, and the Cabinet Secretary, it means all doors are wide open for them and they can aspire for any position in their lives if they deserve it and demonstrate their eligibility.

2.

3Cs OF MAJORITY-MINORITY RELATIONSHIPS

(Complaints, Confrontation and Cooperation)

It is a catastrophe of the human race that followers of some important religions find it difficult to live together in a peaceful environment and with mutual respect for each other's religion. The great discourses of peace, love and that of brotherhood dissipate once they encounter people with different customs and beliefs. Whether teachings of religion itself are responsible for such occurrences or there is misinterpretation of the teachings, may be a matter of debate, but the fact that because of differences in religious beliefs people are being victimized is undeniable. What is the relevance and what sense dobig claims and magnificent messages of various religions make, if they are unable to teachtheir followers rational and sensible behaviour with other human beings? Why religious affiliation should play or has been playing such an important role in determining the nature and intensity of relationships between two groups of human beings raises serious questions about the role of religion in society and the state. Understandably, in order to limit the disastrous effect of the assertion of religious affiliation, most of the modern states have limited the role of religion in the affairs of the state and prefers to remain neutral in religious affairs to varying degrees. But, despite the proclaimed neutrality by the state, its failure to maintain policy-wise equidistance to the followers of all religions, complicates the situation and gives the state an image of being an unfair practitioner of the policy of secularism.

In India, the majority-minority relationships have been much debated and remain a complicated matter. The enormity of its impact and volatility of this relationship can be understood from the fact that India was partitioned in 1947 due to an unmanageable bitter relationship between two communities. Even in post-independent India, the relationship conundrum between two communities is not fully resolved. At times, it raises its ugly head and registers its presence through clashes and communal riots.

It is still puzzling that India, despite being a secular country and having provisions of statutory protective rights for minorities, the relationship between two communities has not always been cohesive; rather it has most often been strenuous. It is worrisome for the entire country as to why the relationship between two communities—Hindus and Muslims—is not fully harmonized and communal conflicts keep occurring time and again.

The relationship between Hindu and other minorities, except the Muslims, has comparatively not been that strenuous. In fact, there have been very few instances of violent clashes between Christians and Hindus. And, whatever incidents of clashes have been reported between Hindus and Christians, are rare and localised. In some states though, there is certainly some simmering anger against religious missions of the Christian Missionaries, particularly against its proselytizing drive. Other than this, because of its positive contribution to the health and educational sector, Christianity enjoys quite a cordial relationship with the majority community.

Likewise, the Hindus also generally enjoy a cordial relationship with its spiritual offshoots such as Sikhism, Buddhism and Jainism. Therefore, when one talks of tumultuous relationships between the majority and minority community, it is actually about Hindu-Muslim relationships.

As per the 2011 Census, members of the notified minority communities constitute over 20 per cent of the Indian population. Out of the total minority population, nearly four-fifths comprise the Muslim and Christian communities. As a corollary of it, Muslims and Christians have an indelible imprint over the minority policy of the government. It is really a painful fact that despite division of the country on religious lines, the issues of conflict between the Hindus and Muslims, which

existed before partition, still persists, though in a subdued form. Thus, it can be concluded that division of the country failed to address the problem of communal conflict, especially between Hindus and Muslims, and it simply put the problem under the carpet for a time being.

At present, there are three kinds of issues determining relationship between majority and minority communities or to be more precise between Hindu and Muslims. First is of historical nature; second is of socio-cultural nature; and the third is that of political one.

Historical Issues

In Hindu-Muslim relationships, there are some irritants that are still adversely affecting both communities' relationships. Out of all irritants, one of the most important issues has been the demand for reconstruction of temples on the sites that were occupied by Muslims during Muslim rule in the past. For Hindus, desecration of the temples by the Muslim invaders was demonstration of detestation and enmity towards the Hindu and its religious places. Therefore, insistence for status quo at important religious places such as Kashi, Mathura and Ayodhya,are viewedas unwillin-gness of the Muslim Community to mend fences with the Hindus.

Though the historic Somnath temple, which was destroyed several times by Muslim invaders, was rebuilt on its original site after independence, issues of other important temples like Kashi,

Mathura and Ayodhya remained unresolved, which are poisoning relationships between both communities.

Later, the movement to build Ram Temple at Ayodhya became a national movement, which is still sub-judice. The issues of the other two temples are dormant now but, in the absence of proper handling, they have been creating rift between the two communities, which sometimes become cause of eruption of communal violence.

Another bone of contention between the two communities has been 'cow slaughter'. Hindus, particularly in northern India, worship cows while Muslims slaughter them for meat. Despite some positive initiatives in this regard by a section of the Muslim community, this issue has still not been fully resolved.

The present is a product of the past and determinant of the future shape of things. In case of Hindu-Muslim relationships, past misdeeds of aggressor kings are still a factor in the relationship between the two communities. While Hindus want reconstruction of temples on the same sites where they were built before desecration, Muslims are opposing it. In the case of the Ram Temple at Ayodhya, Muslims contest the claim of the Hindus that the mosque was built after desecration of the temple. In this regard, the point needs to be noted that since desecration of temples has been such a common phenomenon, discussions on such issues will make the relationship of both communities unnecessarily bitter. As a matter of principle, if a place is famous because of its religious and historical connection to a community, the concerned community's right must be indisputably recognized.

Since religious issues are highly sensitive, the central government should have positively interfered on such matters on the lines of the Somnath temple. Had the government done so, all matters would have been easily resolved. This intervention would not have made the government look 'less secular'; instead, it would have enhanced the secular credentials of the government for its positive approach to solve sensitive disputes. Unfortunately, the government allowed such issues to fester, which had a deleterious impact on social harmony of the country.

As a matter of fact, if one issuespoiled the relationship between the majority and the minority, it is the issue of construction of Ram Temple at Ayodhya. It exposedthe biggest existing fault-line in the relationship between Hindus and Muslims. The insensitive and intransigent approach of leading voices of the Muslim leadership pretending to represent the interests of the community harmed the real interests of the Muslim community the most. In fact, by refusing to respect the sentiments of the majority community, the Muslim leadership chose a confrontationist course for the community. Though, in this regard, Muslim

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intellectuals generally quote Allamma Iqbal: *'Hai Ram kewajoodpe Hindustan konaaz, Ahle Nazar Samajhte Hain Unko Imam-e-Hind'*. In pre-independent India, a poet, who is generally criticized for supporting and propounding the idea of Pakistan, could stake his claim on the legacy of 'Lord Ram', but the progeny of those Muslims who chose to stay in India with cordial bonding with Hindus, refused to show the same respect.

The stubborn approach of the Muslim community infuriated a large section of the majority community, which resulted in the demolition of the disputed mosque. In fact, the demolition had a symbolic significance and a valuable lesson. It was actually a vehement disapproval of the approach of the establishment towards such an issue and also an expression of distrust in the capacity of the state to resolve the matter. This incident also left a deep sense of despondency on the psyche of the Muslims that people of the majority community destroyed their mosque, even if it was not wholly true.

In this regard, it is important to note that the Muslim Community was unmindful of the fact that desecration of temples was demonstration of enmity towards the Hindu and its religious places by the Muslim invaders. Therefore, insistence for status quo of such religious places are viewed as continuity of symbol of enmity shown by the invaders.

In fact, this issue may serve as a classic example to understand how mental timidity and dishonesty on part of the leadership can make even an easily solvable issue a disproportionately big issue. Demolition of a mosque was not an attack on secularism, as it was claimed, but an onslaught on the indecisiveness and incapability of the political leadership of India to solve the issues. Besides, it was a jolt for the distortionary and confused approach of the system of governance towards secularism. India is a secular country, not because the word 'secular' was inserted into the Constitution through the 42nd Amendment, but because the majority of India wants it to remain secular. As the provisions of the Constitution are susceptible to change, secularism needs the continued support of the majority community of the country. If a provision does not suit them, it may be changed. Therefore, it is important to create and maintain a positive environment so that this feeling does not gain ground in the majority community's mind that secularism izs being used to show disrespect to their sentiments and beliefs.

Confrontation Versus Coordination

It is a widely acceptable fact that right from the beginning of the series of Islamic invasions, desecration of temples has been an integral part of the expeditions. Therefore, innumerable temples, idols, statues, monasteries and other religious structures were desecrated, which has been duly and proudly recorded in various

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accounts of contemporary writers, besides physical and other proof. Unfortunately, just after the end of the Muslim era in Indian history, other foreign groups took control over India. Though not explicitly, the British too implicitly promoted Christianity in India.

Therefore, in the post-independence period, it was incumbent upon the government to frame a policy to clear important religious places from religious occupation of Muslims and to be handed over to their respective communities for their renovation. Muslims should have got alternate plots of land for construction of mosques. This way, all disputes would have been solved in one go. But unfortunately, successive governments instead of confronting and solving the problem, preferred to sidestep it. Understandably, such a hesitant approach to confront sensitive issues was a big disservice to the nation.

For the entire controversy around the 'Ayodhya Issue', the pro-temple groups tend to squarely blame the Muslims for their adamant and non-cooperative attitude. However, if the sequence of events is closely examined, it becomes abundantly clear that it is not only politically motivated section of the Muslims but also the leftist historians and intellectuals who played the most dubious role in raking up the issue of the mosque in the pre- and post-demolition period.

Religious Places and National Integration

The disputes related to religious places are in their essence, 'the problem of perspective' rather than anything else. This also reveals the lack of vision on the part of the establishment and their limited understanding of policy and decision-making about the inner dynamics of the Indian society. The limited perception becomes quite conspicuous when two kinds of dominant opinion on the issue of construction of Ram Temple at Ayodhya are analyzed. A section of the people treated it as the 'Issue of entitlement', which needs to be settled by the court of law and thus trivialized the whole issue. On the other, the ardent supporters of the temple affirmed that since it is a 'matter of faith', it is beyond the jurisdiction of the court. And, by virtue of such an assertion, this matter was confined to a religious belief. It appears that both viewpoints have been suffering from the inadequacy of vision. An issue of such nature merits a much larger perspective.

As, already discussed, India is a diverse country. The question is, how have the people of India remained connected to each other in the face of so many physical constraints and diversities? What are the threads that keep India united and have been working as a bond among the people amidst various kinds of diversities?

The history of the world is full of incidents when a country could not maintain its integrity for long when they relied only on hard power (military, police, etc.) of the state as its binding force. Examples of such types of phenomena abound in history.

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This fact shows how necessary soft power is for the unity and integrity of a country like India. Therefore, it is important that India promotes and strengthens its existing multi-layered connectivity among its people.

Looking at Indian society, it is not only religious diversity in which coordination is required but also within Hindu society– which comprises eighty per cent of its total population– it needs to be nourished, as it is sharply divided on regional and linguistic basis. Therefore, those spiritual and cultural threads need to be strengthened, which dissipate linguistic and regional boundaries and provide all with 'an emotional sense of unity'. From days immemorial, India's temples and religious places have been playing the role of unifiers even during turbulent phases of its history. They unite the people of various parts of the country and give them spiritual and sentimental connectivity. In order to understand the importance of this issue, one can take note of a practice being prevalent from old times that persons of south Indian origin are appointed as the main priests in important temples of north India and those of north Indian origin in the temples of south India. At the Viswanath temple of Varanasi, three Aartis is performed every day. First Aarti is performed by the priests of local origin, the second is performed by the hermits of South Indian Monastry and, the third is performed by the priests belonging to the other parts of India. At the

Kashi Vishwanath temple, one can observe how the people from the south, west and other parts of India offer their prayers after standing in a queue for hours. And almost same scenario can be observed in most of the temples of national importance.

Moreover, if one maps places associated with three important Gods of the Hindus namely Rama, Krishna and Shiva, it elucidates how they are holding geographical unity of India. The places, which are associated with Rama is Janakpur in the middle of north-eastern part of India (now in Nepal), Sri Lanka at the southern tip of India and in between are places such as Ayodhya, Panchmadhi, etc. When looked at places of act and actions related to Krishna, the places, which come to our minds are Rajgir, Mathura, Hastinapur, Dwarka, etc. Besides, literal meaning of 'Thiruvanan-thapuram' of Kerala is the rest place of Krishna(Thiru). So far places related to Shiva is concerned, it starts from Mount of Kailash (abode of Shiva) and covers places such as Rameswaram (Tamil Nadu), Sri Sailam Mallikarjunam (Andhra Pradesh), Nashik (Maharashtra), Ujjain (Madhya Pradesh), Baba Vaidyanath (Jharkhand), etc. These religious places are fastening thread of India's cultural map.

Besides, there is a concept of 'Char Dham Yatra', 'numerous Shaktipeeth scattered at all over India and the 'Kumbh' also connects and introduces culture of one region to another one. Therefore, construction and

renovation of temples and settlement of disputes over sites of such religious places must be seen from the perspective of national integration. And, it is incumbent upon minority communities – particularly Muslims – of India that they play their constructive role on such issues, which are important in nurturing national integration. After all, it is each and every Indian's duty that issues, which are important from the perspective of national integration, should not be sacrificed at the altar of a misconceived sense of secularism.

Besides, even from a practical viewpoint, a provision or policy's days are numbered, which aggrieves sentiment of the majority, particularly in the democratic polity. And, those, who are opposing resolution of such issues at the behest of secularism, are actually vilifying it.

Approaches to the Minorities

The dilemma of dealing with minorities is not limited to one country it is faced by almost all the countries, having a sizeable population of minorities. At present, there are three ways to deal with the minorities. The first approach is complete disregard of religious minorities and all norms and laws are enacted in a way, which conforms to religious ethics and theology of the majority community's religion. In this category, there are countries such as Pakistan, almost all Arab countries, Ireland, etc.

There are another group of nations, which are either secular or quasi-secular and don't discriminate on the basis of religion, and laws of the nation are religiously neutral and if there is a bias towards any religion, it is minimal. The US and many European countries fall under this category.

Besides this category, there is one more category of nations, where minorities have been endowed with equal rights and opportunities, including some special ones. In this category, countries like India, Canada, etc. figure most prominently.

Now the question is, how should minorities be treated in a secular country like India? Should India continue with its present minority policy or is there a need for change? The dilemma, whether the present policy is right or not, cannot be demystified if it is not clear what the government expects from the minorities or what minorities expect from the government or from the majority community. For this to happen seamlessly, it is important to know the socio-economic vision of our country –whether the vision of the country is to build an equitable, inclusive and cohesive society or country, irrespective of the fact that it thinks and speaks differently from each other, or a vision to have place where one social group is pitted against the other and these social groups are vying for attention each other's cost? These are some questions, which need immediate clarification.

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Now first of all, we should assume that we want to build an inclusive and cohesive society. If we affirm our commitment to these objectives, we need to identify factors, which are impeding its realization. Among many impediments, the first and one of the most important is the classification of the population on the basis of religion. When the population is divided on the basis of religion, a section of the people become members of the majority and another group becomes the minority. Further, when policies are framed and laws are enacted on such basis, this division gets further amplified. And whatever space for cohesiveness is left, it is filled with polarization and counter-polarization during election days. Therefore, this is the crisis of concept that needs to be rectified. If socially divisive factors are encouraged, society will get divided and on the other hand, if positive factors are encouraged, society will become cohesive.

At the moment, there are many incentives which minority communities are entitled to. As a result, there are many communities, which should not be part of the minority, want to get classified and notified as minorities. In a diverse country like India, many groups of people may get classified as minority on both bases– religion and language. Some groups may be classified as minorities based on language despite being part of the majority, religion-wise. This way, a person can be member of both

groups. A linguistic minority can be religiously associated with the majority group, so how exactly should persons of such a category be classified? Besides, Hinduism is a common umbrella for many kinds of religious beliefs and practices. Therefore, if religious groups with minor differences start segregating themselves from the common religious umbrella of majority, within years, minority groups will turn into majority. Therefore, the 'competition for minoritization' of sects must be discouraged.

Another important matter that needs adequate attention is, if everybody is equal before the law, why should implementation of the law not be equal for everybody? And if the law is not equal for everybody then what significance does the assertion that everybody is equal before law, hold? High ideals –one people, one law– are good only if they are being practiced in the right spirit; if it is used simply as rhetoric, then its enunciation makes no sense.

In this regard, it is said that culture and tradition of minorities must be protected from the government's undesirable intervention. But, India is a country where diversity and difference in tradition is observed almost at every step. Therefore, all traditions and cultures need protection from the ever-encroaching and interfering tendency of the government. People of all communities love their traditions and culture. For example, if minority communities do not want interference of the

government in their inheritance, marriage and marital separation norms, let it be so. But, the same generosity should be extended to all communities.

The approach of the government must be of equidistance towards all religions. For a secular country like India, there should be no space for community-specific law. But, if the government interferes in social and religious affairs of society, it should do it in a non-discriminatory manner. In fact, if the government enacts separate laws for Hindus, Muslims, Christians, etc., it is akin to 'legal fragmentation of the country' and it will also be a travesty of the professed secular credentials of the Government of India. Therefore, it may be safely affirmed that the State should first define the nature, circumstance and extent of its interference in a dispassionate and non-discriminatory manner. Once the State defines its role, it should only then proceed to enact a law in light of the fundamental ideals of the Constitution, i.e., the State shall not discriminate on the basis of religion, caste, gender and place of birth.

Similarly, diversity is propagated as the biggest Indian virtue. To some extent, it is certainly true but as the story goes, excess of everything has its own deleterious impact. Sometimes, this virtue of the country appears to be its bane. It paves the way for mental fragmentation of people on the pretext of various differences. Therefore, it is now time to demarcate the limit and areas of diversity to which they should be acceptable, after which they need to be discouraged in order to build a cohesive, just and peaceful society.

For example, language, dress and social customs are mostly local, but they should have a strong affiliation and acceptance in national law and objectives. Similarly, if family planning is a national priority, no community or State should deny it on the pretext of its tradition.

During an interactive meeting, a person representing the feelings of the majority community said, "If one participates in religious ceremony of Muslims, it is called an act of goodwill but when the same is expected from Muslims, they term it anti-Islamic. So, how [will] goodwill spread? Is it not the responsibility of everyone?"

If the reasons of different communal riots are analysed, one common cause of riots is that the statues of Hindu Gods and Goddesses are desecrated or stones being pelted on a procession led by the members of the Hindu community, after which riots between two the communities break out. It is generally seen that precaution is taken by the administration by enforcing a ban on the passage of religious processions of Hindus through Muslim-dominated areas.

Other Issues of the Concern

Among other issues, there is a plethora of social and cultural issues that are intrinsically

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sensitive. Naturally, handling of such issues warrants a long-term vision, clarity of purpose and understanding of its fallouts in the future. Unfortunately, on this count, the leadership of India has been falling short of expectations. As it has already been said that the occurrence of communal conflicts and lingering social and religious disputes is simply a reminiscent of the failure to deal with the social and cultural issues. Acclaiming the virtues of diversity is fine, but one should not lose sight of the dangers associated with it, if it gets crystallized and takes a harmful turn. Therefore, a society with diversity should not leave conflicting issues to fester, as they get complicated with time, if left unaddressed. Conceptual clarity and a sense of purpose is a matter of utmost importance while dealing with the issues related to religious minorities.

Communalization of the Problem

Every country has its own set of problems, challenges and opportunities, varying in degree, nature, size and type. In a diverse country like India, development needs and performance both vary from state to state, region-to-region, and community-to-community, even within a state. While, there are some valid reasons for state-to-state dissimilarities in development, why communities perform dissimilarly in the same state or even in a similar type of situation, is totally a different issue.

Without going into details, it can be said that it is because of differences in the response pattern of the community to its development needs. In this regard, it is important to understand that for development to take place in a community, it is important that first its need is felt by them. And, if development programmes are imposed, in the absence of a desire for the same, getting cooperation from the concerned community becomes an uphill task. Understandably, development of a community is proportionately related to the positive response to available opportunities as well as to the agents of change and development. It simply implies that the more a community is responsive towards factors of development, the more speedily it tends to grow.

But unfortunately, a tendency in India is gaining ground, to view every problem – whether it is intrinsically economic or social, from a communal perspective, irrespective of its fallout. If a problem itself is viewed in a limited context and its root cause is not diagnosed properly, how in that case would the problem of underdevelopment be resolved?

Though the demand for development is general, the urge for development varies from one social group to another. As a result, there is variation in performance from community to community on various parameters of development. Despite this, it should not be classified on communal lines in a secular country like India.

In fact, the appointment of a committee headed by Justice Rajendra Sachar by the Government of India in 2005 was a blatant communal act. The problem of underdevelopment has more of a geographical connotation rather than a communal one. If Muslims are backward, it is because of their large concentration in those states that are economic underachievers and laggard on various developmental parameters.

As per the 2011 Census, total population of Muslims in India is 17,22,45,158, which is 14.23 per cent of the total population. Out of the total Muslim population in India, 9,13,75,946 (ninety one million three hundred seventy five thousand nine hundred and forty six), which is approximately 53 per cent of the total Muslim population of India, live in only four states – Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Assam and West Bengal. These four states altogether comprise hardly one-third (approximately 32 per cent) of India's total population but in the case of Muslims, it comprises more than half (approximately 53 per cent) of the total Muslim population of India. As a matter of fact, these four states are facing serious problems of underdevelopment and unemployment. Hence, most of the people of these states, irrespective of their affiliation to social and religious groups, are sufferers of underdevelopment, with negligible differentiation.

The effects of low development performance of these states are on all social and religious groups with varying degrees. Therefore, it is not appropriate to view the problem of underdevelopment, which is purely an economic issue, from the communal perspective. In fact, the situation warrants the need to identify those factors, which are preventing a community from availing opportunities offered to them in a dispassionate manner.

In fact, the problem of underdevelopment is not community-specific. A community, which is backward in one state, may be developed in another. For example, if Muslims of West Bengal are less developed in comparison to Hindus, Muslims and Christians are more developed than the Hindus in Kerala. Therefore, neither is it educational nor economic under-performance for which religious factors always play a necessarily decisive role, but sometimes the geographical factor also plays an important role. For example, in Bihar, both Hindus and Muslims, are almost in the same stage of development at least in economic terms. But, when the it is a question of educational attainment, there are certainly some gaps not only between Hindus and Muslims but also between Christians and Muslims. As this is a very important issue, hence it will be discussed in a separate chapter.

Ghettoism and Minority

Whether it is an individual or community, the pattern of habitation matters. It affects the pattern of thinking and behaviour

a tendency in India is gaining ground, to view every problem – whether it is intrinsically economic or social, from a communal perspective, irrespective of its fallout. If a problem itself is viewed in a limited context and its root cause is not diagnosed properly, how in that case would the problem of underdevelopment be resolved?

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of a person and that of the community as well. When a person lives in a religiously mixed colony or hamlet, his thinking and behaviour is bound to be cohesive, collaborative and exchange of good practices takes place among them. In contrast, those who live in a monolithic social environment, they tend to share each other's prejudices, apprehensions and taboos as part of their natural behaviour, because of their like-mindedness and similarity in thinking pattern. As a result, people from such a community become less cohesive and closed-minded. In India, out of the six notified minorities, there is not much variation in the habitation pattern of five communities, but in the case of the Muslim community, this pattern is too conspicuous.

Development of a community largely depends on its willingness to participate in mainstream activity – ranging from economic and social activity to cultural and academic activities. A community with a more adaptable and coordinating nature is generally more development-minded than vice versa. In this regard, equally important is the fact that a community, where futuristic ideas, legislation and policies–which are a precondition for overall development– face resistance, is bound to lag behind in various parameters of development.

In fact, if one has to see the development potential of a community, there are certain factors, which need to be fulfilled. First is, the futuristic and need-based education it imparts to its children; secondly, how educated are its women, what is the average size of its family and lastly, how open is it to new ideas. Having internalized these qualities, there is hardly any community in the world, which is poor and backward.

Besides, the habitation pattern of a community is also the most important indicator of its level of willingness to mingle with mainstream society. If a member of a particular community prefers to live in the vicinity of his own community, it shows his unwillingness to associate with broader society. This, in turn, produces a 'trust deficit' among communities, which is the biggest stumbling block in creating a cohesive society.

As a matter of fact, in the absence of inter-community interactions, the situation provides fertile ground for 'conspiracy theories' and fissiparous tendencies. In such an atmosphere, many kinds of unknown fears are planted in the minds of ordinary people. Secondly, they always think and see things in terms of their own community and they become impervious and insensitive about other communities' feelings.

iii) The State of Inclusiveness

Recently, the term 'inclusiveness' has emerged as one of the important parameters to measure the state of a community. A democratic society cannot function smoothly if it is not inclusive, as both are positively related to each other. Inclusiveness implies that no section of the

society is left out and every section has its fair say in the system.

In order to ensure that a society is inclusive, the government needs to create an environment wherein everybody can contribute in the pursuit of national development to the best of their ability without any discrimination on the basis of caste, gender, region as well as religion. There should not be an artificial and attitudinal barrier to the group or to an individual, which impedes their participation.

But this is a two-way affair. There is a certain section of society, which despite the availability of equal opportunity, is not in a position to take advantage of it. Therefore, for such special groups, the government runs various kinds of schemes and policies. Again, a community's development depends on how responsive it is to promotional measures and policies of the government.

The willingness of a community to be inclusive is first and foremost condition to be a part of society. It has to be two-sided affair. If a community erects physical and mental barriers to prevent the agents of change and development from sneaking in, no amount of governmental effort is enough to make them ride on the bandwagon of development. In fact, development of a community is the outcome of its attitude and efforts for progress. A community must be responsive to the force of change and development as well as to the government's efforts, which complements individuals' effort for amelioration of their socio-economic conditions.

Moreover, it is important for a community not to develop an exclusive tendency in order to become inclusive. In fact 'inclusiveness' is a state of a community, which it cannot achieve if it tries to be exclusive. If a community tries to remain exclusive in one area, it will spontaneously become exclusive in other areas too as its corollary. If a community chooses to remain socially exclusive, it will also become politically exclusive. For example, if a community prevents its girl children from attending schools or encourages them to go only to religious schools, it is bound to remain backward. If a community chooses to remain educationally exclusive, no amount of efforts will suffice to bring them into the national mainstream of development. Therefore, an atmosphere, conducive and responsive to development needs as well as collective willingness to become part of national mainstream at the community level, is a precondition to make a community inclusive. Exclusiveness and inclusiveness never go hand-in-hand. It is a fact, which, if a community accepts and internalizes sooner than later, it will be beneficial for them.

Political Inclusiveness

Whenever there is talk of political inclusiveness of minorities, it is said that it is becoming less inclusive. And, in favour of this affirmation, data showing a declining trend in the representation of Muslims in

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consecutive Lok Sabha elections is used.

This declining trend is not found in the case of other minorities. Even after a substantial increase in Muslim population in absolute and percentage terms, their representation is still decreasing. In this regard, it is also quite important to examine how important a community's legislative strength or representation is, in executive positions from the perspective of a community's interest. This aspect is important because if the representation level does not positively affect a community's interest, then there is little point for much hue and cry for this, particularly in a democratic polity of a country like India.

In fact, the presumption that interest of the community is served best only when it gets adequate representation in legislative bodies, does not hold ground. This becomes quite clear if one analyses the political events and the decision-taking pattern of the last 70 years of the post-independence period. For instance, Urdu was not declared the second language of Bihar, when a Muslim, Abdul Gafoor was chief minister but it was declared so when Dr. Jagannath Mishra, a non-Muslim, was the chief minister. Abdul Gafoor could not take a decision in favour of the community he belonged to, but Dr. Jagannath Mishra could take it at the cost of the displeasure of his own community (as people of Mithilanchal were putting pressure on him for declaring Maithili as second language of Bihar).

Similarly, when the notification regarding implementation of the recommendations of the Mandal Commission was issued in 1990, the prime minister of India was V. P. Singh, a person from a caste that was a non-beneficiary.

When the Constituent Assembly of India decided on special provisions for minority communities, the representation of minority community was quite negligible and they were in no position to dictate their terms. But this situation had no adverse bearing on the framing of pro-minority provisions. Besides, even if the minorities get around 20 per cent of the seats in Parliament, they will not be able to enact any law if parliamentarians of the majority community do not support their cause. Therefore, goodwill of majority community is more important than the number of parliamentarians representing the minority community in Parliament.

In this regard, one needs to understand a special trait of parliamentary electoral politics. The peculiar trait is that, a person who is in a position of power generally tends to woo those social and electoral groups, which he or she is not associated with. The person in power always thinks that social groups of his social group will support him because of the emotional factor but other groups who are not emotionally inclined, will not support him if some meaningful steps are not taken in their favour or if their interests are not protected.

India chose an administrative geographical unit as the basis of representation, and not religion. Therefore, to classify public representatives on the basis of religion is a highly regressive and narrow-minded approach, which must be eschewed in a secular country like India. This kind of debate is against the true of secularism. Besides, if everything is viewed and decided on communal lines, then what is the rationale of a secular polity? These are just a few points and examples put forward to dispel the false impression that the interest of a community is positively related to its representation in Parliament.

Even those Muslims who have been elected for the Lok Sabha, most of them have been elected from Hindu majority constituencies. According to Prof. Zoya Hassan* of Jawaharlal Nehru University, "between 1952 and 2004, of the 441 elected Muslim MPs only 24 per cent were elected from Muslim-majority constituencies, whereas 76 per cent were elected from non-Muslim majority constituencies, indicating that significant proportions of non-Muslims are voting for them. This pattern suggests two important trends. Muslims are usually given nominations from constituencies with marginal Muslim presence have regularly returned Muslim candidates indicating that Muslims can do and win from

non-Muslim majority constituencies despite that Hindu-Muslim polarization since 1989. This underlines that voting is on party lines, which suggests that voters have no hesitation in voting for Muslim simply because party identification is generally more significant than the identity of the candidates. This pattern holds good even after 1989-99 – a period marked by escalation of communal polarization, and yet the majority of Muslims themselves invariably vote for secular and centrist parties that dominate in constituencies with a Muslim population of 30-50 per cent."

Besides, if the pattern of India's political leadership is analyzed, in almost all minority-dominated states, almost all chief ministers have always been from minority communities. Though in many Hindu majority states such as Kerala, Goa, Bihar, Maharashtra, persons from minority community became chief ministers of the respective states. Ironically, no Hindu has become a chief minister in any state where it is in minority. For example, despite being 28.4 per cent even after the exodus of Hindus from the Kashmir Valley, a Hindu cannot even dream to become chief minister of J&K, which remains a question. Even in other minority-dominated states, the situation is not much different. Therefore, the question of political inclusiveness

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Perhaps India is among the few countries of the world where there are hardly any important positions, which have not been filled by people from the minority communities – whether it is constitutional, the Executive or the judiciary.

warrants a larger perspective not just a selective one.

So far as the overall state of inclusiveness of minority communities of India is concerned, perhaps India is among the few countries of the world where there are hardly any important positions, which have not been filled by people from the minority communities – whether it is constitutional, the Executive or the judiciary. Whether it is the position of President, Vice President, Prime Minister or Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of India, almost each and every important position of the country have been held by persons belonging to a minority community. Admittedly, no door appears to be closed for them.

Recently, a downward trend has been observed with regard to the number of persons elected from minority communities for the legislature but electoral behaviour of minorities is also equally responsible for this situation besides many other factors. Muslims are known for strategic voting. They do not cast their vote on the basis of developmental performance but on the basis of perception or their love-hate political relationships. Over a period of time, the 'strategic voting pattern' of Muslims has boomeranged to their disadvantage. Therefore, it is important for them to change their voting pattern, focus on developmental issues and cast

their votes on the basis of development-related issues and performance of a political party on that count.

Since the complaint regarding inclusiveness mainly comes from the Muslim community, it is noteworthy that till date four Muslim judges namely Justice Altamas Kabir (29-09-2012 to 18-07-2013), Justice A. M. Ahmadi (25-10-1994 to 24-03-1997), Justice M. Hameedullah Beg (29-01-1977 to 21-02-1978), and Justice M. Hidaytullah (25-02-1968 to 16-12-1970), have been appointed Chief Justices of India. So far as Vice Presidents of India are concerned, three persons from the Muslim community namely Dr. Zakir Hussain (May13, 1962 to May 12, 1967), Mohammad Hidaytullah (August 31, 1979 to August 30, 1984), and Mohammad Hamid Ansari (August 11, 2007 to August 11, 2017), occupied the august office.

As far as Presidents of India are concerned, three persons from the Muslim community namely, Dr. Zakir Hussain, Fakhruddin Ali Ahmad and Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam (altogether around 10 years) occupied the highest constitutional post. Besides Muslims, there are people who have belonged to other important minority communities such as Sikhs and Christians. Dr. R. K. Narayanan and Giani Zail Singh were from the Dalit and Sikh communities respectively. Besides,

Dr. Manmohan Singh, a leading light of the Sikh community, remained the Prime Minister of India for 10 years. The Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, Justice Jagdish Singh Khehar Ahluwalia , who retired recently, was also from the Sikh community. Another important position, that of the Speaker of the Lok Sabha too, has been held by a person from the minority community (P. A. Sangma - Christian) during the United Front government from June 1996 to March 1998.

The main purpose behind producing a list of these names is to drive home the point that there is hardly any important position in India, which has not been occupied by the people from minority communities. In case of the Head of State, out of total 15 Presidents of India, five have been from minority communities three Muslims, one Dalit and one Sikh. Besides these positions, almost all top bureaucratic positions such as Chief Election Commissioner, Cabinet Secretary, Foreign Secretary and Intelligence Bureau chief – to name just a few, has been held by the members of the minority communities. Therefore, there is exemplary inclusiveness in the Indian system of governance. In fact, even in the 2016 civil services examination, out of around 1,000 successful candidates, over 50 candidates belonged only to the Muslim community.

Economic Inclusiveness

As far as the economic sector is concerned, persons from the minority communities are performing quite well. There are many sectors, which are fully dominated by persons from minority communities. Among all sectors, the most obvious example is of the entertainment industry. In nearly all areas of the entertainment industry, persons from the minority community enjoy popularity and hold the edge. This fact also proclaims the secular nature of the people of India, as they do not see things from a communal perspective. This also punctures the fabricated perception that Muslims are being discriminated against by the majority.

Interestingly, in Forbes' list of India's richest persons of 2017, out of top five, two happened to be from the minority community namely: Azim Premji (Wipro), a Muslim by faith and Shapoorji Pallonji (Shapoorji Pallonji Group), a Zoroastrian by faith. The value of their wealth was estimated at US $19 billion and $16 billion, respectively.

There are many other sectors such as pharmaceuticals, education, leather, lock, bangle, utensil-making, toiletries, saree weaving industry, in which persons from minority community have done exceptionally well. For example, Cipla and Ranbaxy (now sold) have been two leading

pharmaceutical companies of India. How and up to which extent the minority-managed companies can grow in India, may be seen in the growth of the Tata Group, Shapoorji Pallonji Group, Wipro, to name just a few. These examples show that the minority-majority issue is irrelevant in the economic sector; rather entrepreneurship, vision and business acumen are the qualities that matter.

Besides, if one looks at the entertainment industry, actors, producers, directors, scriptwriters– people in almost all divisions of the industry, from the minority community, particularly Muslims –have a notable dominance.

On the other hand, India's neighbouring countries Bangladesh and Pakistan both overwhelmingly Muslim dominated countries, couldn't produce a single Muslim industrialist of the stature of Azim Premji of Wipro and that of Abdul Hamid of Cipla. What does this show? These examples not only speak volumes about the equality of opportunity but, amply demonstrates the unlimited opportunities for minorities of India.

*Page 145, Politics of Inclusion: Caste, Minorities and Affirmative Action, by ZoyaHasan, published by OUP

3.

DISSENT AND DILEMMA ON DEVELOPMENT

Out of the six notified minority communities of India, the Muslim community is at the lower end of development and Zoroastrians and Jains are at the top. All other communities, such as Christians, Sikhs and Buddhists fall in between.

The question arises as to why are there gaps in development performances of various minorities even if they live in same region and get the same set of opportunities? There may be many explanations for this uneven growth but it is clear that development of a community does not depend on its numerical size. It is assumed that a community is underdeveloped because of the 'number disadvantage'. Had it been the case, the Parsees and Jains should have been the most underdeveloped communities of India.

Rather, it depends on how forward-looking and development-oriented a community is.

In fact, a host of socio-economic and attitudinal factors are responsible for development and underdevelopment of different communities.

Here the term 'development' is not being used in any esoteric sense but in its general well-established sense. Assessment of development performance of a community should be done in respect of its literacy rate, cumulative educational attainment and productive participation in the economy, which determines the income and expenditure level of the community. It is also about life expectancy and the infant mortality rate of the community. All these factors of development are not independent of each other but closely related and dependent on each other. This can be understood from the fact that if the income level of a community is low, it has its adverse impact on health and educational attainment of the community and if the educational level is low, it will impact the overall economic prospect of the community and vice-versa. As a matter of fact, the development level of a community is the sum of its performance on all these counts.

As a matter of fact, development often takes place in tandem. When a community performs better in the education sector, it not only increasesits income level but also transforms the whole approach to life. An educated community tends to be more prosperous, futuristic and rational in its approach. And, a futuristic and rational community not only takes care of not only its interest but also that of a society, better. In fact, good education triggers a chain

reaction of development in a community.

In fact, the efforts and performance of a community to develop depends on one passive factor, that is, the perspective of a community towards development. If a community understands the importance of development, it willnaturally place emphasis on good education, would try to increase its participation in economic activities and above all, would like to create acongenial environment. In this regard, it will be important to see what kind of education a community endorses for its youth. What actsas a determinant of a community's fate is whether its focus is on religious education or a modern and futuristic one. In the long history of human civilizations, one may easily observe that a community, which gives an overarching role to religion, cannot protect itself from its straitjacketing impact on freedom of thinking and action. In order to make this point clear, it would be appropriate to refer to two incidents of the medieval period. When in the 15th century, the printing machine was invented by Johannes Gutenberg in Germany, the whole of Europe took advantage of the invention and it played an important role in bringing the Renaissance to Europe, as it was the most important instrument for spreading knowledge and information among the masses. But the response of the Muslim world to this invention was quite the opposite. The Ottoman Empire banned its use by

declaring its use as 'Haram' (prohibited). This decision was taken at the behest of some highly influential clerics of Turkey, who issued a Fatwa against its use. As a result, for about 250 years, the Muslim world remained bereft of its use. But, surprisingly, within the Muslim society of the Ottoman Empire, there was no opposition for such a decision. On the contrary, when Galileo invented the telescope and found that contrary to the belief enshrined in The Bible, it is not the sun which revolves around the earth but it is the earth which is revolving around the sun. As the story goes, there was furious reaction from the Church against that affirmation. But, despite opposition from the Church, progressive people of Europe took up the baton of scientific temperament from Galileo; rejectedthe objection of the Church and took Europeforward to new heights of its power, prosperity and influence all over the world. But, ruefully one has to admit that in the previous case, the Muslim society and its ruling establishment didn't dare to use it for many centuries because of over-empowering influence of clerics. In fact, still political establishment of most of the Muslim societies still takes decisions under the influence and pressure of the clerics. And, if a single reason is to be given for the backwardness of Muslim society, it is this one. In fact, whatever dilemma Muslim society is facing regarding its development, is of an international nature, not limited to

any specific country. But, some countries discovered creative solutionswhile others are still struggling with such conundrums.

Understandably, two different responses from the two seemingly similar circumstances, completely changed the future course of two civilizations. The fact of the matter is that development of science and technology does not take place in a society where there is no place for inquisitive minds, no space for doubts and no freedom for expressing differences and thinking without the fear of consequences. Unfortunately, barring a few, most of the religions do not give due importance to human intelligence and forbid their followers from questioning their tenets and place emphasis on having firm belief and staunch loyalty to their precepts. Despite the prevalence of this type of condition, the situation remains quite manageable if the diktats of religious authorities remain limited to the premise of the religious places and occasions; but, if their diktats cross the boundaries of their premises and start interfering in normal activities of the community, the lethality of their diktats increases manifold. In fact, the state of regressiveness of a society is proportionately related to the extent of interference and the level of impact ofthe religious authority on it. The condition of society indeed becomes regressive when a religion starts forcing its followers to accept its version of explanations of causes and consequences of events and

objects, without applying scientific logic to explain them. As a matter of fact, in the case of religion, people generally surrender their natural urge to question and doubt its tenets and practices either out of tradition or out of commitment or because of fear from fellow community members in case of disapproval of its tenets. A society where human mentality is blinkered with prejudicial practices of religion and does not allow questioning of the assumptions that are considered unquestionable, never attains heights in science and technology, as such a condition is crucial for the reign of reason and the urge to know.As the history of human progress shows that it is imagination, unrestrained urge and determined efforts to demystify the mysteries of nature that made all the difference in the world. By trying to usurp these traits from humans, religions, which focus on belief,curb the natural intelligence of the people.

Now the question is, since most persons are under the influence of one religion or the other, then how did they manage to overcome its restraining effect over their minds? Actually, the realm of religion is the heart, and doubt, logic and imagination is the realm of the mind. The more a society is under the influence of a religion, the more it tends to be emotional and less logical in its approach. And an emotional community's reaction on even a slight digression from its beliefs and practices is simply ferocious. On the contrary, communities, which limit the role

A society where human mentality is blinkered with prejudicial practices of religion and does not allow questioning of the assumptions that are considered unquestionable, never attains heights in science and technology,

of religion and donot allow its interference in day-to-day affairs of society, tend to nurture inquisitive minds and a scientific temperament. It is not surprising that development of science and technology could take place in Europe only when Papal authority weakened after the Renaissance. Therefore, it can be safely said that development of a community is inversely proportional to the influence of belief-based religion on human life. Admittedly, the purpose of showing this inverse relationship is not to demean religions. It is one of the most important adhesives that unites various groups of people, preaches empathy and kindness towards fellow human beings, provides hope and solace, explains the inexplicable situations and events andis a source of soothing for the bereaved. But, theunrestrained influence of religion limits the circumference of human endeavour; that is why, its interference needs to be rationalized in the wider interest of human civilisation and also for the community, which blindly follows it. Most of the progressive governments of the world found a solution of this problem in secularism of varying degrees.

The reason for explaining the deleterious effect of religion is to unravel the factors which make a difference in the development performance from community to community even in the same geographical region because of its overarching influence on some communities. It is true that religious factors alone are not responsible for the development differential, but it plays a highly important role in the process of the formation of attitude towards various issues andit is the attitude of a community that matters most in determining the pace of development in a society. Besides, religion also plays a highly significant role in the formation of the world-view of a community. It also plays an important role in deciding the use of various natural resources as well as the attitude towards the use of flora and fauna.

Assessing the Development Differential

For realizing development in a society, the first and foremost necessity is the understanding of the importance of the need of development. If the urge for development is subdued in a community or it doesnot seek it, 'the development' becomes imposed and forced and often communities resist such an effort. And, in case of resistance from the community, it becomes costlier as, in the absence of popular support, time overrun and financial cost takes its own toll.

So far as development performance of minority communities in relation to the national develop-ment trend is concerned, the performance of some minorities is seen as higher than the national average, while one community – the Muslims – is lagging behind it. In this regard, it is important to see whether prevalence of backwardness in Muslims is a national phenomenon or a regional one. Similarly, it is also

important to perceive whether Muslims are lagging behind on all parameters of development or only on a few.

Development and Collective Perception

Perception plays an important role in determining a community's initiative and efforts for development. There are many issues, which have a significant bearing for a community's development, which solely depend on its perception. For example, size of family and educational attainment depend more on perception of an individual and the community. A small size of a family gives more financial elbowroom to a family to spend on health and education whilea big family size puts a lot of constraints. It is not a mere coincidence that a community with higher fertility rate is poor and community with low fertility rate is normally found to be prosperous.

Similarly, the attitude of a community towards educationis also a crucial determinant of its development. Education not only enhances financial securityof an individual, it simply transforms one's way of thinking. In this regard, equally important is the attitude towards women. A community with a healthy and futuristic collective attitude towards women is also favourably disposed towardsgreater development.

Besides these micro-level perceptions, there are also larger issues related to the collective perception of the community. In this regard, it is important to consider how a community is being viewed by other communities, but at the same time, it is also equally important to take into account how a community in question views other communities.

Actually, every community has some perceptions about other communities and vice- versa. The term 'public perception' implies, how other communities, whether minority or majority, views the concerned community. If public perception about a community is good, its membersdraw all the benefits – easily get jobs, work contractsand other kinds of commercial assignments. If the public perception about a community is not good, it has to face a lot of constraints and a non-cooperative environment. On the contrary, if they enjoy the benefit of a good public perception, they do not face any hindrances in obtaining employment and other type of opportunities. They get the advantage of working in a non-discriminatory commercial environment and also get other associated benefits. But, the question that arises is, how is this public perception built?

In fact, public perception about a community is not formed in a day; rather it is formed over a number of years. There are many factors, which contribute in building perception about the community. Among all contributory factors, self-image of a community plays the most important role in building its perception as it directly or indirectly guides its behaviour. If the self-image of a

community is that of a persecuted one– whether it is in fact or not, that is different matter– its approach towards other communities will be embedded with fear, suspicion or that of hate. On the contrary, if it sees itself as an important stakeholder of the country, its approach will be positive, creative and responsive towards various issues and the rest of the society. Both kinds of approaches will create two different kinds of environment and will get reflected in economic and non-economic terms through various ways. For example, during the insurgency in Punjab, even an ordinary person from the Sikh community had to face suspicion. Otherwise, a person from the Sikh community is generally considered hardworking and duty-bound. After the end of the insurgency in Punjab, all kinds of suspicions associated with an unknown person from the Sikh community disappeared. Undoubtedly, a major victim of this 'problem of perception' at present is the Muslim community, not only in India, but, almost all over the world. As a matter of fact, because of terror incidents, mostly instigated by persons of the Muslim community, the general perception about the people of this community has undergone adverse changes. If newspaper reports and personal conversations are taken into account, the Muslimseven find difficulty in getting a house on rent. There are many potential employers, who are unwilling to hire Muslims because of this perception.

Though only a handful of persons have been involved in terror activities, but the entire community got stigmatized. And this stigma has its repercussions. In fact, the severity of this problem can be understood from the fact that a film titled 'My Name is Khan' was made in Bollywood addressing this problem. Though the intensity of this problem has reduced a bit, it is still a big problem. And it cannot be resolved without addressing the root causes of such a perception.

Nature and Extent of the Problem

If this problem of perception is analysed in retrospect, the partition of India dealt a big blow to the image of the Muslim community of India in general. This wasdespite the fact that the movement for the creation of Pakistan was the movement initiated by some elite Muslims and landlords, and an ordinary Muslim had virtually nothing to do with that demand. But when the country got partitioned, ordinary Muslims and Hindus had to pay a heavy price in the form of displacement and widespread carnage, which followed it.

Besides, in post-independent India, frequent communal riots, the myopic vision of the Muslim leadership, their resistance to steps related to socio-economic reforms and their intransigent approach on issues related to the sentiments of the majority community, painted a negative image of the Muslim community. Unfortunately, wise, rational and cohesive voices are

unable to become the representative voices of the community. As a result, despite the fact that an average Muslim is as good or as bad as other people in society, the lack of a cohesive and sensitive approach towards other people sometimes creates trouble. In fact, the Muslim community needs to be futuristic in its approach and also requires an image makeover in order to become inclusive with the rest of society in the real sense of the term.

So far as the public perception about the other biggest minority community, i.e., the Christians is concerned, if activities of churches are discounted it has, in fact, quite a good image. Admittedly, the service orientation of this community plays a major role in its image-building particularly because of its activities in health and education, despite murmurs and complaints regarding their 'pursuit of conversion'. Besides, they also have the benefit of the craze for 'English Education' in Indian society and that of the image of developed co-religionist countries.

If Muslims and Christians are compared with each other, despite their common Abrahamic origin, the general relationship between them is adversarial. Muslim-dominated areas are the least preferable places to reside for the Christians and the same goes for the Muslims. That's why barring Kerala, for historical reasons, in almost all Christian-dominated states, the population of Muslims is miniscule. Similarly, in Muslim-dominated states such as Lakshadweep and Jammu & Kashmir, the Christian population is negligible. For details, please see Table-1.

Moreover, the Christian community does not act shy when it comes to engaging with the rest of society, whereas the Muslims prefers not to engage with the other communities in an uninhibited manner. Its approach is inward looking and appears to be more religion-centric and self-centred.

So far as the Sikh community is concerned, it has been associated with Hinduism to such an extent that it will not be wrong to declare it as a variant of Hinduism. Though, its separate identity has been solidifying over the years, it is still a member of greater Hindu family of religions. In fact, its centrality of service and community participation makes this sect distinct from other Hindu family of religions. The 'langar service' of this community is its great innovation, which makes it look more humane than other religions of the Hindu family. This community is enjoying exceptionally good perceptions as hard-working, open-hearted and dynamic.

So far as Buddhist and Jain communities are concerned, both religions are glittering gems of Hindu family of religions. While Buddhism is an international religion, Jainism is mostly confined to India. Though Jains are less than one per cent of India's population, they significantly dominate commercial sector of

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India and their performance in other walks of public life too is quite impressive. There is no negative taboo attached with this community. Buddhists are settled mostly in Ladakh region of J&K, Arunachal Pradesh and parts of north-eastern states. Their number is few and do not dominate any sector in a big way. There is no perception problem attached with this community.

So far as the Zoroastrians (Parsees) are concerned, despite being negligible in number, they command enormous influence in various sectors of the country. Economically and educationally, they are the most advanced community of India. And because of their excellent contribution, the community enjoys an excellent public perception. Besides, the Parsees are considered as a 'model minority community' because of its highly cohesive and assimilative approach. This community, despite firmly adhering to its religious practices, never had any kind of confronta-tion with the majority community.

After analyzing the general perception of the majority community towards different minority communities, it may be affirmed that public perception of the community is formed on the basis of its contribution in national life and its cohesive approach towards other communities.

If the Muslim community overcomes its paranoia about the majority community and adopts a precautionary and sensitive approach towards the sentiments of the majority community, there is no reason why an environment of peace and harmony cannot be created, which is a precondition for economic development of a community.

So far as the Christian community is concerned, it does not have any major issue with the majority community. But, the conversion drive of Christian missionaries is certainly creating problems at many places. In most of the states of India's northeast, they have successfully converted people from other religions to Christianity. If it is sincere to improve its relationship with the majority community, it needs to stop its conversion drive under the guise of religious freedom and practices such as 'healing congregation' and through other service-oriented activities. Except this issue, the Christian community otherwise enjoys quite good relationship with the majority community.

Status of Women

In order to assess the well-being of a society or community, two factors are quite important. The first is its 'educational attainment' and the second is its 'work participation rate'. Understandably, the educational attainment and economic fortune of a community cannot grow if the work participation of women is not adequate. Among various factors that develop a society, the most important determinant as well as indicator is the status of its women. A society, which treats women equally and respectfully, has a greater growth potential compared to a society which

discriminates against its women. In a society, where women have less of a say in routine affairs as well as in the decision-making process of the family or a community that buttresses patriarchal practices, birthrate isgenerally higher. And the higherbirth rate, in the absence of adequate economic means or per capita less availability of economic resources, results in low educational attainment as well as lower literacy rate.

Table No. – 2.
Literacy and Illiteracy Rate (in per cent)

Religion	Total Illiterate	Female Illiterate	Male Illiterate	Literacy Rate*
All Communities	36.93	44.02	30.24	63.07
Hindu	36.39	44.02	29.22	63.61
Muslim	42.72	48.1	37.59	57.28
Christian	25.65	28.03	23.22	74.35
Sikh	32.49	36.71	28.68	67.51
Buddhist	28.16	34.4	22.13	71.84
Jain	13.27	15.07	12.14	86.73

* Considering 0-7 years as illiterate (Source: Census 2011)

Chart -2

Illiteracy Rate, Total, Male & Female (in %):
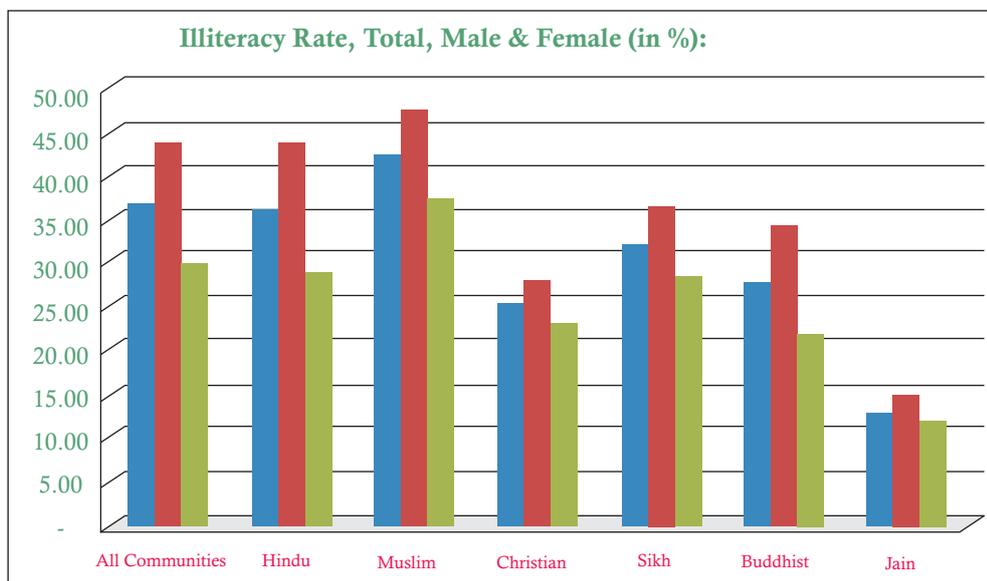
A lower literacy rate narrows down availability of economic opportunities which results in a low work participation rate. And, incidence of poverty of a community is a cumulative effect of both factors. As shown in Tables 2 and 3, the Muslim community is lagging behind on both counts. And, the one reason that is responsible for this phenomenon is the 'status of women' in Muslim society.

Table No. – 3.
TOTAL PERCENTAGE OF WORKFORCE

Sl. No.	Religion	Total Popul-ation	Non-worker Population (in number)				Work Participation Rate (in per cent)		
			Total (in crore)	Male (in crore)	Female (in crore)	Per Cent Non-worker of total population (%)	Per cent of Worker to total Population	Male	Female
1	Total	121.00	72.89	29.13	43.76	60.71	39.29	75.36	24.64
2	Hindus	96.62	56.96	22.96	33.99	58.95	41.05	75.74	24.26
3	Muslims	17.22	11.61	04.46	07.15	67.42	32.58	84.42	15.58
4	Christians	2.78	1.61	0.64	0.96	58.09	41.91	68.27	31.73
5	Sikhs	2.08	1.33	0.49	0.84	63.67	36.33	81.60	18.40
6	Buddhist-s	0.84	0.48	0.20	0.28	56.85	43.15	66.88	33.12
7	Jains	0.44	0.29	0.09	0.19	64.27	35.73	89.98	10.02

Source: Census Report 2011

Chart -3

Chart - 3A. Religion-wise Work Participation Rate of Male (in %)

Religion	Work Participation Rate of Male
Buddhists	75.74%
Hindu	84.42%
Christians	68.27%
Muslims	81.60%
Sikhs	66.80%
Jains	89.98%

Chart - 3B. Religion-wise Work Participation Rate of Female (in %)

Religion	Female Working Participation (in %)
Hindu	24.26%
Muslims	15.58%
Christians	31.73%
Sikhs	18.40%
Buddhists	33.12%
Jains	10.02%
National	24.64%

Female Working Participation (in %)

Chart -4

70.00%					
68.00%			**67.42%**		
66.00%					**65.91%**
64.00%				**63.94%**	
62.00%					
60.00%					
58.00%	**58.95%**				
56.00%	**57.14%**	**57.91%**			
54.00%					
52.00%					
	Buddhists	Hindu	Christians	Muslims	Sikhs	Jains

As per the 2011 census, the work participation and literacy rates are lowest in the Muslim community among all religions. While the national female work participation rate is 24.64 per cent, the same forthe Muslim women is 15.58 per cent.

The above chart simply demonstrates that without increasing the work participation rate of women, the overall work participation rate of Muslim community cannot be increased. This is apparently because of the fact that among all minority communities of India, the Muslim community imposes many restrictions on public conduct and the behaviour of its women. This is clearly getting reflected in their literacy rate which is lower than the women of almost all other religious groups taken together. Admittedly, till the educational attainment of Muslim women does not increase, its work participation rate will also be low, which in turn will affect the per capita income of the community members. And, if overall income level of community will not rise, there will have little money to spend on education or for investment in commercial ventures.

High Rate of Population Growth

In order to understand the state of underdevelopment of the Muslim community, its population growth rate also needs special attention. In fact, incidence of backwardness of Muslim community is the cumulative effect of the quad of low literacy rate, low work participation rate, pitiable status of women and high population growth rate. This situation warrants tough policy measures so that the communitycan be freed from the clutches of the above-cited quad that are slackening its development.

Table No. 4.
Population Growth Rate

Year	National	Hindu	Muslim	Christian	Sikh	Buddhism	Jain
1971	24.80	23.40	31.20	36.00	32.00	17.00	28.50
1981	24.66	24.20	30.80	19.20	26.20	25.40	23.70
1991	23.87	22.80	32.90	17.00	25.50	36.00	04.00
2001	21.54	20.00	29.30	22.10	16.90	23.20	26.00
2011	17.64	16.76	24.60	15.50	08.40	06.10	05.40

Source: Census Reports

Chart – 5

Religion-wise Population Growth Rate (%)
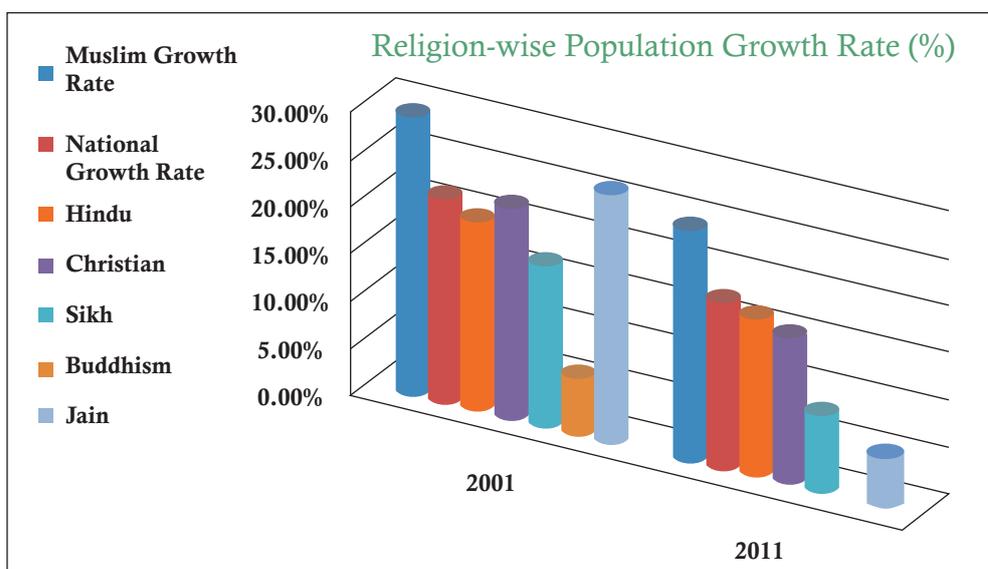
As it is clear from the above Table and Chart, the growth rate of the Muslim population is disproportionate in almost every decade since independence. The problem of population growth is not limited to the Muslim community only, but is actually a national problem. This problem, however, has been accentuated more by Muslim community's unwillingness to effectively control its birth rate.

Since the persistence of low literacy rate of its girl-child is bound to affect the spread of education in the community, some special policies are required for high growth regions as well as for communities to coax them to adopt family planning measures. For this purpose, special incentives are needed to be given to ameliorate the overall conditions of girls within the community. Admittedly, the problem of backwardness of the Muslim community is more social and attitudinal rather than economic or circumstantial. In fact, low performance in economic and educational fields is simply an outcome of this phenomenon.

But, the example of Kerala is bound to perplex for the policy-makers. The state has a high literacy rate, good public health facilities and its per capita income is reasonably higher than that of the national average. But, among Muslims, it appears that all these factors are ineffectual. As per the Working Paper No. 468 of Centre for Development Study (Kerala),the Muslim community is in better economic condition than the Hindus, but its population growth rate is approximately double than that of the Hindus. Therefore, the role of the religious factor in population growth cannot be discounted.In other states, the high growth of Muslim population could be justified under the guise of backwardness and poverty but the example of Kerala demonstrates the neutrality of these factors. Whether they are rich or poor, illiterate or educated, these factors do not appear to be playing any role in differentiating the situation. This situation warrants religion-specific policies or a national population control policy applicable to all, irrespective of religion. Besides this, polygamy also needs to be banned not only as a measure of social reform but also as a population control measure.

Table No. 5.
INDIA POPULATION FORECAST

Year	Population	Yearly % Change	Yearly Change	Median Age	Fertility Rate	Density (P/Km²)	Country's Share of World Pop	World Population	India Global Rank
2020	1,383,197,753	1.11 %	14,828,755	28.2	2.30	465	17.74 %	7,795,482,309	2
2025	1,451,829,004	0.97 %	13,726,250	29.8	2.19	488	17.74 %	8,185,613,757	1
2030	1,512,985,207	0.83 %	12,231,241	31.4	2.10	509	17.69 %	8,551,198,644	1
2035	1,564,570,223	0.67 %	10,317,003	33.0	2.02	526	17.59 %	8,892,701,940	1
2040	1,605,355,574	0.52 %	8,157,070	34.5	1.95	540	17.43 %	9,210,337,004	1
2045	1,636,496,308	0.38 %	6,228,147	36.1	1.90	550	17.22 %	9,504,209,572	1
2050	1,658,978,162	0.27 %	4,496,371	37.5	1.86	558	16.98 %	9,771,822,753	1

Source: Worldometers (www.Worldometers.info)

In fact, the disproportionate rise in one community's population also leads other communities to follow up on the same lines as they become wary of their decreasing share in total population. As a result, the overall population of the country will increase, which will further increase the burden on national resources. By all estimates, even if the national fertility rate of India keep decreasing slightly, just after seven years from now, in 2025 (please see Table No. 5 for population estimation), it will be world's most populous country with more than 1.45 billion, and by 2030, it will cross the 1.51 billion mark. Even at present, we have simply an

unmanageable level of unemployed youth and no government policies can provide employment to all. With more unemployed people, the social and political situation becomes more volatile in the country. Therefore, in absence of tough population control measures, the country is bound to slide towards anarchical situation.

So far as the Christian community is concerned, there is a dramatic difference in its decadal growth rate. Understandably, this difference is directly related to its success of conversion to Christianity from Hinduism. The crude birth rate of this community is not a big factor in its population growth as it is almost equal to the national level. But total population of the community is slightly subdued, as many of the newly converted people belonging to reserved category generally do not disclose their religious identity because of fear of losing reservation benefits.

Understandably, policy-makers of India need to talk to leaders of both the number conscious communities and their service should be taken to convince the communities that it is the quality of life and education that matters the most. If the Muslim community leaders express some apprehensions, they should be taken in the right spirit in order to make population control measures effective.

So far as the abrupt rise and fall in population growth rate of the Buddhists is concerned, it is also directly linked to conversion. As large number of people from scheduled castes converted to Buddhism, a sharp increase and decrease in population growth of this community is registered. In the case of Sikhs, after 1991, its population is growing consecutively at a lower rate than the national average. In case of Jains, their population growth is quite lower than the national average. Though, female work participation rate is also low in the Jain community despite the highest literacy rate among all communities, it is because of the overall prosperity of the community.

Discrimination

The sense of 'eing discriminated against' is deep within the Muslim community. Why and how they developed such a feeling is a matter of a separate academic investigation. Despite the fact that this is the dominant sentiment of the community, no credible data or argument is put forward that may give credence to such a perception. It is true that backwardness in the Muslim community is higher than other religious communities, but to affirm that it is the outcome of discrimination is not even a distorted presentation of the situation, but a complete rejection of the fact. Blame game politics is simply harming not only the short

but also long-term interests of the community as it is diverting its attention from the real causes of its backwardness, which need to be addressed.

On the other end, there are large sections of people who think that the Muslims get special treatment and exclusive rights by the Constitution and the Government of India. They want that there should be a common law for all citizens of India, without any exception, whether it is religion or other issues. But the problem is that minority communities of India view such a demand as a violation of their rights as minority protected by various Articles of the Indian Constitution. The issues related to the Muslim community are trapped in these two different views. And the contradiction of the situation is the fact that though leaders of the Muslim community grumble against backwardness, they are unwilling to remove the causes that are constraining the pace of development of the community. This is creating a peculiar situation can be termed as the 'Inclusive-Exclusive Paradox'. It means the community wants to be inclusive in respect of development while remaining exclusive otherwise.

In fact, the issue of backwardness of the Muslim community is complicated, as it has less of an economic connotation and more of a social and religious one.

Therefore, it is important to affirm that, soon the community realizes this fact that social development is a precursor of economic development better it will be for the future of the community.

Moreover, a section of people within the Muslim community or outside argue that the comparative backwardness of the community is the result of discrimination, which the people of this community face at work and other places. They complain about discrimination or bias towards deserving people of the minority community when it comes to appointment at high offices.

Their grudge, however, is unfounded, as the reality is quite different. Barring the position of Prime Minister, there is hardly any office, which has not been occupied by persons of the Muslim community, details of which have already been given in the previous chapter. There is certainly a lower percentage of Muslims in government jobs in proportion to its population, but for this, the inner dynamics of the community are responsible. In 2017, large numbers of Muslim youth were successful in the civil services examination, a figure, which is highest since independence. And, just the year before that, a Muslim from J&K, stood first in civil services examination of 2016. People from the minority community couldnot have achieved such a feat, had they been discriminated against. One

the contradiction of the situation is the fact that though leaders of the Muslim community grumble against backwardness, they are unwilling to remove the causes that are constraining the pace of development of the community. This is creating a peculiar situation can be termed as the 'Inclusive-Exclusive Paradox'. It means the community wants to be inclusive in respect of development while remaining exclusive otherwise.

may claim in this regard that they are being discriminated against at the lower level.

Despite all these facts, it is difficult to deny that there is no social bias against Muslims, but that is found mostly in urban areas where the level of social interaction is low. And for this, the habitation pattern, food preferences, the resemblance of names with the perpetrators of terror acts, are some of the factors that are responsible, for which the community members need to introspect.

But in rural areas, because of interdependence on a day-to-day basis, it is at a minimal level. When the case of discrimination is examined in the private sector, it appears more of a case of preference and convenience than that of discrimination. In fact, in some cases Muslims are more preferred than Hindu employees. While interacting with private sector employers, it became clear that at some places they are certainly less preferred but in terms of the overall scenario, it was more of an exception than a rule. Therefore, while the complaints of discrimination cannot be completely brushed aside, it can be said that these are almost negligible. It is not such a big issue as it has been made to appear. The last, but certainly not the least important issue, of which one cannot and should not lose sight of, is that such complaints are generally politically motivated, rather than being real. So far as other communities are concerned, they do not air any such complaints.

4.

ASSESSING DEVELOPMENT DIFFERENTIALS AMONG RELIGIOUS AND SOCIAL GROUPS

The backwardness of Muslim community has been at the heart of public debate in post - Sachar Committee Report period. As per various indicators of economic development, performance of various religious communities of India varies from state to state and religionist to religionist. Therefore, instead of generalizing the trend and drawing conclusion on that basis, it is important to examine the level of variation in economic performance from community to community and state to state. As it has already been clarified that religious views and attitude too play important role in actualizing development therefore, attempts would be made to decipher reasons that make difference in developmental performance.

What is Backwardness?

Before comparative backwardness of Muslim community is examined, it is important to understand the term 'backwardness'. According to Oxford Dictionary, backwardness is 'the state of having made less progress than is normal or expected'. Admittedly, backwadness of a community is generally assessed on the basis of its performance in health, education and that of in economic arena such as income, employment, consumption, etc.

As a matter of fact, whether it is Muslim or any other community, its educational and economic status is not homogeneous all over the country. It varies from state to state, depending upon the level of development of state. In fact, regional dynamics of development along with locational and other local factors play more dominant role in determining tempo of development than religious factors. Understandably, religious factors only become important when it becomes a factor in government policy. If government doesn't have a policy inherently discriminatory on religious ground, in that case assessment of any community's performance with regard to development on religious ground doesn't appear justified and a healthy practice for a secular country like India. Secondly, India is not only socially and culturally diverse country but also developmentally diverse. Growth stage of various states is different from each other. Similarly, all religious groups are vertical one it is not horizontal and homogeneous group. That's why Muslims of West Bengal have no

similarity with the Muslims of Kerala in any respect, except religious practices. While, Muslims of Kerala are economically prosperous, more literate than the national average, whereas Muslims of West Bengal, UP and Bihar are big blocks of backwards. Therefore, to keep Muslims of both states in the same group because of their religious affiliation is no way justifiable. If there should be any comparison on the basis of religion, it should be within the state. For example, Muslims of Kerala should be compared to the Hindu of Kerala and that of Muslims of West Bengal to that of their Hindu counterpart. If both communities are being compared at all-India level, it gives over generalized and misleading picture, as it disregards state-to-state sharp difference in development performance. Therefore, to get a real picture of a community with regard to its development performance, it is important that each and every community is compared at state level.

Therefore, in order to grasp state-wise comparative pictures of various communities, 68th round of NSSO's per capita consumption expenditure data is being used as it is the most reliable data to compare performance of various communities.

But before dealing with monthly consumption expenditure data, for convenience sake, all states are being divided in two parts. First part consists of those states whose per capita income is higher than national average and second part

comprises of those states whose per capita income is lower than national average.

As per RBI data, there are 19 states in India, which have higher per capita income than national per capita income and the rest fall in lower per capita income group of states. The list of states with higher per capita income than national average are Delhi, Goa, Chandigarh, Sikkim, Puducherry, Haryana, Tamilnadu, Gujarat, Karnataka, Kerala, Himachal Pradesh, Telangana, Uttarakhand, Maharashtra, Punjab, Arunachal Pradesh, Andaman Nicobar Island and Andhra Pradesh.

The states, which have lower than national per capita income, are Jammu and Kashmir, Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Odisha, Nagaland, Assam, Tripura, Jharkhand, Bihar, Uttar Pradesh and Manipur.

If looked at the list of the states, it becomes clear that except Kerala, almost all states with sizeable Muslim population fall under the second category of states. It means overwhelming majority of the Muslims live in lower income zone. As a matter of fact, when state domestic product is low, per capita income of residents of the state too will be low. Naturally, when per capita income of a state will be lower than national average, in that case residents of the state, irrespective of the religion, too, will have lower income than national average.

Secondly, since majority of the

Muslims live in lower income zone states of India, hence, to give purely an economic and geographical indicator a communal colour, is no way justifiable. Thirdly, among higher per capita income states, Kerala is only state where both Muslims and Christians live in substantial number. In Kerala, as per 2011 Census, population of Muslims is 26.56 per cent and Christians is 18.38 per cent. But economically, both minority communities, Christians and Muslims are economically better off than the Hindus.

Since majority of the Muslims live in lower income zone states of India, hence, to give purely an economic and geographical indicator a communal colour, is no way justifiable.

Table No.- 6
Total Population, Muslim Population share, Per Capital Income, Literacy Rate and Density of Population:

Sl. No.	Name of States	Total Population**	Muslim Out of Total Population (in %)	Per* Capita income (2014-15)	Literacy Rate (in per cent)	Density of Population (per square km)
1.	Delhi	16,787,941	12.86	249004	86.21	11,297
2.	Goa	1,458,545	8.33	242745	88.7	394
3.	Chandigarh	1,055,450	4.87	225369	86.05	9,252
4.	Sikkim	610,577	1.62	210394	81.42	86
5.	Puducherry	1,247,953	6.05	158830	85.85	2,598
6.	Haryana	25,351,462	7.03	148485	75.55	573
7.	Kerala	33,406,061	26.56	139195	93.91	859
8.	Uttarakhand	10,086,292	13.95	134784	78.82	189
9.	Maharashtra	112,374,333	11.54	134081	82.34	365
10.	Karnataka	61,095,297	12.92	132880	75.36	319
11.	Tamilnadu	72,147,030	5.86	130197	80.09	555
12.	Gujarat	60,439,692	9.67	124678	78.03	308
13.	Telangana	35,193,978	NA	125832	NA	307
14.	Himachal Pradesh	6,864,602	2.18	124500	82.80	123
15.	Andaman Nicobar Island	380,581	8.52	121954	86.63	46
16.	Punjab	27,743,338	1.93	114561	75.84	550
17.	Arunachal Pradesh	1,383,727	1.95	103633	65.38	17
18.	Andhra Pradesh	49,386,799	9.56	93699	67.02	308
19.	Mizoram	1,097,206	1.35	85659	93.3	52
20.	West Bengal	91,276,115	27.01	78903	76.26	1,030
21.	Nagaland	1,978,502	2.47	78526	79.55	119
22.	Jammu & Kashmir	12,541,302	68.31	62857	67.16	56
23.	Chhattisgarh	25,545,198	2.02	78001	70.28	189
24.	Rajasthan	68,548,437	9.07	76881	66.11	201
25.	Tripura	3,673,917	8.60	71666	87.22	350
26.	Meghalaya	2,966,889	4.40	68202	74.43	132
27.	Odisha	41,974,218	2.17	64869	72.87	269
28.	Jharkhand	32,988,134	14.53	56737	66.41	414
29.	Madhya Pradesh	72,626,809	6.57	56182	69.32	236
30.	Assam	31,205,576	34.22	54618	72.19	397

31.	Manipur	2,855,794	8.40	52436	76.94	128
32.	Uttar Pradesh	199,812,341	19.26	43861	67.68	828
33.	Bihar	104099452	16.87	31380	61.80	1,102
34.	Lakshadweep	64,473	96.58	NA	91.85	2,013
35.	Dadra and Nagar Haveli	343,709	3.76	NA	-	698
36.	Daman and Diu	243,247	7.92	NA	87.10	2,169
37.	All India	1,210,854,977	14.23	86454	74.04	382

*Sources: Census 2011,RBI and Central Statistical Organisation.

Chart -6

States with higher Per Capita income than National Average (2014-15)

Chart -7

States with Per Capita Income Lower than National Average (2014-15)
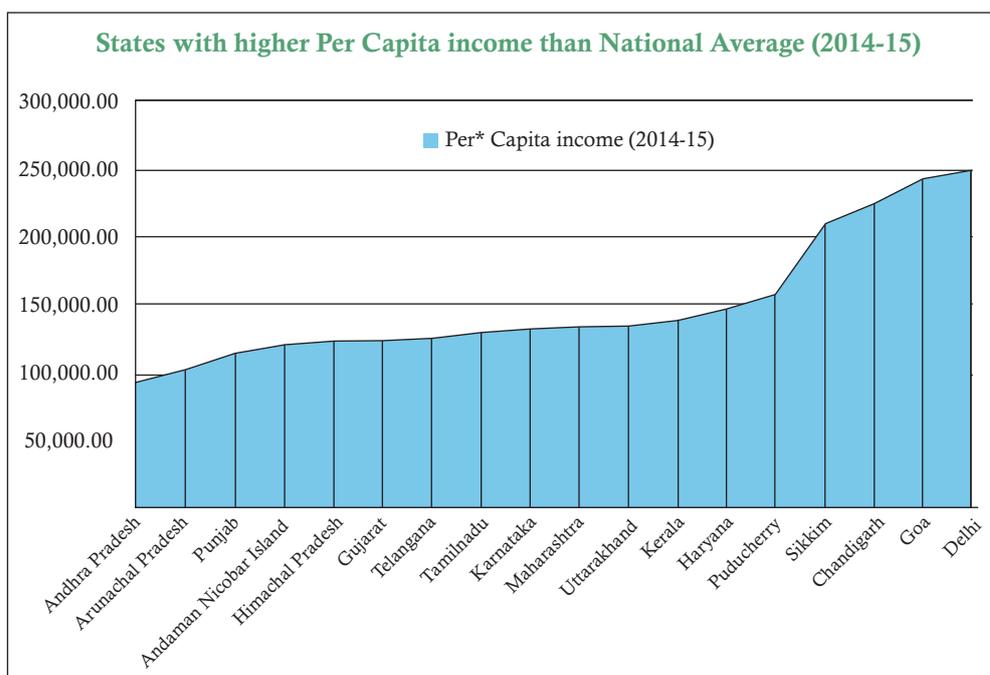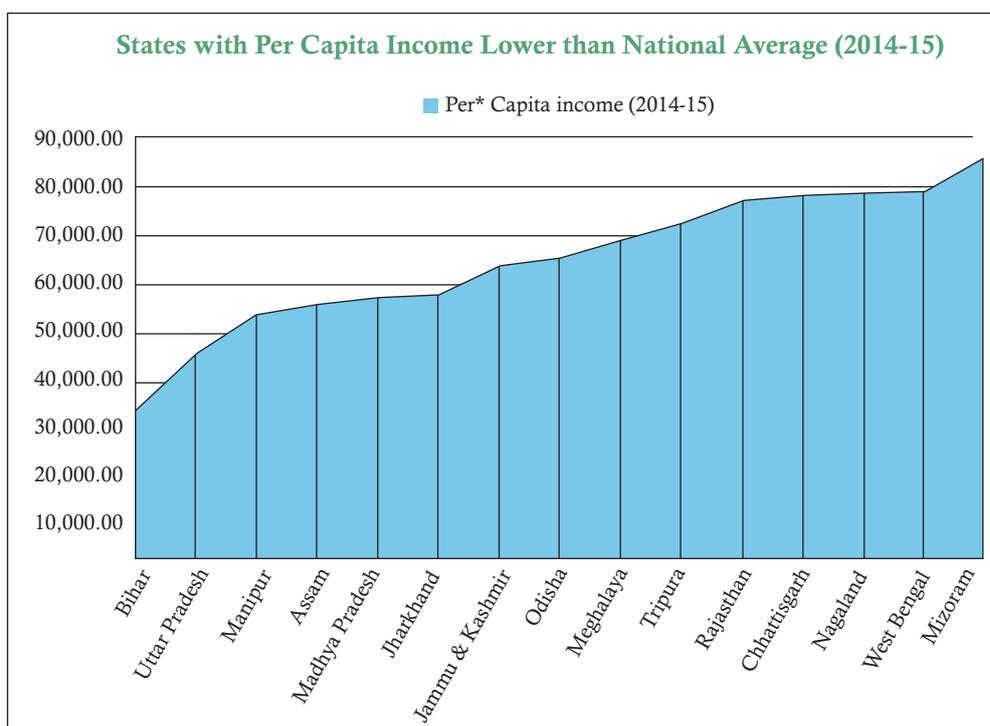
The Case of Kerala*

The study of Kerala is important because both numerically big minorities, Muslim and Christian, are present in substantial number. Secondly, it is also important to study whether the pattern of behaviour of minorities change with the change of state from economically laggard to dynamic one or it remains the same. With regard to high population growth rate and that of lesser participation in higher education is generally attributed to poverty and backwardness of Muslims. But this logic doesn't hold ground in the case of Kerala as despite being in better-off condition, its population growth is higher than national and state average. Its participation in higher education and government job is low. Therefore, population growth rate of Muslims cannot be linked to poverty and illiteracy. As per study conducted by Centre for Development Study, Thiruvananthapuram.

According to census, the total population of Kerala increased from 31.8 million in 2001 to 33.4 million in 2011. The overall increase was 1.565 million, 362,000 among the Hindus and 1,010,000 among the Muslims, but just 84,000 among the Christians.

Numerically, at present, the Christians are the smallest among the three major religious groups in Kerala. They numbered just about 6.057 million, according to the 2001 Census, and 6.141 million, according to the 2011 Census. The Christians were 18.4 percent of the total population of the state in 2011. The majority community–the Hindus, with nearly 18 million, was 54.9 percent in 2011. The Muslims, with 8.9 million, were 26.6 percent in 2011. While 56 percent of the population is Hindus, only 36 percent of the emigrants from Kerala were Hindus. On the other hand, the Muslims and the Christians are over-represented. Among the emigrants, 41 percent were Muslims and 22 percent were Christians. Muslims are only 26.6 percent and the Christians are only 18.4 percent of the population.

Table – 7:
Emigrants and Remittances by Community, 2014*

Religion	Emigrants	Total Remittances (Rs. in Cr.)	Remittances per Household
Hindus	872090	28137	58993
Christians	537902	17238	102246
Muslims	990383	25767	149253
KERALA	2400375	71142	86844

(*Source: Kerala Migration Survey, conducted by 'Centre for Development Studies, Thiruvananthapuram' for Kerala Government).

Chart -8

Remittances per Household in Kerala   (in Rs.)

■ Hindus   ■ Muslims   ■ Christians   ■ Total in KERALA

149,253.00

102246.00

86,844.00

58,993.00

Hindus   Muslims   Christians   Total in KERALA
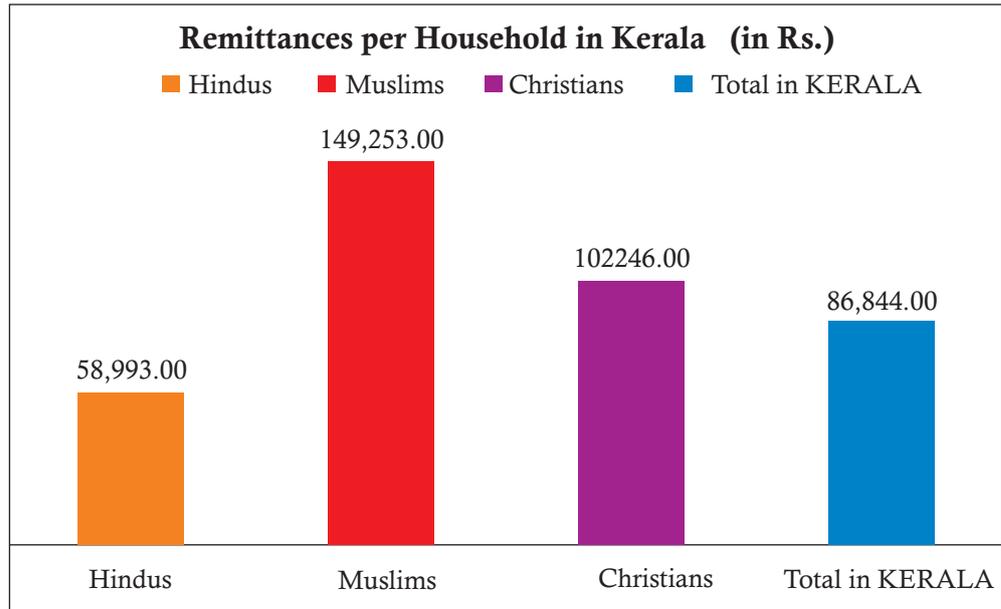
Table No.- 8.

Kerala's Percentage Distribution of Live Birth by Religion of the Family

Religion	2015	%	2014	%	2013	%	2012	%	2011	%
Hindu	221,220	42.87%	231,031	43.23%	236,420	44.08%	214,591	38.99%	248,610	44.37%
Muslim	213,865	41.45%	218,437	40.87%	214,257	39.96%	175,892	31.96%	214,099	38.21%
Christian	79,565	15.42%	83,616	15.65%	84,660	15.78%	102,546	18.63%	94,664	16.90%
Others	933	00.18%	1,178	00.22%	869	00.16%	57,215	10.39%	2,671	00.48%
Not Stated	430	00.08%	196	00.03%	146	00.02%	167	00.03%	224	00.04%
Total	516,013	100%	534,458	100%	536,352	100%	550,411	100%	560,268	100%

Source: Annual Vital Statistics Report, Government of Kerala, Vital Statistics Division
Department of Economics & Statistics, Thiruvananthapuram

As per 2011 Census, 54.73 per cent of Kerala's residents are Hindus, 26.56per cent are Muslims and 18.38per cent are Christians. But, in 2015, Hindus contributed 42.87per cent of the total childbirth. Muslims and Christians contributed 41.45 per cent and 15.42 per cent of the total child births respectively, and the others (0.32 per cent) contributed 0.26 per cent of the total child births. Whereas, contribution of Hindus in child birth in 2015 was 11.86 per cent less, in 2014, it was 13.86 less, in 2013, it was 10.65 per cent less, in 2012, it was 15.74 per cent less and in 2011, it was 10.36 per cent less than its current share in population (Census 2011). Similarly, contribution of Christian in childbirth in 2015 was 2.96 per cent less, in 2014, it was 2.73 less, in 2013, it was 2.6 per cent less and in 2011, it was 1.48 per cent less than its actual contribution in population (Census 2011). But, in 2012, contribution of Christians was 0.25 per cent higher than its share in total population, as per Census 2011. On the other hand, share of

Muslims in new childbirth was 14.89 per cent higher in 2015 than its share in total population. As per four preceding years of 2015, i.e. 2014, 2013, 2012, 2011, contribution of Muslims in childbirth is 14.31, 13.4, 5.6 and 9.65 per cent higher than its share in total population respectively as per Census 2011. While all other religions are continuously showing decreasing trend, the case of Muslims are different. The most striking point is that almost every year its contribution is rising than its share in total population.

As per working paper no. 463 of CDS, which is based on Kerala Migration Survey 2014, among the 14 districts in the state, Mallapuram received the largest amount of remittances, i.e., Rs.10,245crore which works out to Rs.121,000 per household. This directly correlates with the religious composition of receiving households. Muslim households received Rs.25,767 crore or 36.2 percent of the total remittances in 2014. Hindus received Rs.28,137 crore or 39.6 percent of the total and the Christian community received Rs.17,238crore or 24.2 percent. The share of the Hindus is below their share in the total population of the state. On an average, a Muslim household received Rs.144,000 as remittances in the 12-month period ending February 2014. A Christian household received Rs.115,000. In the case of the Hindus, the average remittance a household received is only about 40 percent of what a Muslim household received (Rs.57,000.00).

Taking important indicators into account, CDS working paper concludes that Christian is the most affluent religious community of Kerala, Muslim community at second and Hindu community at third position.

Table No. 9.

Percentage Distribution of Deaths by Religion, 2015		
Religion	**No. of Death**	**Percentage of Total Deaths**
Hindus	151767	60.09
Muslim	48532	19.21
Christian	50910	20.16
Others	1071	0.42
Not Reported	296	0.12
Total	**252576**	**100**

Percentage Distribution of Deaths by Religion, 2014		
Religion	**No. of Deaths**	**Percentage of Total Deaths**
Hindus	150159	60.49
Muslim	46468	18.72
Christian	50095	20.18
Others	1211	0.49
Not Reported	309	0.12
Total	**248242**	**100**

Percentage Distribution of Deaths by Religion, 2013		
Religion	**No. of Death**	**Percentage of Total Deaths**
Hindus	156789	60.26
Muslim	48919	18.80
Christian	52855	20.31
Others	1350	0.52
Not Reported	282	0.11
Total	**260195**	**100**

Percentage Distribution of Deaths by Religion, 2012		
Religion	**No. of Deaths**	**Percentage of Total Deaths**
Hindus	126798	52.84
Muslim	36144	15.06
Christian	46846	19.52
Others	29829	12.43
Not Reported	365	0.15
Total	**239982**	**100**

Percentage Distribution of Deaths by Religion, 2011		
Religion	**No. of Deaths**	**Percentage of Total Deaths**
Hindus	148097	60.45
Muslim	45305	18.48
Christian	50365	20.56
Others	901	0.37
Not Reported	334	0.14
Total	**245002**	**100**

Economic Status Indicators

Besides data on the possession of household consumer durables, quality of the house occupied by the household and type of fuel used for cooking in the house, KMS also collected information related to several other variables about the household that could distinguish poor households from richer ones. These data include the colour of the ration card that the household possess (red or blue), whether the household has enrolled in RSBY (a health insurance scheme for poor households) or whether any member of the household has a bank account, or has enrolled in NREG, etc.

The proportion of households with red ration card (indication of a poor household) varies from 23.9 percent among the Christians to 34.8 among the Hindus. From this point of view, the Christians are better-off than other communities. Among the various communities, the Orthodox Syrians had the lowest proportion of red ration cards and the SC/ST Hindus had the highest proportion. The same pattern holds with respect to bank account.

The average ranks using all the four indicators show that the Christians are better-off than Muslims and the Muslims are better-off than the Hindus. Among the Christian

denominations, the Orthodox Syrians are the most well-off and the Dalit Christians are worse-off than any other Christian denominations. Among the Hindus, the Brahmins are the most well-off and the SC/ST Hindus are worse-off than the rest. Among the Muslims, the Sunni Muslims are much better off than the Shias.

When all the 18 communities are considered, the Orthodox Syrians are found to be the most welloff and the SC/ST Hindus, worse-off than any other community.

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The case of Kerala is interesting because it defies well-established assumption that with higher literacy rate, economic development and better health facilities, birth rate decreases. It is partially true also in the case of Kerala so far as Hindus and Christians are concerned, as both communities' share is lower in CBR (Crude birth Rate) than their share in total population. But, in the case of Muslims, picture is totally different. As per CDS study, Muslims of Kerala are betteroff than Hindus of Kerala despite population of Muslims is increasing on abnormally higher rate and the population of Hindu is even lower than replacement ratio. While demographic trend of Hindus and Christians is following the well-established assumption that with the rise of literacy level and higher income level, population growth rate decreases. The question is, why

population growth rate of Muslim defies this widely held assumption? Why despite higher income than Hindus, Muslims are having such a high rate of population growth?

In fact, Muslims and Christians are number-conscious religion. As per worldwide trend, Christians mostly resort to conversion to increase its number, Muslims resort to higher birth rate to increase its population. Therefore, expansion of Christianity do not have any additional impact so far as overall population growth is concerned, but number consciousness of Muslims appear to be contributing disproportionately to overall population of the state. The mindset-whether religious, economic or educational-that makes difference in thinking and behaviour of a community is a subject-matter of perception survey, which is beyond scope of this study. Nonetheless, it may be guessed that since in democratic system of governance, number matters and more a number, more the community finds itself in a position of strength for political bargaining as well as in a position to influence government to take decision in favour of its perceived interests, may be an important determinant of such behaviour. There may also be some religious factors or some socio-economic factors, but whatsoever may be the reason, there are certainly some exceptional factors that are working behind such pattern of population growth.

Understandably, many incidents and tendencies are ignored in

democratic polity because of likely undesirable political fallout of interference in it. But, there are certain areas like this one in which inaction of even a day has serious economic and administrative implications for the country and for the future of the society. Unfortunately, population control is the area, which is not on priority list of the government despite the strong possibility that within few years, India can overtake China as world's most populous country. As a matter of fact, , a country can take advantage of 'demographic dividend' if it has adequate infrastructure to impart skill, educate and is in a position to generate employment opportunities for them otherwise it is bound to lead to 'demographic disaster'.

Undoubtedly, the problem of unemployment is directly connected to unrestrained population growth. India is facing very serious crunch of employment opportunities in comparison to its demand. It has already highest number of unemployed people but family system of India is working as a shock absorber of this problem. But, the day it will stop absorbing or become incapable to absorb, programmes of the government such as right to food or cheap food, MNREGA type employment schemes, which are working at the moment as safety valve, will not be able to prevent disaster befalling upon the country.

Automation of economy is going on in its full swing and as all indications show, in future its pace will further get accelerated, which is bound to compound the fallout of high rate of unemployment. Therefore, the question is, where India will employ or engage such huge number of unemployed persons? And if youth remained unemployed in large number, which at first appears like purely an economic problem, will manifest itself in multifarious ways, culminating in a serious social, economic and administrative problem. Therefore, it is important that government acknowledges monstrosity of this problem and make efforts to devise special plan for respective districts as well as for social and religious groups, where population growth is more than replacement level.

The observation of population trend of Kerala shows that literacy and income level do not affect demographic behaviour of all communities homogeneously. Even, for Muslims of Kerala, it is not necessary that they keep on getting remittance from Gulf and keep improving its economic lot. As whole world is slowly moving towards protectionism therefore, by all likelihood in future, situation is not going to remain the same, as it is used to be.

Community-wise Comparative Economic Scenario

Regarding minorities, it is important to identify that whether minorities of India are growing along with majority community or they are being bypassed by the development, taking place in the country. For a big country like

India, it is always important to ensure that the development remain economically inclusive and geographically extensive. And, a development is considered inclusive only if fruits of development trickles down to all sections of the society irrespective of the fact that whether they belong to majority religion or minority one.

The social and religious groups, if do not get benefits of development, start developing a grudge against the whole process of development. But, in the case of minorities, because of 'Minority Syndrome' of the minorities, they do not view such a circumstance as shortcoming of policy or as imperfect implementation of policy, but something more than that. 'Minority Syndrome' can be defined as a mental state in which one feels that they are being denied their due because of prevalence of discriminatory attitude and there is a machination in play against it, hatched up by the majority community. They feel if its literacy rate is low or if its educational attainment is less than average or its share is less in government jobs, they feel or make it feel others that there must be something wrong on the part of majority community or that of government, that's why they are low achievers. Out of six minority communities of India surprisingly, Muslims, which is the biggest among all minorities, is seriously suffering from this syndrome. The other minorities, which are small in number do not air any such feelings. As suggested earlier, without mainstreaming of

Muslim community of India, it is very difficult to remedy this syndrome. So far as other communities are concerned, they also need to realize that despite being minority in India, Muslim population of India is almost equal to the most populous Muslim countries of the world. Hence, if this community remains poor and backward, its implications will not remain limited to the community only, but it will get reflected in development performance of the whole country. In fact, there is positive connection between development of the country and that of Muslim community of India. Therefore concern for development of the community should not remain limited to the members of Muslim community only.

Regarding development performance of various communities, another important determinant that needs to be examined is geography of backwardness of minorities, particularly that of the Muslim community. In this context, it is important to see that whether a particular state's average literacy, infant mortality, work participation, etc. is almost equal to that of Muslim community's average performance, or it differs from community to community. For example, if literacy rate of Kerala is 94 per cent then it will be pertinent to see literacy rate of Muslims is also around the same figure or it drastically differs. If it is less than 90 per cent or say 80 per cent, than incidence of illiteracy of Muslim community may be considered as a problem but if it is,

'Minority Syndrome' can be defined as a mental state in which one feels that if they have not been able to get adequate success in important areas of economy, education as well as that of in area of governance, it is happening because of discrimination or machination of the majority community against it.

Regarding development performance of various communities, another important determinant that needs to be examined is geography of backwardness of minorities, particularly that of the Muslim community.

say, 91 per cent, it cannot be said that development in literacy rate is not inclusive. Because, minor difference of such level can happen at the behest of any small reason therefore, state policy cannot be blamed for this. Therefore, in this report, state has been selected as a unit in order to assess development differential between Muslim community and others. It means comparison of developmental attainment of majority and minority communities will not be done at national level but on state level. State has been taken as a unit of analysis because there is a yawning gap in respect of developmental performance among various states.

In order to assess level of economic backwardness of minorities of India, in general, and that of the Muslim community, in particular, it is important to examine monthly expenditure pattern of various communities. Since, no survey such as income survey takes place in the country, therefore, to assess income level of various communities, NSSO's latest religion-wise data of consumption -expenditure is being used, as it is the most credible indicator of a community's economic status. Therefore, monthly consumption data of Hindu and that of other religious minorities needs to be comparatively analyzed in order to find out whether economic growth is religiously inclusive or it has a majoritarian tilt.

Table No. – 11
Religion-wise Per Capita Monthly Consumption Expenditure**

State	State Code	Religion						
		Hindu	Muslim	Christians	Sikh	Jain	Budh	Others
Jammu & Kashmir	1	2229	1690	2570	2695	1635	1897	1908
Himachal Pradesh	2	2333	1650	5309	2193	1294	3281	3346
Punjab	3	2644	2581	1801	2616	4124	Na	1568
Chandigarh	4	3562	2450	3344	4252		Na	Na
Uttaranchal	5	2064	1584	3263	2163	2805	Na	Na
Haryana	6	2695	1943	6505	2690	15592	Na	3145
Delhi	7	3744	2232	2875	5038	3851	3630	3647
Rajasthan	8	1847	1624	2993	2046	2683	Na	3152
Uttar Pradesh	9	1469	1234	5115	2752	4350	2685	1357
Bihar	10	1103	1021	998	949	Na	1258	
Sikkim	11	2037	3087	1705	1310	Na	1657	Na
Arunachal Pradesh	12	1756	1974	1616	1760	5550	1964	1903
Nagaland	13	2466	1847	2005	Na	2253	Na	1946
Manipur	14	1480	1432	1343	Na	2422	Na	1449
Mizoram	15	2002	2527	2013	1673	Na	1115	Na
Tripura	16	1454	1134	1430	Na	Na	1282	1720

Meghalaya	17	2027	1674	1619	5839	Na	1504	1295
Assam	18	1362	1095	1077	2349	4268	1763	1304
West Bengal	19	1839	1237	2343	2902	5656	1873	2692
Jharkhand	20	1357	1020	1083	2387	2089	Na	958
Orissa	21	1140	1336	1083	2139		681	1472
Chhattisgarh	22	1176	1589	1231	5929	9031	1215	4119
Madhya Pradesh	23	1378	1448	3911	4122	3811	6197	1413
Gujarat	24	2082	2049	2279	7587	4125	Na	Na
Daman & Diu	25	2553	1593	Na	Na	Na	Na	2298
D & N Haveli	26	2176	2840	1104	Na	Na	Na	987
Maharashtra	27	2437	2499	3839	5992	5252	1807	3117
Andhra Pradesh	28	2091	2046	2324	1795	2609	Na	3051
Karnataka	29	2286	1886	4582	5802	2957	2868	Na
Goa	30	2654	2510	3867	4753	Na	Na	Na
Lakshadweep	31	6853	3052	5125	Na	Na	Na	Na
Kerala	32	2943	2575	3650	Na	Na	Na	25087
Tamil Nadu	33	2162	2243	2378	Na	3476	1586	Na
Pondicherry	34	2951	3214	3138	Na	4984	Na	Na
A & N Islands	35	3933	4062	3263	Na	Na	Na	3193

Source: National Sample Survey Organization (NSSO) 68th round, 2011-12

As per NSSO data, in following States/UTs Muslim community's per capita monthly expenditure is higher than Hindus. They are: Andaman and Nicobar Island, Pondicherry, Tamil Nadu, Maharashtra, Dadar and Nagar Haveli, Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Orissa, Mizoram, Arunachal Pradesh and Sikkim. In rest 24 states/UTs, Hindu's per capita consumption expenditure is higher. It means, in 31.42 per cent states/UTs, Muslims are economically better-off than Hindus while Hindus in 68.57 per cent states/UTs are better off than Muslim. In this regard, one noticeable fact is that these are the states where percentage of Muslim population in total population of the state is lower than its national percentage.

Table No.-12*
Name of the states in which per capita monthly consumption expenditure of the Muslim is higher than the Hindu

Sl. No.	Name of State/UT	Hindu	Muslim
1.	Dadra and Nagar Haveli	2176	2840
2.	Sikkim	2037	3087
3.	Maharashtra	2437	2499
4.	Madhya Pradesh	1378	1448
5.	Chhattisgarh	1176	1589
6.	Orissa	1140	1336
7.	Mizoram	2002	2527
8.	Arunachal Pradesh	1756	1974
9.	Tamil Nadu	2162	2243
10.	Pondicherry	2951	3214
11.	Andaman and Nicobar Islands	3933	4062

Source: NSSO's 68th Round Monthly Consumption-Expenditure Survey

Whereas, out of 35 states/UTs, in 20 states, Christian's per capita consumption expenditure is higher than Hindu's. It means in 57.14 per cent states/UTs, Christians are economically betteroff than the Hindus.

So far other minorities are concerned, on an average Christian, Sikh and Jain have higher per capita monthly consumption expenditure than Hindu in most of the states barring few. But in Nagaland and Lakshadweep, Hindu is welloff than all other minorities. Therefore, one thing is clear that there is no majoritarian slant in income distribution in India. On the contrary, in general, minorities are better-off than majority community of the state in respect of monthly consumption expenditure.

Table No.-13.

States/UTs with Hindu and Christian's Comparative Consumption Expenditure

Sl. No.	Name Of States/uts	Hindu	Christian
1.	Jammu & Kashmir	2229	2570
2.	Himachal Pradesh	2333	5309
3.	Uttaranchal	2064	3263
4.	Haryana	2695	6505
5.	Rajasthan	1847	2993
6.	Uttar Pradesh	1469	5115
7.	Mizoram	2002	2013
8.	West Bengal	1839	2343
9.	Jharkhand	1357	1083
10.	Orissa	1140	1083
11.	Chhattisgarh	1176	1231
12.	Madhya Pradesh	1378	3911
13.	Gujarat	2082	2279
14.	Maharashtra	2437	3839
15.	Andhra Pradesh	2091	2324
16.	Karnataka	2286	4582
17.	Goa	2654	3867
18.	Kerala	2943	3650
19.	Tamil Nadu	2162	2378
20.	PONDICHERRY	2951	3138
Source: NSSO's 68th Round Monthly Consumption-Expenditure Survey			

Comparative Analysis of Consumption Expenditure among SC, ST and Muslims

Sl. No.	Name Of States	ST	SC	Muslim
1.	Jammu & Kashmir	1472.8	1652.4	1690
2.	Himachal Pradesh	1550.9	1653.4	1650
3.	Punjab	2712.2	1710.4	2581
4.	Chandigarh	5509.6	1633.4	2450
5.	Uttaranchal	1571.4	1478.4	1584
6.	Haryana	2655.9	1567.8	1943
7.	Delhi	3235.7	1971.3	2232
8.	Rajasthan	1166.2	1382.5	1624
9.	Uttar Pradesh	1340.7	977.6	1234
10.	Bihar	831.9	872.0	1021
11.	Sikkim	1516.0	1677.4	3087
12.	Arunachal Pradesh	1660.4	2181.7	1974
13.	Nagaland	1936.3	1841.7	1847
14.	Manipur	1300.6	1297.9	1432
15.	Mizoram	1887.1	3583.7	2527
16.	Tripura	1139.5	1277.7	1134
17.	Meghalaya	1484.1	2413.3	1674
18.	Assam	1086.0	1282.7	1095
19.	West Bengal	997.9	1229.8	1237
20.	Jharkhand	885.5	995.1	1020
21.	Orissa	714.9	890.4	1336
22.	Chattisgarh	847.2	964.5	1589
23.	Madhya Pradesh	858.0	988.2	1448
24.	Gujarat	1260.2	1577.9	2049
25.	Daman & Diu	1941.3	2520.7	1593
26.	D & N Haveli	1113.8	1203.3	2840
27.	Maharashtra	1143.6	1752.4	2499
28.	Andhra Pradesh	1406.8	1579.3	2046
29.	Karnataka	1354.2	1489.4	1886
30.	Goa	2811.0	1583.0	2510
31.	Lakshadweep	2496.5	4240.0	3052
32.	Kerala	1841.5	1933.5	2575
33.	Tamil Nadu	1838.9	1609.2	2243
34.	Pondicherry	2591.7	2128.8	3214
35.	A & N Islands	2842.1	3310.3	4062

Source: NSSO's 68th Round Monthly Consumption-Expenditure Survey

Chart – 9

**Consumption Expenditure among Muslims, SC & ST
(in the States having Muslim Population above 10%)**

States having Muslim Population Above 10%
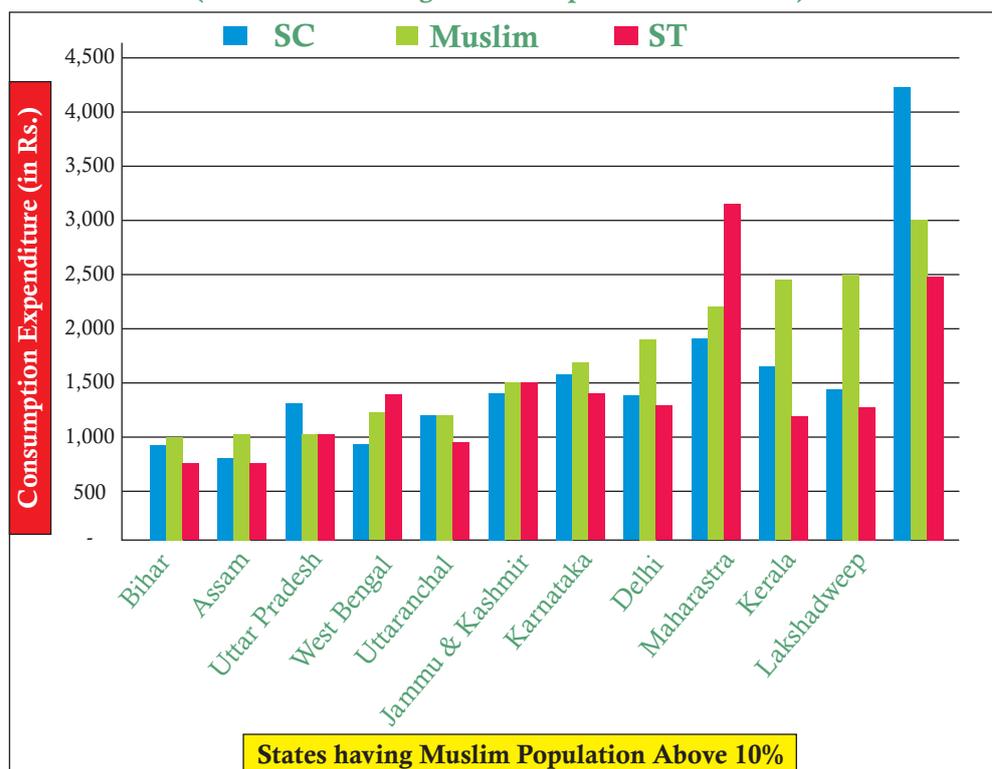
As, in the beginning, it has been affirmed that in this chapter relative backwardness of Muslims vis-à-vis schedule castes and scheduled tribes will be assessed. In this regard, it will be appropriate to keep in mind that since population of survey for religious community consumption expenditure and that of social groups' consumption expenditure is different. Secondly, unlike census conducted by GoI, NSSO's survey is not mass-based rather sample-based. Thirdly, information provided by population regarding consumption and expenditure always suffer from inadequacies as generally people are hesitant to provide actual information regarding income, consumption and expenditure. As, it is the most credible source used which is widely used to assess economic status of the people, hence the same is used for this report too.

When SCs and STs per capita monthly consumption expenditure is compared, almost in all states, per capita monthly consumption expenditure of Muslims is higher than SCs as well as that of STs. On the basis of the data, though in 25 states/UTs, Hindu's per capita consumption expenditure is higher and that of Muslim's in 10 states/UTs. But with the exception of Himachal Pradesh, Chandigarh, Mizoram, Meghalaya, Tripura, Assam and Daman and Diu, almost in all states, per capita consumption expenditure of the Muslims is

higher than the SCs. But, these are the states in which,except Assam, all are having lower percentage of Muslim population. Whereas, altogether in seven states/UTs such as Punjab, Chandigarh, Haryana, Goa, Delhi, Nagaland and Daman and Diu, STs per capita monthly consumption expenditure is higher than Muslims. But in rest 28 states/UTs, Muslimsare economically well-off than the STs. Though, in the above data, all people who have identified themselves as SCs or STs, irrespective of religion have been included. Therefore, whether it is STs or SCs, this does not necessarily mean SCs or STs of Hindu only. Despite this fact, since overwhelming population in both categories is that of the Hindu SCs and STs, therefore, it cannot have any big impact on the conclusion.

On the basis of the above-cited data, the claim that the perception created in post Schar Committee Report that it is poorer than even SCs and STs is true only in context of the few states but in the case of most the states/UTs, it is incorrect.

If economic status of Muslim is compared to Musahar in order to assess development differential between two, it appears quite preposterous. There may be some individuals from Musahar caste who would have excelled than an individual Muslim but collectively as per our investigation, there are not even five villages in whole of India where Musahars are collectively better than the Muslims.

Besides, Musahar, as a caste is the most backward and development awareness among them is the least among all castes and communities. They are notorious for not working for tomorrow's living. They work and think on day-to-day basis and do not believe in hoarding of wealth and food material. Therefore, they cannot be compared to any caste or community. In fact, comparison of Muslim community to Musahar is simply insult of the Muslim community.

Moreover, as it has already been stated that in 80 per cent states/UTs, Muslim is better off than SCs then how Muslim can be worse-off even than Musahar, which is the most backward even among SCs.

Table No. 15

Community-wise National Monthly Consumption Expenditure*

Sl. No.	Adherent of Religion	Per Capita Monthly Consumption	Mean Household Size Expenditure	Mean Household Monthly Consumption Expenditure
1.	Hindu	1880.5	4.3	8,086.15
2.	Muslim	1582.2	5.1	8,069.22
3.	Christian	2607.0	3.9	10,428
4.	Sikh	2770.7	4.7	13,022.29
5.	Jain	4218.7	4.4	18,562.28
6.	Buddhist	1866.4	4.4	8,212.16

* Calculation has been made on the basis of 68th round of NSSO's monthly consumption expenditure survey.

Chart-10
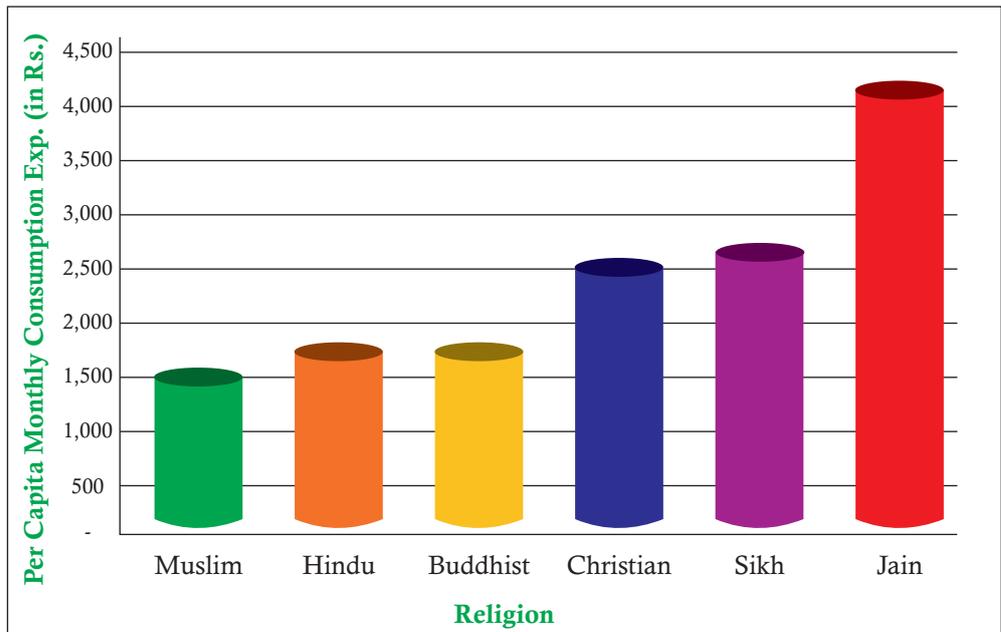
Chart- 11
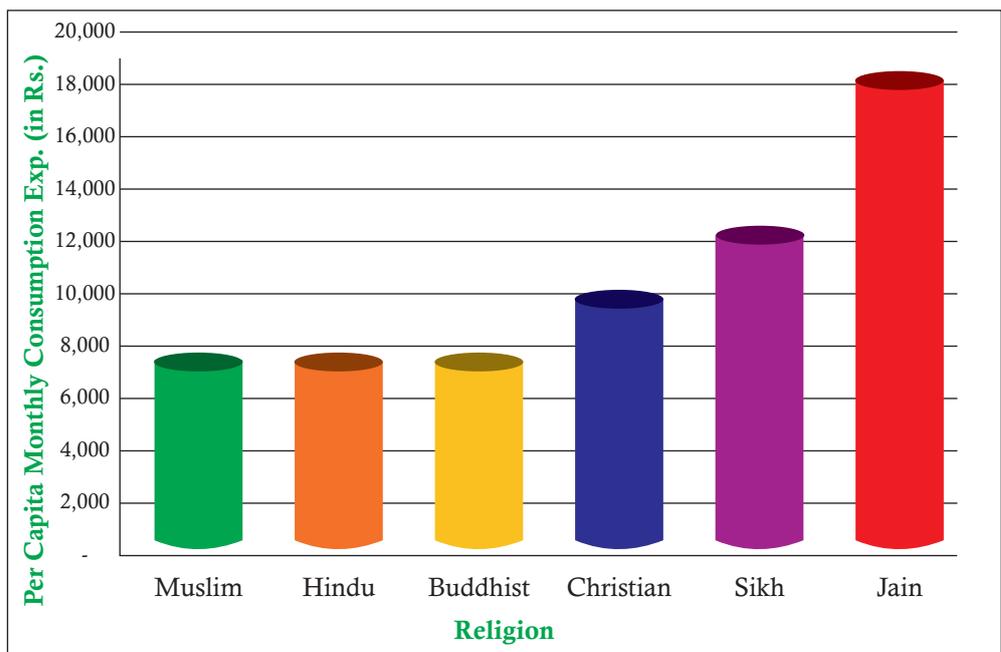
Chart- 12

Mean House Hold Monthly Consumption Expenditure: Muslim Vs Christian

Per Capita Monthly Consumption Expenditure

Muslim   Christian

Rs. 1,582   Rs. 2,607

Muslim   Christian

Mean Household Monthly Consumption Expenditure

Muslim   Christian

Rs. 8,069   Rs. 10,428

Muslim   Christian
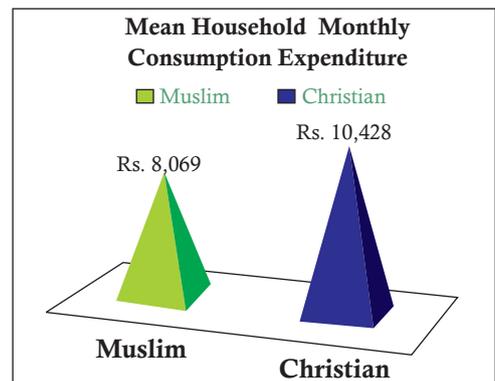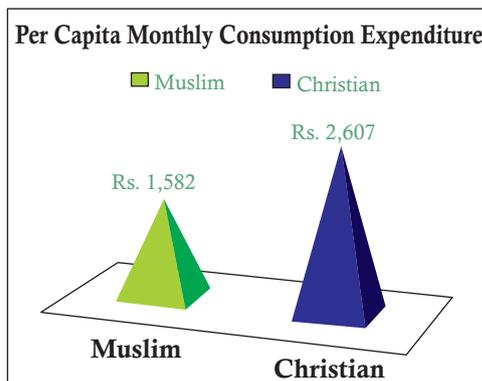
Chart- 13

Mean House Hold Monthly Consumption Expenditure: Muslim Vs Sikh:
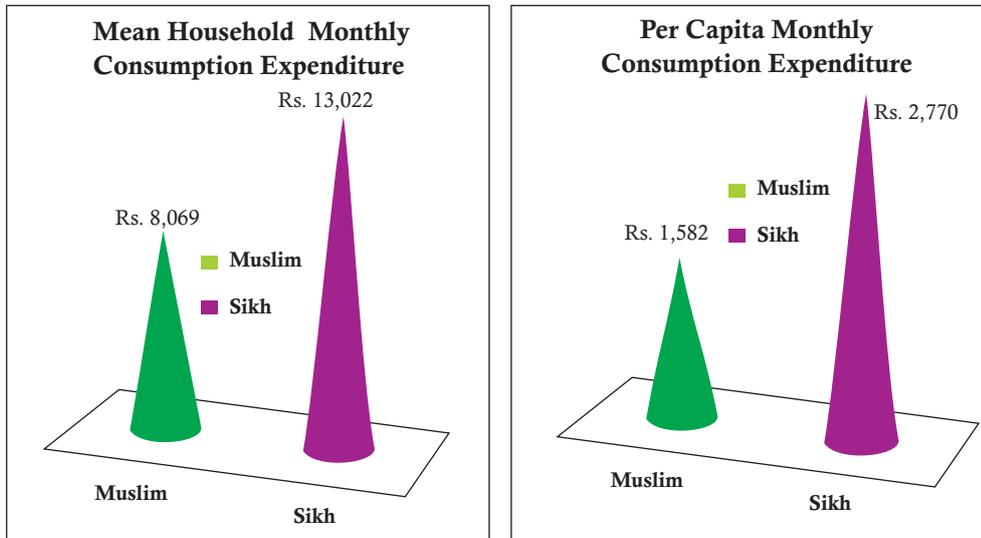
At national level, Muslim's per capita monthly consumption expenditure with Rs.1582.2 is apparently lowest among all communities and Jain's per capita monthly consumption expenditure with Rs.4218.7 is the highest. So far as Hindu is concerned, with Rs.1880.2, its per capita consumption is third lowest and that of Buddhist with Rs.1866.4 is second lowest among all communities. Sikh community with Rs.2770.7 is second highest and Christian community with Rs.2607 is the third highest in respect of monthly per capita consumption expenditure among all communities.

When Muslim's per capita monthly consumption expenditure is compared with that of Hindu, there is a gap of Rs.298.3 and when compared to Buddhist the same gap comes down to Rs.284.2, so far as monthly per capita consumption expenditure is concerned. But,

when same comparison is made among the same three communities' on the basis of 'mean household consumption expenditure', situation looks totally different. As, Hindu's mean household monthly consumption expenditure is Rs.8086.15, Buddhist's Rs.8212.16 and that of Muslim's is Rs.8069.22. Now, if difference between the Muslims' and that of the Hindus' mean household monthly consum-ption expenditure is ascertained, it is to the tune of Rs.16.93, that is quite negligible. When comparedto that of the Buddhists', this difference is Rs.142.94. But, in comparison of Sikh, Christian and Jain, mean householdmonthly consumption-expenditure of the Muslims is abysmally low (please see table no. 15).

On the basis of the above comparison, it may be safely said that though per capita monthly consumption expenditure of Muslim is lowest among all

religious communities but when the comparison is made on the basis of mean household monthly consumption expenditure among all three low income group communities, the difference in consumption expenditure becomes almost negligible. The question is, why existing per capita considerable difference in monthly consumption expenditure becomes negligible when same comparison is made on the basis of household. This is simply because of larger mean household size of Muslim community. This fact implies that simply by reducing household size, which implies that byresorting to the measures of population control, it may equate its monthly consumption expenditure almost equal to the Hindus. Besides, this community also needs to overcome social taboos related to women so that their literacy and work participation rate may improve. By resorting to such measures, the Muslim community can remove tag of the most economically backward community of India.

Conclusion of the Analysis

On the basis of analysis of census data of 2011 and 68th round of NSSO's monthly consumption expenditure data, it may be concluded that it is true that the Muslim Community is backward among all religious communities and Jain is the most forward among all, barring Parsees. But when comparison is made to the backwardness level of SCs and STs, Muslim is much better off. All other communities follow

national trend on most of the parameters of development, with some differentiation. In this regard, it is also important to note that except Jain and Parsees (which is better economic performer in almost all the states), all other communities religious communities' performance drastically differ from state to state.

So far reason behind backwardness of the Muslim community is concerned, it is mostly because of internal (see chapter six) reasons coupled with locational factor. The internal reasons of the community's backwardness are, low literacy rate of women, low work participation rate particularly of its female members and as a cumulative effect of both, low educational attainment and below national average work participation rate of the community. Without raising literacy and work participation rate of Muslim women, community cannot equate with the national average on such counts. This, in a way, also necessitates urgent social reform within the community.

So far as its low per capita monthly consumption expenditure is concerned, it is mainly because of the fact that average size of the Muslim family is larger than other religious community. Therefore, larger family size or high dependency ratio is adversely affecting future development particularly educational prospect of the community.

So far as perception with regard to low development achievement of the Muslim community that it is consequence of discrimination** against the community members by government agencies, appears brazen but baseless accusation.

The incidence of comparative backwardness of the Muslim Community is result of the internal factors as they are constraining participation of the community in development process.

The incidence of comparative backwardness of the Muslim Community is result of the internal factors as they are constraining participation of the community in development process.

* The study of Kerala has been done on the basis of research and findings of CDS Working Paper No. 463 and Working Paper No. 468 authored by K.C. Zachariah, Centre for Development Study, Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala. Papers are available at: www.cds.edu

Besides, data of Annual Vital Statistics (various years) of Kerala government too has been usedfor death and birth statistics.

* (Sachar committee Report, page 16 and in 'Being The Other: The Muslim in India' by Saeed Naqvi, 'Today's population of 180 million Muslims have to cope almost daily with a biased state.'page 62)

5.

GOVERNMENT PROGRAMMES AND SCHEMES FOR MINORITIES

Going by the avowed principle of equality and justice for all as laid down in Indian Constitution, the central as well as various state governments have formulated certain minority-specific schemes supposedly for overall welfare of the minority communities of India.

In order to ensure inclusive development in the country, the formulation of programmes and schemes for underprivileged groups of the society become necessary. While devising schemes for underdogs of the society, some precautions are required so that measures to uplift them remain an effective tool to carry out justice and they do not become a tool of social division and stratification. Moreover, while implementing community specific policy, it is important that they should be reflective to current national objectives and priorities besides being consistent with the constitutional philosophy of the country.

What should be the criteria to extend economic assistance to any community? Is it their minority status or being less in number adequate or its socio-economic status? How and why needs of minorities are different from majority one despite residing in same localities and facing same realities? If it is different, why it is so? If a community is in minority, does it necessarily mean that it must be poor? Whether minority-focused schemes are based on identified needs or it has been devised to get just political score? Which are the problems that are minority-specific, which needs minority specific programmes for their solution? In this regard, one may question why barrage of questions are being raised on schemes for minority communities? But this question can be answered by questions itself. As, why there should be separate welfare schemes for majority and minorities when the problem is not minority-specific or it is of general nature? When the problem is of general nature, why remedies are community-specific? What about fundamental spirit of the constitution, which prohibits state to discriminate on the basis of narrow consideration such as caste, gender, community, etc. Equally important issue is, since caste-wise stratification is a reality in minority communities of India too, therefore, why it is not taken into account while formulating policy for the minorities?

While studying schemes for minorities, it is clear that many important factors and realities of the society have not been taken into consideration. For example,

when in states like Kerala and Tamil Nadu, just to name a few, Muslim and Christian—both communities are in better-off condition than the majority community, Hindu, then, what is the rationale for separate social welfare schemes to benefit them? If schemes are formulated for these communities on the basis of economic consideration, it is no more a tool for equality and justice but may bring distortionary effect on the society if less fortunate people of the majority community are bereft of the same. Since economic logic doesn't appear a valid reason then what is the rationale for such schemes? There is only one reason that they are comparatively lesser in number than Hindu – a majority community. Is it a sound socio-economic criterion? Similarly, in some states such as Tamil Nadu and West Bengal, Imams are being paid from state coffer. Though the amount is meager but how payment to anyone for performing a pure religious duty may be justified in a secular country? This type of programmes regarding minority communities in most of the cases have been designed to suit political expediency rather than to address actual needs of the minority communities.

In absence of a minority policy and well-defined objectives vis-à-vis minorities, programmes and schemes are being framed to catereither demand of organised interests or for welfare purposes, which though provides immediate succor and makes a government popular, but from long-term perspective, it is non-consequential.

The second important point that needs to be considered in this respect is that it does not take social reality of Muslim society into account. As a matter of fact, no minority community of India is a homogeneous group. It is as structured and stratified as Hindu society. But the biggest minority community of India i.e. Muslims, is more divided than even majority community–Hindu. If fact, case of extreme backwardness is prevalent in Arzal–schedule caste counterpart of Muslim community–and among its women. But, in most of the schemes meant for the Muslim community, there is neither gender component nor special provisions for backward castes of the community. Therefore, from perspective of equitable development within the community too, it is important that this issue must be addressed.

Though, both state and central governments try to address various kinds of needs and support numerous aspirations of the minorities through number of schemes and programmes but instead of adopting top-down approach, bottom-up approach will be more effective in dealing real issues of the minorities. For example, many state governments are spending heavily on education of Arabic and Farsi. In Bihar, annual budget of Maulana Majharul Haq University is approximately Rs. 398 crore. But, what is the achievement of this university from development

perspective of Muslim community and also from employment perspective of the students who are attaining education there? There is virtually no need of special university of such kinds, as students desirous to study Arabic and Farsi, may be easily accommodated in general universities existing faculties. Interestingly, faculty of Persian of Patna University is on the verge of closure in the absence of applicants for the course. Besides, community-specific universities promote sub-streaming and compartmentalization of the society. Had this money been spent on technical universities for minorities, it would have brought much better result for the community. With regard to Muslim Community specific prgrammes prepared in the past, it is important to note that some of them are heavily infested with the political consideration, resulting in inefficient prioritization of the need, which is taking its toll in the form of persistent under development of the Muslim community.

So far the present central government is concerned; it has accelerated the pace of welfare of minorities particularly through speedy and efficient implementation of the existing schemes. The government endeavors to improve the quality of life of minorities across the country by implementing the ongoing schemes, initiatives, meant for their welfare, and by taking necessary corrective measures as soon as they become necessary.

Following Ministries/Depart-ments and agencies of the central government have some minority-focused welfare programmes and schemes. Some of them are:

Sl. No.	Name of Ministries/ Dept./ Agencies	Name of the programmes/ schemes	Present Status
1.	Ministry of HRD	National Council for promotion of Urdu Language	Functional
2	Ministry of HRD	National Commission for Minorities Educational Institutions	Functional
3.	Ministry of Minority Affairs	National Minorities Development & Finance Corporation (NMDFC)	Functional
4.	Ministry of Minority Affairs	National Commission for Minorities	Functional
5.	Ministry of Minority Affairs	Maulana Azad Education Foundation	Functional
6.	Ministry of Minority Affairs	Numerous schemes for skill development, expansion and promotion of education and welfare	Functional

Souce: www.goidirectory.nic.in

The thrust area of the present government is to develop skill among the minority youth and their placement and also, preservation of heritage of minorities including promotion of their traditional arts and crafts. These programmes or schemes

have been restructured to suit the genuine interests of the minorities in accordance with the policies of the present government.

One of the major initiatives of the government is the Multi-Sectoral Development Programme (MSDP), which is an area development scheme aiming to improve the quality of life of the people and reduce imbalances in the Minority Concentration Districts (MCDs). Identified development deficits are addressed through a district specific plan with provision of infrastructure creation for schools, sanitation, pucca housing, drinking water and electricity supply, besides beneficiary oriented schemes. The focus of this programme is on rural and semi-rural areas of the identified Minority Concentration Districts.

The scheme has been restructured for implementation during 12th Five Year Plan. Block has been made the unit of planning in place of district. The programme has been expanded to minority concentration towns or cities and cluster of minority concentration villages.

Nature of Programmes

While analysing nature of programmes, they may be classified under four broader categories. First is social welfare-oriented, second is educational, third is skill and employment-oriented and fourth is of religious nature. In majority of the states, there are separate programmes and schemes for minorities but in some states, it is mixed with other social groups of the society. So far minority-dominated states are concerned, governments of these states do not run minority-specific schemes.

In order to ensure inclusive and equitable development in country, central government as well as most of the state governments has devised minority-specific schemes with adequate budgetary support. State-wise brief is being prepared in order to assess extent of efforts of various states for development of minority communities. The details of programmes and schemes have been roughly prepared in order to sketch extent of the efforts. Therefore, it is quite possible that some of the ongoing schemes do not get any mentions.

Andhra Pradesh:

Considering the educational and economic backwardness of minority communities, the Andhra Pradesh government is implementing a number of educational programmes like residential education, scholarships, skill development programmes for youth. With an expenditure of Rs.8.00 crore, the state government has imparted skills to 5,714 candidates of minority community in 2015-16 with a placement rate of 70 per cent and an average salary of Rs.6,250.00 per month. In addition, the state government is also implementing the Shadikana scheme and assisting Haj pilgrims. The government has implemented economic support schemes helping 14,287 beneficiaries with an expenditure of Rs.48.00 crore

in 2015-16. In 2016-17, the state government intends to assist 100,000 families with an outlay of Rs.250.00 crore. The Andhra Pradesh government has targeted to provide major impetus to the welfare and development of the minorities in 2016-17 fiscal and thereafter. The government has provided Rs.710.57 crore for the welfare and development of minorities in 2016-17, which is 87.53 per cent more than the 2015-16 allocation of Rs.378.81 crore.

Bihar:

The Bihar government, besides the central government schemes, runs the scholarship schemes for students, belonging to minority communities, under which those securing first division get Rs.10,000.00 assistance. The state government has launched two new schemes namely Chief Minister Employment Loan Plan and Chief Minister Minority Education Loan Plan. Under the first scheme, in the next five years, a loan of Rs.125.00 crore would be provided to minorities for employment on simple interest. In the second programme, a loan of Rs.50.00 crore would be distributed among students of minority community for acquiring technical education. The state government implements a scheme related to fencing of Graveyards, Skill Development Programmes, Pre-Matric, Post-Matric and Merit Cum Means Scholarship and 15-point programme besides running a minority development corporation and monitoring the Wakf properties. Bihar government also runs a

programme of financial assistance to divorcee Muslim Women. At present, one-time lump-sum assistance of Rs.25,000.00 is provided to divorcee women. In current fiscal year, Govt. of Bihar has planned to spend approximately, Rs. 800 croreon minority welfare schemes.

Kerala:

The Kerala government has established Minorities Development Finance Corporation in 2013 with the main objective of promoting welfare and economic development of religious minority and recommended communities, as notified by the central and state governments from time to time, by providing financial assistance by way of loans, advances, guarantees, securities and other financial aids subject to the guidelines as laid down by Government of India. As per the national commission of Minorities Act, 1992, the notified minority communities in the State are Muslims, Christians, Sikhs, Buddhists and Parsees. Recently, Jains have also been included in the list by the Government of India. The self-employment scheme for minorities is for individual beneficiaries and under this scheme, Projects costing up to Rs.10.00 lakh are considered for financing. The educational loan scheme for minorities is for individual beneficiaries under which an amount up to Rs.7.50 lakh is considered for financing for studying technical, professional and skill development courses of duration not exceeding five years. The maximum amount per year is

limited to Rs.2.00 lakh. For Skill Development Programmes, the minimum periods shall be one year and the maximum loan amount for Skill Development programmes for more than one year is limited to maximum Rs.3.00 lakh. The foreign educational loan scheme for minorities is for individual beneficiaries. Under this scheme, an amount up to Rs.20.00 lakh is considered for financing for studying technical and professional courses of durations not exceeding five years in a foreign country. The maximum amount per year is limited to Rs.4.00 lakh. A sum of Rs.3.50 crore has been earmarked for scholarships and Rs.4.00 crore for skill development schemes to students of minority communities. A sum of Rs.31.00 crore is provided for a housing scheme for the divorced, widowed and abandoned women of the minority communities.

Besides, there is a separate provision of reservation in jobs (12 per cent) for Muslim community within OBC category.

Karnataka:

With a view to improve the quality of education at Minority Residential Schools and strengthen the Directorate and District Minority Offices, around 1,000 posts of teaching and non-teaching staff have been filled. Scholarship worth Rs.600.00 crore has been distributed to 32 lakh minority students who are not covered by the Central Government Scholarship

schemes. Incentive to minority students undergoing higher education abroad has been increased from Rs.10.00 lakh to Rs.20.00 lakh. Around 360 students have been benefitted by this scheme. Altogether, 500 additional school rooms and infrastructure along with e-learning facilities to 400 schools have been provided in 200 Urdu schools. Financial assistance of Rs.166.60 crore has been provided to 60,171 students under Arivu scheme. Under Ganga Kalyana Scheme, an amount of Rs.100.47 has been spent for 8,218 beneficiaries. 2,555 bore wells have been electrified. The Karnataka government had also launched new programmes for 2016-17 and a total amount of Rs.1,374.00 crore had been provided to Minorities Welfare Department. Under the new schemes, infrastructure development works have been taken up in minority colonies at a cost of Rs.100.00 crore. The government earmarked a sum of Rs.13.00 crore to organise mentor leadership and capacity-building programme for youth from minority communities. Likewise, Rs.50.00 crore will be provided for modernisation of Madrasas and to provide formal and computer education. A grant of Rs.3.00 crore has been provided for providing educational infrastructure facilities to Jamia-Ul-Ulum Educational Institution in Bengaluru and Rs.3.00 crore to Beary Association, Bangalore, to construct Souharda Bhavan. A fellowship programme is

underway for minority students pursuing Ph.D. and M.Phil courses in subjects relating to minorities on the lines of JRF model and a research center will be established at Mohammed Gavan Library, Bidar. Besides, a 9-point programme facility will be extended to Government Urdu Schools and Rs.125.00 crore will be provided for the development of Christian community. The facility of payment of fee will be extended to students belonging to Muslim, Christian, Jain, Sikh, and Budhist Community studying in nursing courses in government/private colleges. The state government also contemplates to provide financial assistance for the reconstruction of Buddhist Vihars, Rs.5.00 crore to develop Jain Basadis and Rs.25.00 crore to complete the construction of Haj Bhavan.

Madhya Pradesh:

The Madhya Pradesh government has a backward classes and minorities department to implement the provisions made in the interests of backward classes and minorities and protect their rights in context of facilities available to backward classes. Like many other states, it does not have a separate department for minorities. The department focuses on formulation of the policies and planning, prepare various educational, social and economic development programmes to ensure maximum benefits to people of the backward classes and minorities.

Besides taking effective measures for bringing the backward classes and minorities into mainstream of society, it implements the various central government programmes for the minorities. The government conducts the survey of land, buildings of Mosque, Dargah and Gurudwara etc. to remove the illegal possession, use the Wakf properties in favour of minority and makes reasonable efforts to protect and promote the Urdu language.

Bhopal is the only district with minorities' concentration in Madhya Pradesh where Multi-Sectoral Development Programme is implemented as planned by the central government.

Maharashtra:

The Maulana Azad Minorities Financial Development Corporation is Maharashtra's channelising agency of central government's minorities' development and it was constituted to meet the financial requirements and social upliftment of financially backward classes amongst the minorities. An outlay of Rs. 405.00 crore has been allocated for the welfare of minority communities in the state. Through this fund, various schemes like scholarship, training of minority youth and creation of basic amenities in minority residential areas will be undertaken. The Maulana Azad scholarship is for girls belonging to Christian, Muslim, Sikh, Buddhist and Parsi community while the post-matric government scholarship is for boys and girls belonging to Christian, Muslim, Sikh, Buddhist and Parsi community.

Sikkim

The Sikkim government runs a scheme for infrastructure development in minority institutes to augment infrastructure in private-aided, unaided minority schools or institutions in order to enhance quality of education to minority children. The scheme covers the entire state but preference is given to minority institutions located in districts, blocks and towns having a minority population above 20 per cent.

Tamil Nadu:

Minority community of Tamil Nadu is quite well-off. Muslim and Christian, both communities are in better-off condition than that of majority community. Despite, there are number of schemes to support both communities. The Tamil Nadu government provides financial assistance to Christians to undertake pilgrimage to Jerusalem. Since May 2011, the state government has taken proactive steps for the welfare of Muslims such as increase in annual administrative grant for Tamil Nadu Wakf Board to Rs.1.00 crore and monthly pension of Ulemas to Rs.1,000.00. In addition, the administrative grant to 61 Tamil Nadu State Hajj Committee has been enhanced to Rs.30.00 lakh with effect from 2013-2014.

Uttar Pradesh:

The Uttar Pradesh government had allotted Rs.2,475.61 crore for the minorities for 2016-17 besides implementing the centrally sponsored schemes. The government has allotted Rs.791.83 crore for the minority students, while another Rs.150.00 crore are allotted to arrange for the fee shortfall. Similarly, for the upgradation and modernisation of Madrasas, the government has allotted Rs.394.00 crore.

The government has decided to build female hostels in minority-dominated areas and allocated Rs.18.41 crore. The new UP government has decided to end the 20 percent quota for minorities in social welfare schemes. Earlier, the minorities, mainly Muslims, in UP used to get 20 percent quota in schemes of departments like sugar development, micro-irrigation, horticulture, agriculture, animal husbandry, rural development, basic education, panchayati raj, medical and health, public works, tourism, higher education and youth welfare, among others.

West Bengal:

Besides central government sponsored minorities development programmes, the West Bengal government has a number of its own schemes for the notified religious minority communities including Muslims, Christians, Buddhists, Sikhs, Jains and Parsees for their economic upliftment. The government has allocated Rs.2,500.00 crore to Minority Affairs and Madrasas Education Department.

The West Bengal Minorities Development and Finance Corporation have taken up various schemes for Economic Welfare,

Scholarships, Vocational Training, Mass Awareness and Career Counseling for minority students. The corporation provides financial assistance to the minorities for self-employment in the form of soft loan, different scholarships (Merit-Cum-Means, Post-Metric, Pre-Metric and Talent support stipend) for poor and meritorious students, education loans for poor and meritorious students, promotes training programmes for development and up gradation of skill and others.

In some states, such as Orissa, Rajasthan, Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand, minority specific schemes are mixed up with the schemes for SCs and STs.

But in most of the states where minorities are in majority such as **Meghalaya, Mizoram** and **Punjab,** there is no minority specific programmes.

Benefits of OBC Status

Besides above-mentioned benefits, large numbers of backward castes (list in annexure) of Muslim communities have been included in the OBC list of castes liable to get reservation benefits. Thus, a large number of castes from Muslim community too get all kinds of benefits at par with the castes included in OBC lists. In Bihar, some castes of Muslim equivalent to Mahadalit castes have also been included and getting all kinds of benefits. Therefore, it will not be an exaggeration to state that supporting net for minorities of India is reasonably wider and encompass large sections of the community. Whether it is central or state government, both are doing their best to support minorities. If with so much support, Muslim communities are not able to remedy the situation, they need some introspection. As, it has been previously stated that factors for backwardness of Muslim community lie within the community itself. Therefore, without changing its mindset, resorting to population control measures and drastic social reform for realization of gender parity, this community cannot set foot on the fast track of development.

6.

A PEEP INTO THE WORLD OF INDIAN MUSLIMS

In previous chapters, the minority policy and the socio-economic status of the Muslim community in comparison to other social groups have been discussed. In this chapter, the structure and behaviour of Muslim society will be discussed. There is minor difference between Muslim society and Muslim community. Actually, 'Muslim Community' has a religious connotation and it is used to differentiate the followers of other religions who believe in Islam whereas the term, 'Muslim Society' indicates the internal social structure of the community.

The world of Indian Muslims is as diverse and variegated as Indian society itself. It is not a monotonous group of people, as is generally believed by the people of other religious societies. This society is also made up of motley of social customs, languages, attire, eating habits and other factors. So far as their habitation pattern is concerned, they generally prefer to live in densely populated areas with co-religionists. Even those who live in sparsely populated areas they prefer to live in a close neighbourhood of co-religionists.

Despite so many internal diversities, the resolve for projecting themselves as a uniform society is quite strong. In spite of the fact that they use many languages in their day-to-day lives, an emphasis on learning of Urdu language is found in almost all sections of Muslim society. There are some stunning similarities in attire as well as in living styles, even though they live in diverse geographical regions (states). The insistence on adhering to an established religious identity at the cost of discarding regional identity has its own costs. Though this boosts religious unity but after a limit such a practice dissociates the community from mainstream society, which generally comprises many other religious practitioners. This weakens the thread of relationships between Muslims and other communities of the neighbourhood. In fact, it is essential to increase togetherness among the communities so that they remain connected to a common language and culture. The last two to three decades have been witness to the disappearance of processes and happenings which encourage commonality and connections between various communities, which is dangerous trend from the perspective of the future of social harmony.

Islam and Muslim Society

The thinking and behaviour of the Muslim community cannot be understood without the basic understanding of Islam, and behaviour of Muslim society cannot be understood without deciphering its inner social

structure. Therefore, an analysis of the behaviour of the Muslim community from the perspective of Islamic theology, is necessary.

Islam is the pivot of Muslim society, which defines its life and determines its thinking and behaviour. The centrality of religion in the day-to-day lives of Muslims, distinguishes this society from all other societies and religions. In Islam, there are some fundamental beliefs without subscribing to which one cannot be considered a Muslim. Besides, there are fundamental obligations that every Muslim, being a Muslim, has to follow. Therefore, it is important to know the fundamental beliefs and obligations of a devout Muslim. In order to understand fundamentals of the Islam, two books were studied as reference books namely;[1] 'Muslim Sects and Divisions' by Muhammad b. Abd al-Karim Shahrastani and 'Muslims in India and Abroad by Abdul Matin. According to them:

When Gabriel appeared in the garb of an Arab and sat close to prophet and interrogated, 'O Apostle of God, what is *Islam*?' The prophet replied, 'to bear witness that there is no God but Allah, that I am a messenger of God, to observe prayer, pay the zakat, fast in the month of Ramadan and perform the pilgrimage, if you are able to do so.' Gabriel said, 'you have spoken the truth'. He then asked, 'what is *Iman*?' The messenger replied, to believe in god, his angels, his scriptures, his messengers, the last Day; to believe also in *Qadar*,

'determination of good and evil,' Gabriel said.

According to the Sunni Theology, there are Five Beliefs: (1) Belief in God (*Tauhid*); 2) Belief in the Angels of God (*Farhistha*); (3) Belief in holy books revealed by the God; (4) Belief in Messengers of God (Prophets); (5) Belief in the day of judgment. There are four obligations in the Sunni Theology: (1) Prayers (Namaaj), (2) Fast (Roja), (3) Alms Tax (Zakat), and (4) Pilgrimage to Mecca [Haj], once in a lifetime. These details have been summarized in the four pillars of Islam in the Sunni Theology: (1) Belief (Imaan), (2) Conduct (Amal), (3) Preaching the Faith (Tabligh), and (4) The Holy War (Jihad).

According to the Shia Theology, there are five fundamental beliefs: (1) Oneness of God (*Tauhid*), (2) Justice of God (Adl), (3) Prophethood (Nabuwat), (4) Apostolic Succession (Imamat, belief in twelve Imams as the successor of the Holy Prophet), and (5) The Day of the Judgment (Qiyamat). According to the Shia Theology, there are six obligations: (1) Prayer (Salaat), (2) Fast (Som), (3) Pilgrimage to Mecca (Haj), (4) Alms Tax (Zakat), (5) Booty Tax (Khums), and (6) Holy War (Jihad).

As a matter of fact, all above-cited beliefs, obligations and the fundamentals of Islam are very important to the followers of Islam. But 'Jihad', which is common obligation of both Shias as well as Sunnis, puts potentially

followers of Islam on a constant course of confrontation with followers of other religions. Although Islamic scholars tend to give the term 'Jihad' a peaceful undertone but it is the connotation of the term in which it is being practiced and also perceived by the followers of other religions, that is significant. Therefore, without unnecessarily debating on its liberal meaning, we may construe the term as being a 'war against enemy of Islam'. And, who are the enemies of Islam? This depends on the perception of a follower of Islam as to which of the activities he considers to be against Islam. Owing to this fact, no one is in a position to deny its potential misuse for violent purposes against followers of other religions.

Besides, the oft-used slogan 'Islam is in danger', is a reminder to Muslims of their obligation of Jihad – as religion is in danger, they must resort to Jihad for its defence. Though justification of violence is found in scriptures of other religions too, but, that is not central point of those religions. This makes up the fundamental difference between Islam and other religions.

Therefore, Islamic theologians need to toil on such issues in order to remove apprehensions of other communities towards Muslims. The gravity of the situation can be understood from the fact that even Muslim countries are not comfortable with it. Seeing series of Jihad-inspired attacks on a number of individuals, the Government of Bangladesh

banned teaching of Jihad in Madrasas in April 2017[2] Pakistan, which used the Madrasas to train thousands of youth during the 1980s for Jihad against the army of the USSR Afghanistan, has been labelled as a 'rogue state', because of the proliferation of Jihadi education in that country. Terrorists of J&K are openly justifying their activities in the name of Jihad but there has been no noteworthy objection of it from the Ulemmas. There is already a 'United Jihad Council' in Pakistan as an umbrella organization of terrorists headed by Syed Salahuddin, (nearly designated a global terrorist by UNO) but no one is objecting the use of the term 'Jihad' in such activities. Therefore, it is incumbent upon the Muslim community to distance itself from this obligation in order to convince followers of other religions that they are not at war with them. This kind of gesture is highly significant for peaceful co-existence for Muslims as well as for the practitioners of the other religions, particularly in a multi-religious society. Many Muslims complain that wherever they go they get unfriendly treatment not only by the other religionists but also by the authorities of many Muslim countries too. Is it a good situation for Muslims? Therefore, Islamic scholars need to think over such a theological issue with a curative approach. The need of the hour is that in India too, Madrasas stop teaching about Jihad voluntarily, as it is against the spirit of secularism and that of a multi-cultural society like India.

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Communalism in Muslim Community

As per the Merriam-Webster dictionary, communalism means 'loyalty to a socio-political grouping based on religious or ethnic affiliation'. But the sense in which the term 'communalism' is being used nowadaysis slightly different from this one. The level of communalism of a community can be assessed on the basis of two factors: first, how blindly one adheres to one's religion, and second, what do they think and how they view other religions? It means the more a religion keeps a welcoming attitude towards the beliefs and principles of other religions, the less communal it will be; the more assertive it is about its own version of truth, the more its followers will tend to be religiously dogmatic or communal. Though hardly any religion is completely immune to this tendency, but in some religions, it is more expressive and in some others, it is comparatively negligible. So far as the nature of communalism is concerned, it differs from community to community. The communalism of Christianity is totally different from that of other communities, whether Muslim or any other community.

In principle, communalism is bound to be at a higher level in the Muslim society because of clearly defined Islamic tenets, with little scope for deviation. In Islamic terminology, religion means 'obedience', and the one who submits and obeys is the religious man. Since Muslim society is indistinguishable from Islamic theology, Islamic theology is interpreted by Maulanas and Muftis for them. Therefore, 'obedience to religion' gets translated in practice into obedience to Islamic clerics. This situation gives Islamic clerics immense influence and control over the way of thinking and behaviour of the Muslims. They keep the community under their unquestionable religious influence. The extent to which they command their influence over the community can be understood from the fact that they condition minds of Muslims in such a way that 'the thought of being a Muslim' never subsides from their minds and the persons belonging to the community always think as a Muslim, nothing more, nothing less.

As explained earlier, the level of communalism is bound to be higher in Islam because of the tenacity of its followers to follow the tenets of their religion. Here the question arises, how can commitment to one's religion be termed as 'communalism'? Actually, staunch commitment to one's religion and negation of other religious beliefs make a community fanatic and unwelcoming to other religions (there is no God, but Allah). In Islam, both factors are crucial to be a true Muslim. As a result, in most countries, Muslims as a community, are not at ease with other communities. But this situation can be improved to some extent, if Muslim communities adapt themselves to the traditional culture of the respective countries

and maintain close interaction with other local communities. This may act as an antidote to religious fanaticism on the one hand and would make other religious communities less apprehensive about the Muslims, on the other.

So far as the spread of religious rigidity in Indian Muslim society is concerned, it is found in both upper as well as in lower caste Muslims, but varies in degree as well as in nature. The tendency to flaunt religiosity is unquestionably high in all categories of Muslim society. The upper strata of Muslims project themselves as custodians of the community's perceived interests; therefore, it is natural that they would keep flagging issues related to religion, in order to keep their leadership position over the community intact. On the other hand, lower strata of Muslims also flaunt their commitment to religion in order to socially upgrade themselves within the community. Nowadays, higher caste Muslims are reasonably concerned about their declining influence within the community; therefore, they will keep playing the Islamic card to keep their influence intact over the community.

Incidence of Backwardness in Muslim Society

Recently, socio-economic backwardness of the Muslim community has been quite a serious issue of debate. It has already been discussed in previous chapters. Here, there will be an attempt to analyze whether social and educational backwardness of Muslims is the outcome of economic backwardness or economic and educational, both are the result of social backwardness. As per census statistics of the Government of India, it is amply clear that economic backwardness of the Muslim community is an outcome of its social backwardness. Therefore, without removing social backwardness prevailing in Muslim society, it cannot develop economically and educationally.

In fact, no economic or other incentives are going to bring the desired results if drastic steps are not taken to remove its social inertia. But the problem is that the community does not want to take up any measures of social reform on its own and resists fiercely if the government tries to introduce any social reform. And, the voice of social reform within the community is so feeble that it is hardly audible. Therefore, in the absence of internal demand for reform, any effort to introduce reform is considered as superimposed and is easily termed as an onslaught on its religion. As a result, every successive government as a pattern wants to avoid taking any reformative measures for the community. But the problem is that no society develops in a situation of social stagnation. In Islamic theology (particularly for Sunnis), most of the behaviour and practices are decided, which leaves little scope for aberration. In this regard, it is important to quote Shahrastani[3] 'There is a saying of the Prophet

that the one who seeks counsel will not be unhappy, but the one who follows his own counsel will not be happy'. This leaves little scope for ordinary Muslims to apply their own minds on a range of issues and drastically limits the scope for their mental independence. And, the clerics of the community keep convincing Muslims that whatever problems they are facing, it is because the tenets of holy book (Quran)are not being followed properly by them. Therefore, the problems of the Muslim community need to be seen intheir totality, a piecemeal approach to it will not work at all.

Despite this, Islamic scholars interpret many commandments of holy books as per their attitude on the issues. Therefore, without taking the Imams and Islamic scholars into confidence, it is a very difficult task to create a receptive atmosphere for any kind of social reform within Muslim society.

Besides these issues, there are some other issues, which are quite important from the perspective of the Muslim community.

Government Intervention in Socio-Religious Affairs of Muslim Community

Electoral behaviour of the Muslim community puts it in a position of strength, which has been envied and criticized by many people and organizations. On the sheer electoral strength of the community, the Muslims have been stalling the efforts of even the judiciary to introduce right-based reform for Muslim women using the legislature (Shah Bano case). So far as the legislature of India is concerned, it has even lost its willingness to introduce reform in the community. It still has to be seen whether the recent legislative foray of the BJP-led government to criminalize triple talaq will get legislative sanction or not. But, why the Muslim community is so apprehensive of the government's intervention merits special deliberation.

On the basis of the approach of Muslim community, there are two kinds of interventions. The first is of the kind which is taken positively and welcomed by the community. The second type of intervention is frowned upon by the community in general, barring a few progressive elements. The Haj subsidy (now stopped), salary to Imams of mosques, building of Haj houses, welfare and promotional programmes such as loan subsidy, scholarships and other kinds of assistance to students, financial assistance to divorced women, etc., are the types of interventions (described in chapter 5), which the Muslim community takes as positive interventions. On the other hand, there are many issues related to social reforms, legislation or judicial intervention to secure rights of women, etc. that are considered intrusive by most of the community leaders.

High crude birth rate, low literacy rate and low work participation rate of Muslim women are three prime reasons responsible for the prevalence of backwardness

among Muslims. All other factors, which are put forward as examples of Muslim backwardness such as low per capita income, lower share in government jobs in proportion to population and poverty, are simply outcome of the above-mentioned factors. This cause and effect relationship needs to be seriously looked into.

As per the religious data of the 2011 census, the average household size of Muslim is around 5.1, the highest among all religious groups. In fact, when the survey was conducted by the Centre for Policy Analysis (CPA) to examine why the dropout rate in Muslim community is high after upper primary level of schooling, it was found that in almost all cases, the economic reason was a main factor. And secondly, in more than 70 per cent cases of dropouts, children belonged to such families where the number of children were three and above. The second important factor relates to women. Whether it is because of religious factors or social ones, the end result is that there is a wide gap between the literacy rate of Muslim women and their male counterparts. There is also a substantial gap between the literacy rate of Muslim women and that of women of other communities in India. As a result, the presence of Muslim women in the job market is almost minimal. Besides, because of the prevalence of instant divorce and polygamy, Muslim women always live in constant fear and do not play an assertive role in family matters. Even if other social factors are not

taken into account, the prevalence of merely these three factors is sufficient to keep any society backward, whether Muslim or any other.

Survey Chart - 1:
Stages of Dropout (in %)
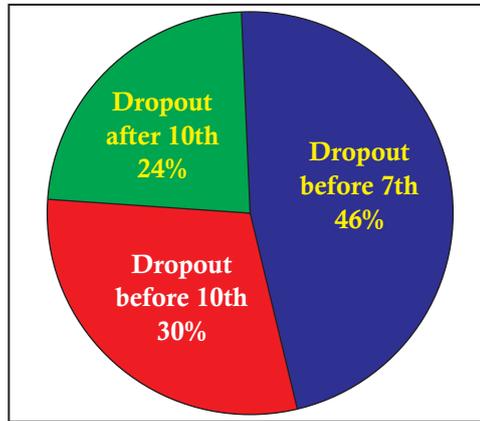
Survey Chart: 2
Reasons of Dropout (in %)
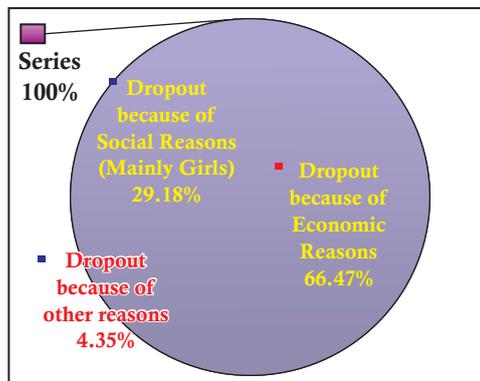
Survey Chart: 3
Distribution of Students by Choice of Schools (in %)
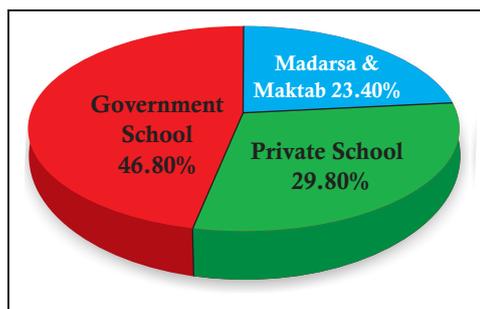
The irony with the Muslim community is that they are aspiring to develop at par with other communities but without addressing causes which stall its progress. It does not want to become part of the mainstream and move as per the spirit of the time but wants all the benefits associated with it. In fact, population control and issues related to women are the areas where intervention of the state is required the most, but these are also the areas where an overwhelming majority of the Muslims oppose state intervention the most. It is important for the Muslim community to understand that they cannot have the cake and eat it too. They need to make a choice.

Social Discrimination in Muslim Community

Whether it is the spiritual or political sphere, a philosophy which espouses freedom, is not passionate towards equality. As a political philosophy–capitalism and in the realm of spiritualism–Hinduism, gives an individual the highest level of freedom for thought and action. As capitalism has always been under threat from egalitarian philosophy, Hinduism too has always been subjected to hard-hitting criticism for plurality in its approach and for being unmindful to social equality. Specialization of work and division of labour has been at the core of the Hindu system of society, which is now infamously known as caste system. In the caste system of India, the place of an

individual in society was dependent on the type of the work a person used to be associated with. Therefore, prestige-wise society was unevenly divided. Understandably, a good chunk of the Hindu population got converted to other religions, mainly to Islam and Christianity, in their quest for equality and to save themselves from being discriminated against.

Survey Chart: 4
Average Size of Family (in %)
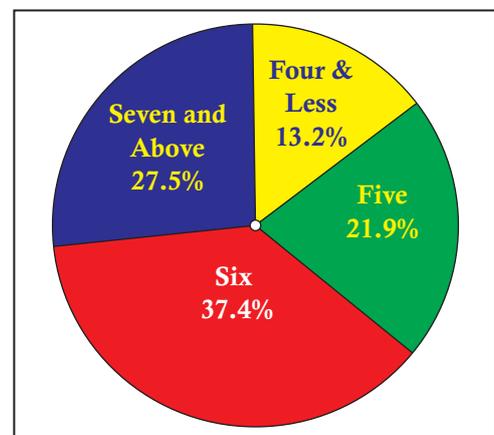
As a matter of fact, whether it is 'equality' or 'discrimination', it is more a matter of attitude and practice than an issue of theology. As already mentioned, the socially discriminatory nature of Hindu society, besides the carrot-and-stick measures, pushed a large number of its followers to other religions, mainly to Islam and Christianity. It is true that a large number of Hindus were wooed or being wooed to these religions by showcasing their tenets that it was inherently a non-discriminatory and it did not discriminate on the basis of caste and birth. But, once converted, they were undergoing discriminatory behaviour by both religions.

Whether it is Christianity or Islam, they perpetuate inequality in their own way. Caste may be considered an Indian phenomenon but as a common practice female members are not allowed to pray together with their male counterparts in Islam. In Christianity too, how many female members have risen to the level of the Pope? This gender discrimination is a global phenomenon.

In India, whether it is the case of Islam or Christianity, those who converted from lower castes do not enjoy similar level of social status than those who converted from higher social echelons. Since the focus of this report is the Muslim community hence, it will restrict itself to the study of the social structure of Muslims only.

Social Stratification in Muslim Community[3]

Despite the concept of 'Ummah' (universal brotherhood), Muslim society is divided on several grounds. First, there are four schools of thought in Islam. In the Indian subcontinent, there is the overwhelming influence of the 'Hanafi School of Thought'. Besides, there is vertical division in Islamic society between Shias and Sunnis. Within Shias and Sunnis, there are many sub-sects. Altogether, there are 73 sects in Islam. In the Indian context,on the basis of theological ideology, again there are two broad divisions, i.e., Deobandi and Barelvi. The source of all these divisions, are the religious scriptures and their interpretations.

So far as the social structure of the community is concerned, it is generally classified in three categories: Ashraf, Azlaf and Arzal.

Ashraf

'Ashraf' is on the top of the social ladder in Muslim society. It mainly consists of those who came from outside India along with Muslim invaders and settled here. Besides, those who converted from higher castes of Hindus got almost the same social status in the Muslim community. Even in 'Ashraf ', there are further social divisions. They are: Sayyad, Sheikh, Mughal and Pathan.

(a) 'Sayyads' are usually persons claiming descent from the Prophet. They use the title of Mir or Sayyad at the beginning of their name and at the end of the name affix the sub-divisional title. Sometimes, only the title Sayyad or Mir is used and not the sub-divisional title. The Sayyad sub-divisional titles are Abidi, Aksari, Baqari, Hasani, Hussaini, Kazimi, Naqvi, Rizvi and Zaidi.

The titles Chishti, Jalali and Qadiriya, are affixed generally by spiritual guides and teachers (mostly among Sunnis).

Besides, the above-mentioned Sayyad sub-divisions, the following sub-divisions are common among both the Sunnis and Shias. Generally among Shias, these are Sayyad while among Sunnis these are Shaikh.

Abbasi, Alvi (or Alawi), Hashimi and Jafari

(b) **Shaikh** - Ansari; Faruqi; Khurasani; Milki; Qidwai; Quraishi; Siddiqi and Usmani.

(c) **Mughal Sections** – Generally, Mughals use the title Mirza at the beginning of their name and at the end affix their descent title, viz. Chaghati; Qizilbash; Tajik; Temuri; Turkman and Uzbak or Uzbeg.

(d) **Pathan Tribes** – In common practice, Pathans use the title Khan at the end of their name and generally do not affix their tribal title. However, if the following tribal title is affixed, the title Khan is omitted: Afridi; Bangash; Barakzai; Barech; Daudzai; Durrani; Ghorgushti; Ghauri; Kakar; Khalil; Lodi; Mohammad; Mohammadzai; Orakzai; Rohila (group of Pathan tribes inhabiting in the Rohilkhand region of UP) and Yudufzai.

MUSLIM RAJPUT

(a) **The following sections of Rajput are now entirely Muslims in UP:** Bhale Sultan (mostly in Bulandshahr and Sultanpur); Khanzada (mostly in Avadh); Ranghar (all over the province) and Lalkhani (a branch of Bargujars—all over the province).

(b) **Important and major Rajput sects which have Muslim branches:** Bais; Bargujar; Bhatti; Bisen; Chandel; Chauhan; Gautam; Panwar; Raikwar; Ratthaur; Sombansi and Tomar

OCCUPATIONAL CASTES

The following castes of Azlafs have a larger population within Muslim community:

Dhuniya (Mansuri) - Cotton Carder

Kunjra (Raien) - Green Grocer

Maniha - Bracelet Maker

Name of castes associated with Azlaf (clean occupational castes) and Arzal(castes associated with unclean work) category

Name Of Caste	Associated Occupation	Surname
Atishbaz	Fire-Work	Atishbaz
Bawarchi	Cook	Bawarchi
Bhand	Jester	Bhandi
Bhatiyara	Innkeeper, Jishmfarosh (earlier)	Farukhi
Faqir	Beggar	Peerjada
Gaddi	Muslim Grazier	Kalan
Mirasi	Muslim Musician	Mirasi

Momin, julaha,	Muslim Weaver	Ansari
Nanbai	Baker	NA-
Qassab	Butcher	Quraisi
Dhuniya	Cotton Carder	Mansuri
Kunjra	Green Grocer	Raeen, Rajjaque
Manihar	Bracelet Maker	Siddiqi
Barhai	Carpenter	Saifi
Chikwa	Non- Cow Slaying Butcher	Quraisi,Chique
Dhobi	Laundry Man	Kassar, Zarzar, Safi
Halwai	Confectionery	Halwaie, Halwafarosh
Kumhar	Potter	Kumhar
Lohar	Blacksmith	Nalband
Hajjam	Barber	Salmani
Teli	Oil Presser	Mallik, Usmani
Attar	Scent and Oil Trader (mobile)	Attar
Idrisya	Tailor	Idris
Dafali	Drummer	Masoodi, Hashmi, Dafali
Mir Shikar	Bird Hunter, Banjara	Mahegir
Dhunia	Cotton Processor	Naddafi, Mansoori
Gorkan, Saie	Digging of Grave and caretaker of Graveyard	Saie, Shah, Alvi, Saheb
Pamaria	Dancer, Travelling entertainer	Abbasi
Nat	Wrestling& Cattle Rearing	Khalifa
Rangrez	Coloring of Clothes	Sabbag
Madari	Street play with the help of monkey	Madariya, Qalandar

Besides, there are Group of 12 castes which areknown as 12 number[4].They are: Nat, Gulgulia, Jaidi, Tirkutah, Lodhrha, Kungarh, ChhauBhaiya, Girhara, Tikulhara, Kurharia, Bakkho and Banwaria

b) Arzal (castes who are associated with unclean professions):

Name Of Caste	Associated Occupation	Surname
Halalkhor, Lalbegi, Beghi, Farrash	Sweeper, Cleaning, making of bamboo utensil, etc.	Halal, Mehtar, Mester, Jaroobaksh, Khakrob

Inter-Caste Relationships Among Muslims

All occupational castes of Muslims have been categorized under Azlaf category. They are mostly involved in clean occupations. They are the largest in number among all the three social groups of Muslims. Arzals, who are at the lowest ladder of the social status, are generally involved in cleaning filth. So far as inter-caste relationships are concerned, though they do not have any hesitation in eating at each other's houses, but in case of Arzals, both upper and middle castes hesitate in eating at the house of Arzals. There are instances when persons from Arzal community opened restaurants/dhabas but they had to close them down in the absence of customers, as other Muslims avoided eating there.

So far as marriages are concerned, inter-category marriage is taboo and problematic. Though marriage in sub-categories is not as problematic as it is in the former case, but they are less preferable. For example, Sayyads and Shaikhs do not prefer to marry Pathans. But Pathans have no hesitation in marrying Sheikh and Sayyad families. While conducting the survey, when a question was asked whether they approve of inter-caste marriage, their answer was in the negative. But, when the question was asked about a situation in which boy and girl with different social backgrounds marry, how did they react? In most of the cases, respondents said that they would accept it. Every caste

has clear-cut preferences for marriage within its own caste but if tradition is breached and marriage takes place between two castes of Azlaf category, it is taken in a normal way. But Azlafshave serious reservations in marrying into the Arzal caste. Similarly, people belonging to the Ashraf caste have serious reservations against both these castes.

Survey Chart: 5
Factors considered in Marriage in Muslim Society (in %)
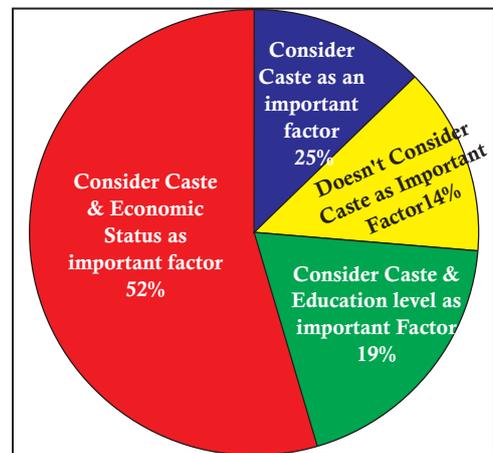
So far as the identification of caste by surname is concerned, it is not always easy; sometimes it is misleading. For example, generally the weaver community (Julaha) uses *Ansari* as its surname but sometimes the Ashrafs also use this surname. The literal meaning of the term Ansar is helper. Reportedly, they are descendants of those persons whose ancestors were helpers (*Ansar*) of the Prophet in Medina, that is why they use this surname. But most of the persons with the suffix 'Ansari' suffix belong to the weaver community. The Ansaris of higher social origin do not marry and mingle with the

Ansaris of the lower order (Azlafs). Equally, similar surnames, such as, *Siddiqui* and *Farooqui*, are used by the Muslims of all three categories.

The urge for being associated with the Ashraf caste is quite high in both non-Ashraf categories of Muslims. The desire for upward social mobility is found more in migrants because they have the 'advantage of anonymity' in a new place. Those who migrate to other places particularly for employment, taking advantage of anonymity of their lineage at new places, add the Ashrafsurname such as 'Khan'. But, sometimes they get identified because of substandard pronunciation and poor quality of language in their conversation.

One thing that deserves to be noted regarding relationships between Ashraf and non-Ashraf castes of Muslims is that, despite differences in status, there is not much rancour against Ashrafs among the Azlafs and Arzals. Whether it is because of their insecurity or due to dominance in religious matters, both lower castes of Muslims recognize and accept the superiority of Ashrafs over them in general. In this regard, it is important to take into account the fact that since 'Muslim' society is religion-centric and religious matters are fully controlled by the Ashrafs, hence, despite some murmuring, voices of dissent are not shrill.

Though in Bihar, after the rise of 'Pasmanda Politics' (backward Muslim Politics) some rift is quite visible as earlier, the Ashrafs had a monopoly over most of the political positions meant for the Muslims. As a result of the rise of backward politics, many Azlafs were politically elevated, which would not have been possible otherwise. Despite the strengthening of Pasmanda Politics, Arzal Muslims are still politically and socially neglected.

So far as religious matters are concerned, the Ashrafs, particularly those of Sayyad and Sheikh sections, have gained almost complete dominance. When Muftis of western UP belonging to the Azlaf caste were spoken to about their status, they claimed that almost each and every important religious position have been occupied by the people of the higher social order (Ashraf). They affirmed that when persons from non-Ashraf category question their dominance, they are rebuked with the assertion that since they brought religion (Deen) for us around 1,000 years ago, how can neo-converts like us dare to teach them about practices and traditions of Islam (Deen)? They are told to shut up and follow the dictates.

Similarly, a former Member of Parliament from Bihar details in his book, Masawat ki Jung (Struggle for Equality)about the role of Khankahas (Islamic Monastries) in maintaining the continued dominance of Ashrafs over the community. Most of the important khankahas are headed by persons from the Ashraf caste and hardly any person from the Arzal and Azlaf castes gets elevated to head them. Therefore,

it will not be an exaggeration to say that under the guarded wall of secrecy and high claim of equality, there is as much social inequality within Muslim society as there is in any other society in India.

Status of Women in Muslim Society

The 'Status of women' in Muslim society, for last few decades, has been a matter of heated social and political discussion, with a surfeit of arguments – both for and against. So far as the approach of the Muslim society towards its women is concerned, though it has been mainly determined by its scriptures, but the role of economic and educational status as determinants of approach cannot be discounted, though these factors do not play as effective a role as they play in other societies of India. Besides, despite global similarities in attire, impact of local traditions and influence of global culture– liberal and fanatic – on the overall approach of Muslim society cannot be totally discounted. Nonetheless, since lives of most of the Muslims are being strictly guided and controlled by commandments of its scriptures hence, whether it is a male or female member of the community, dictates of religious commandments limit their 'behavioural independence'. Since, in this report, the status of Muslim women is not being examined from a theological perspective but from a socio-economic one, therefore, religious factors have been seen here in a limited context of its impact on development of the community.

As has already been explained in previous chapters, one of the prime reasons of low development of the Muslim community is lower literacy and lower work participation rate among women. Whether it is low work participation rate or low literacy rate of Muslim women, the role of social and religious factors as constraining factors, cannot be discounted. This fact needs to be understood that provisions of a religion are subject to interpretation and interpretation depends on convenience, attitude and educational exposure of the interpreters. Therefore, in those Muslim societies where the role of women has been interpreted liberally or women enjoy high level of freedom and are in a position to take advantage of the globally available opportunities, their growth pattern is totally different from that of the socially conservative society.

When the survey was conducted among Muslim women to elicit their opinion on certain social issues, their answers were quite surprising. Though an overwhelming majority of the Muslim women did not approve of 'instant divorce' and 'polygamy' as a good practice but to one's utter surprise, the majority of the interviewed women did not want to oppose these practices openly. When asked, since you consider them as anti-women provisions, why do you not want to opposethem openly? A majority of the women felt that since it is a matter of Deen (religion), it is not

appropriate for us to oppose it. In this regard, it is important to mention that the majority of women are convinced by the logic that 'if after [demanding] instant divorce her husband would go to jail, from whom they would seek compensation'.

In this regard, it is important to note that the practice of polygamy is a major tormentor of Muslim women; more than even 'instant divorce'. In many cases, without divorcing his wife, a Muslim male marries other women and stops taking care of his former wife or insults her so that she herself begs for divorce (Khula) or creates a situation so that she leaves the house. In majority of the cases, they adjust with 'other women' or go back to their parents' house. By all accounts, women are the sufferers of this practice.

So far as the logic behind continuance of this practice is concerned, it is quite flimsy. The gender ratio among Muslims is 951/1000, as per the census of 2011. It means, for every one thousand males, there are only 951 females in the community, which means 49 women less for every one thousand men. Therefore, demographically, there is no justification behind the continuance of polygamy. Besides, it also violates Article 15 of the Constitution, which strictly prohibits discrimination on the ground of gender.

Reportedly, the main purpose behind pursuance of this practice was to give shelter to widows and helpless women during

continuous war. If this is considered as a reason then now there is no point in its continuity, as such stuations no longer exist. Hence, nowadays, there is no moral justification for the same. It is now only an instrument of validation of licentiousness of male members of the community.

Survey Chart no. 6
Opinion of Muslim Women on Polygamy (in %)
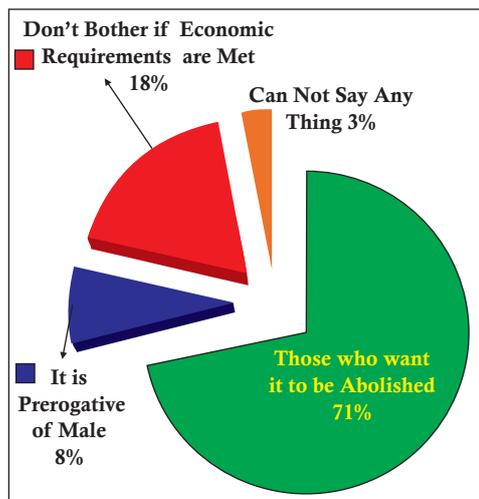
Unfortunately, a matter, which is purely of a social nature and the continuance of which has serious implications for gender justice, has been presented by the dominant section of the community, as if it is a fundamental pillar of their religion and any legislation in this regard, will be a breach of their religious freedom. Till now, no government has shown the courage to enact laws to remedy this situation. There is no discourse for legislation on such issues in the country and whenever voices surface against it, they are thwarted by referring to various provisions of the Indian Constitution, particularly Article 25. It is true that Article 25 gives religious freedom to minorities to

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practice, profess and propagate their religion but there is no provision, which may say that this Article will prevail over all other Articles and objectives of the government. Denial of gender justice to Muslim women on the pretext of religion is not justifiable from any perspective.

The dilemma of the Muslim community is that it wants to develop with the other communities but it does not want to remove the barriers that constrain its growth. If the Muslim community keeps using religion as a bulwark to prevent social reform, then it should not complain about underdevelopment.

Problematic Approach of Muslim Society

After studying various aspects of Muslim community, through field surveys, survey of newspaper reports and articles and other literature on problems of Muslim community, it is very difficult to figure out after all what are the problems of the Muslim community that need to be addressed on a priority basis, as the list of the community's problems is too lengthy and so is its range. In this regard, it is important to note which issue, event and circumstance is the problem and which is not, depending on the community's perception towards them. If the perception is positive, things may appear rosy but if it is negative, things and situations appear completely different.

Besides, because of religion-centric nature of the community, most of the issues, from individual to the international level, are seen from a religious angle. Whether it is an issue related to women or a diplomatic one, all of them are viewed from the same perspective. For example, the community is quite concerned about persecution of Rohingya Muslims in Myanmar and the issue of the situation in Palestineis very close to its heart. It was quite concerned when the US attacked Iraq and it is consistently worried on account of the rising proximity between India and Israel. It also thinks that India should take an accommodative stand towards illegal Muslim migrants from Bangladesh.

On the one hand, the Muslim community desires to direct India's foreign policy from the perspective of its religious brotherhood and on the other, the Organization of Islamic Countries (OIC) almost frequently passes a resolution echoing the line of Pakistan on the Kashmir issue, but Muslim organizations prefer to keep silence on this count. The Muslim Community of India needs to look into such kinds of duplicity in its approach honestly.

Besides, if India starts taking sentiment of the Muslim Community in consideration, tomorrow, Christians may also urge the Government of India to adjust its foreign policy as per the interests of the Christians.If India's foreign policy gets guided and dictated by various minority communities' sectarian interests,with disregard for its

national interest, what will be the end result? Every country follows a foreign policy as per its national interests and if it is mixed with sectarian interests, it will create a disastrous situation for the country. That's why, vanguard of the Muslim Community must widen its sectarian vision so that India's national interests can get properly accommodated in their vision.

Domestically, if looked at ongoing narrative of the community, as the story goes, the community is facing host of problems, ranging from economic deprivation to interference in its religious affairs. Recent legislative initiative by the government of India to prohibit 'Instant Divorce' has been presented as blatant intervention in religious affairs by the dominant section of the community. Therefore the message 'religion is in danger' (Deen khatre mai hai), was floated nationally by dominant section of the community and a number of protests organized against it all over India.

In fact, resistive mind set of the community is limited to one or two issues, it covers large number of the development efforts. The polio immunization programme is viewed as an effort to control the population of the Muslims, Yoga-which has been supported by all member countries of the UNO including all Islamic countries, its practice by majority of the Indian Muslims are viewed as anti-Islamic, population control measures too are also unpopular within the community, to name

just a few. Besides, women of the community are expected to remain in Burqa, denied to offer prayers in Mosque in addition to many other measures that curtail their freedom and restrict independence of their behavior.

On the contrary, there are many problems, which are faced by the Muslim community such as lack of sanitation facilities, high rate of illiteracy among the Muslim women, to name just a few, but these are hardly considered by the community as a problem and interestingly, it has never been an issue for them worth demanding and generally do not pressurize government agencies for actions on the same.

Therefore, it is safe to say that root of most of the problems of the Muslim community lies in its perception towards issues and faulty priorities. On the one hand, hearts of vanguard of the community is brimful with the variety of problems and concerns of Muslims of all over the world-mostly imaginary and distantly connected on the other, the issues which are crucial for its development, are missing from the agenda.

Therefore, from development viewpoint it is important that the community changes its perspective towards various issues first, development will naturally follow it. As a concluding remark of this report, I would like to say, right from first chapter to the last chapter of this report, if there is one factor, which has been playing havoc with the community, it has

Sad to say, it is important for the community to realize that if they consider everything from the perspective of being a problem, they themselves will be considered as the epitome of problem by the rest of the society.

been identified as its attitude. Therefore, it is observed that without attitudinal change, no matter how much efforts are made by the government, overall situation of the community will not improve qualitatively, and the development will keep bypassing the community. It is important for the community to realize that if they consider every change and development from the perspective of a problem, they will amass huge heap of burden on themselves and as a corollary, their morale will get burdened and buried under its weight. Therefore, the community needs to learn art of segregating issues so that social issues do not get mixed up with religious ones.

Last but not the least important issue is that there are host of issues on which the Muslim community of India needs to think calmly, for their better future and also for the larger interest of the country. Besides, it also needs to learn the art of coexisting with the majority as well as with the other minority communities, besides making adjustment with the new realities.

[1] Sources: 'Muslim Sects and Divisions' (Page no. 31 and 37) by Muhammad b. Abdal-Karim Shahrastani, translated by A. K. Kazi and J.G. Flynn and 'Muslims in India and Abroad' by Abdul Matin.

[2] Dhaka Tribune, 25 October 2017

[3] Source: Muslims in India and Abroad by Abdul Matin

[4] Source: 'Masawat ki Jung' by Ali Anwar, Page 54

7.

FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE REPORT

About The Report

This report is an intervention in the policy discourse on minorities from the perspective of wider national interests. This has been prepared with curative approach to the issues related to the minorities of India. It is different from all other previous reports as it has not been prepared at the behest of the government. That is the reason it attempts to analyze all issues without any constraints whether it is socio-economic or religious or political one. While preparing the report, the stress is on assessment of whole gamut of economic and non-economic factors that determine future prospect of the community. The report specially investigates the reasons responsible for the incidence of backwardness of Muslim community of India. Unrestrained and dispassionate analysis of the issues related to minorities, particularly that of Muslim community of India, makes this report useful for all whether they agree with its findings or not.

Findings of the Report

There are large numbers of micro and macro issues that are affecting lives of the people irrespective of their minority or majority status.

But, there are some issues which are insignificant from viewpoint of majority community, but from minorities' viewpoint, those are highly significant and consequential. Similarly, there are some other issues, which are highly important from the perspective of majority community–Hindu, but for minority communities they are not major issues. For example, 'sense of insecurity' is a big issue for Muslim community but majority community, Hindus, generally do not consider it a problem for anyone. Similarly, sentiment of the majority community get hurt when they see that part of pious sites of their important religious places, such as premises of Kashi Vishwanath Temple, birth-place premises of Lord Krishna in Mathura and Ram Temple at Ayodhya are not being vacated by the Muslim community.

Whether it is the frightened minority community or the majority community with a sense of being persecuted, it does not augur well for the country. Hence, this report feels that some bold and brave steps are required to solve those irritants, which are maiming majority-minority relationships in India.

While studying nuts and bolts issues of minority communities; contours of intra-community social relationships and inner social dynamics were found to be playing decisive role in shaping present and future shape of the minorities, particularly, Muslim community. In fact, in most of the cases, it was found that 'incidence of backwardness' of Muslim community is essentially outcome of its 'social backwardness'. Therefore, instead of devising programmes and schemes for the entire community, special measures are required to uplift women and downtrodden sections of the community. Irony of the current situation is that by flagging socio-economic conditions and low development performance of its lower sections, benefits of programmes and schemes meant for minorities are being cornered by mostly higher sections of the community. Therefore, while framing programmes and schemes for minorities, situation warrants special and separate provisions for downtrodden sections of the community so that equitable development takes place within Muslim community too.

Moreover, incidence of backwardness particularly in Muslim community is essentially a function of underdevelopment of its women. Whether it is work participation rate or literacy rate or access to health services on all counts performance of Muslim women appear dismal. Therefore, they largely depend on its male members for fulfillment of their basic needs, which drastically reduces their independence and capacity to take stand on vital issues concerning them. Hence, when a male member marries another woman without even formal divorce, abandoned woman has to accept her undignified status in the family or is forced to face severe economic hardships. Therefore, this report observes that practice of polygamy is much bigger curse for Muslim women than even instant divorce. In the absence of availability of legal recourse, either they play the role of second fiddle in the family or are being abandoned. Moreover, most unfortunate part of this ongoing practice is that it is more prevalent in low-income group families than in higher income group. Since Muslim women themselves are part of a closed society, they are less educated and generally because of being habituated to live under harsh religious control, are not assertive of their rights at all. In fact, sense of self-interest among them is so low that they are staging protests even for the steps that are being enacted for their security in the family system. Hence, it is the responsibility of the central government to play an active role to empower and ensure better treatment for Muslim women within the family system of the community. In order to understand ferocity of the situation, one must see that even government finds it difficult to withstand organized opposition of male members and religious clerics of the Muslim community; then how underdogs of the society

can be expected to face them on their own? Therefore, government must show its resolve to secure those rights of Muslim women, which are naturally available to the women of the other communities.

Another significant observation of this report is that those communities, which are adaptive to change and development, are performing better on various parameters of development and a community whose attitude is resistive towards agents of progress and development fall behind in development performance. Therefore, the Muslim community, which is lagging behind other communities in some areas of development, is in dire need of attitudinal changes towards legislative intervention focused on social reform. Since progressive and futuristic people of Muslim community command little influence over the community, hence Urdu Press may also be used to raise level of awareness about the need of equal rights to women and that of gender equality. If voices and dictates of obscurantists and religious clerics will be allowed to prevail over the society, no meaningful change can take place in the community as it reduces their dominance. In this regard, it is important to note that the tendency of equating one's personal interest or interest of a group with the interest of religion (Islam) is so rampant in Muslim community that most of the times both get badly mixed with each others. As a result, any effort to

introduce reforms in the community, no matter how positive it is, becomes difficult to implement. So far overall performance of the community is an issue of concern, it is true that its economic performance is lowest among all religious communities of India, particularly in northern and eastern part of India. But in most of the states, it is in better economic conditions than SCs and STs–lower development performers of the majority community. When compared with per capita income of Hindus, it varies from state to state. In some states, per capita monthly consumption expenditure of Muslim is higher than the Hindu but in majority of the states, Hindus' per capita expenditure is slightly higher than the Muslims. But when monthly expenditure was compared from household to household, both communities' per capita monthly expenditure was almost equal. Therefore, bigger family size of average Muslim family is also an important factor responsible for low per capita monthly consumption expenditure. Besides, with regard to Muslim family, it was also observed that dropout is more in lower strata as well as in lower income group families. It was found that more the number of children in a family, particularly in lower income group families more children of such families were likely to drop out from the school.

Therefore, it is observed that for the purpose of equitable development, it is important that

government ensures that benefits of the schemes meant for Muslim communities percolates to its women and lower strata of the community.

Last but not the least important observation is that interests of the people of lower castes and women of Muslim community get adversely affected when atmosphere is communally charged. As, under the pretext that religion is in peril nowadays (DEEN KHATRE MAIN HAI), higher strata of the community suppressesthe legitimate demand for equal social status and call for dignified treatment by women and that of lower sections of the people. As a matter of fact, most of the higher religious positions of the community are occupied by the people of Ashraf section of the community, which drastically reduce say of women and that of lower sections within the community, particularly in social and religious affairs. Besides, barring few exceptions, women are generally not allowed to enter into mosques restricting religious freedom of women. This is also violation of Indian Constitution, which gives right to profess and practice religion of one's choice to all, irrespective of gender.

Besides above-mentioned general observations, there are some specific observations as described below:

1 . This report endorses that all minority communities except Muslim is in better-off condition than majority community in respect of consumption expenditure as well as in respect of most of the indicators of the development. This report affirms that out of 35 States/UTs, in 10 States/UTs, monthly consumption expenditure of Muslim is higher than the Hindu while in rest of States/UTs its monthly consumption expenditure is lower than the Hindu. So far as other minorities are concerned, their income level and other developmental accomplishments are better than both Hindu and Muslim communities, with exception of few States and UTs. Therefore, overall economic condition of Muslims is not as distressful as it was made to believe by the previous reports.

2 . Infant Mortality Rate (IMR) of Muslims is lower than Hindus but literacy and work participation rate of Hindus is higher than Muslims. In fact, rise in population of Muslim community is due to high crude birth rate and low IMR. So far as women literacy is concerned, Muslim women's literacy rate is lowest among all communities' women. While male literacy rate of Muslims is slightly lower than the national average but because of persistence of higher rate of illiteracy in Muslim women, its overall literacy rate dips further than national average. This fact necessitates that minority-focused programmes of

government should have women orientation, particularly in the case of Muslim community.

3 . Crude Birth Rate (CBR) of Muslim community is higher than all other communities, whether it is majority or minority. This trend is same almost in all states including in those states where Muslims are better off than the Hindus. While, with the rise of literacy and income level, other communities show downward trend in CBR as per widely held assumption but Muslim community appears to defy this assumption. For example, in case of Kerala, with the rise of income, CBR of Muslim community also increased, as per Kerala's population trend of last 40 years. This fact warrants community-specific population control programmes, particularly for Muslim community.

4 . Work Participation Rate of Muslim community is lowest among all communities as a direct consequence of low work participation rate of Muslim women. That's why, despite work participation rate of males almost equal to national average, overall work participation rate of Muslim community is low. This fact necessitates promotional programmes for Muslim women to bring into job market in order to increase work participation rate of the community.

5 . Above facts necessitate need of social reform within the community without which no welfare programme can produce desired result. The reason of backwardness of Muslim community is not poverty but its social backwardness and poverty is simply the outcome of it. Once, this community recourse to social reform, it will not require many promotional measures for its development by the government.

6 . One of the important factors behind backwardness of Muslim community is that the large numbers of its school going age children, go to Madarasas–a religious school of Muslim community. Irony of the situation is that families of those children, which need employable skills the most, send their children in such religious schools more than others. The kind of education imparted in Madrasas is out of tune with the modern world. Since, on an average, 15-20 percent school going children of poor families go to religious schools (Madarasas), particularly from Muslim dominated habitation, therefore, urgent steps are needed to bring them in the perimeter of mainstream education.

7 . Despite lower literacy rate in Muslim community, most of the the young adults have some kinds of life sustaining

skills. Besides, those who are at the lower end in respect of social status are in many cases in better economic condition than those who are at the higher end in social status. This is mainly because of occupational affiliation of Arzal and Azlaf category of the people.

Recommendations

In the light of study of various issues related to minorities and thereafter observations on the same, it is natural to suggest some specific steps to remedy the situation. Since this report attempted to look into minority-related issues particularly that of Muslim community in wider spectrum, therefore, recommendations, too, cover multiple areas.

Policy Rectification and Introduction of New Policy

1. Present definition and identification of minorities are fallacious, as it is neither comprehensive nor truly inclusive. Therefore, the 'concept of minority and its definition' needs to be revisited. Present centralized approach of identification of minority should be decentralized to state and if possible, to a division level. If it is assumed that a minority community has to face social, religious, administrative and economic constraints in their day-to-day lives for being minority, then same assumption must be applied in religiously neutral manner,

which is not the case at present. Since community-wise distribution of population in India is uneven from state-to-state and region-to-region therefore, if a minority presumably faces some problems for being less in number, more or less every minority, irrespective of the state and religion, must have been facing. Therefore, religious slant must be removed from it and if Hindu is in minority, it should also get the same benefits as minorities receive in various states. Besides, minority benefits should not be extended to a community if it is in majority in that particular state. At present, in many states, a community which is a national minority but is in majority in a state, the benefits of being minority should not be extended. If it is given, it is akin to making mockery of justice and the very need of such provisions.

2. In order to address anomalies in definition of minority and to make it state-specific, Ministry of Minority Affairs should issue fresh guidelines to make it all-encompassing and should issue state-wise list of minorities, as it is has been released in the case of OBC (state-wise list of castes to be covered under it).

3. While devising programmes and schemes, even if it is minority-specific, effort should be made to give it a

geographical orientation. Size or minority status of a community should not be considered for providing economic assistance to the people. For example, in Kerala and Tamil Nadu, minorities like Muslims and Christians, are better off than majority community, Hindu. In such a circumstance, there is no need for minority-specific welfare programmes. In fact, 1. surfeit of special programmes and schemes prevent minority communities from getting integrated to the mainstream of the country for the fear of losing benefits. Therefore, special caution is required while devising schemes for them so that they should not become an instrument of alienation for minorities.

4. There is special need for Muslim women-specific programmes and schemes in order to raise their literacy and work participation rate. For this purpose, government should consider to start schools for girls near Muslim-dominated areas, so that access of Muslim girls to mainstream education may increase.

5. A community that is not internally inclusive, cannot be externally inclusive. Therefore, government may consider introduction of reservation facilities in all minority institutions for women and the castes, which have been already included in the list of castes liable to get OBC reservation benefits. These institutions may be Wakf Board, teachers of government-aided Madrasas and higher academic institutions with minority tag, Haj Committees, etc. The limit of reserved seats may be fixed up to 50 per cent in such places exclusively for the women of the Muslim community, irrespective of the castes.

6. Number of Madrasas should be curbed in those areas where private and government schools are available in adequate numbers. Besides, contents of study material of Madarsas should be closely monitored and a blanket ban be imposed on teaching of Jehad of any forms, as it has been done in Bangladesh in order to curb radicalisation of the community. Besides, it is not compatible to secular norms and values of the country.

7. In all kinds of schemes, whether it is welfare schemes or promotional schemes such as scholarships for students, coaching facilities to students for competitive exams or social assistance programmes, at least 50 per cent should be reserved for women/girls and for those belonging to downtrodden section of the minority communities (identified as OBC by the Government of India, list attached in annexure). In

those schemes, where 30 per cent reservation has already been provided to women, it should be further raised to 50 per cent.

8. Council of Minority Educational Institutions', an autonomous body under 'Ministry of Human Resource Development', should be dissolved. Apparently, categorization of educational institutions on the basis of religious association (minority status) is antithetical to the fundamental spirit of the Constitution, which aims at inculcating feeling of fraternity. Tag of acceding minority status to those institutions, which impart religious education to their adherents, is one thing but to give the same tag which give general type of education is completely different. In a secular country like India, there should not be any place for such kinds of categorization of educational institutions on communal lines as it squeezes common space among students and scholars.

Action Needed for a Comprehensive Social Development

9. Government should frame special population control policy in all districts having population growth rate more than replacement level of population. In this regard, precautionary measures should be taken so that it should not be given

communal colour. As, communalization of the problem not only complicates the issue but also defeats its real purpose. The problem of population growth should be seen as national one, not from communal perspective at all.

10. Ministry of Minority Affairs of Government of India has already taken many measures to promote education and employment in minority communities, particularly among Muslims. This report recommends that it should also take up programs to make minority community particularly Muslims aware about measures of family planning, as higher crude birth rate of the community is one of the prime reasons of its poverty and backwardness.

11. While enacting laws, with due respect to fundamental spirit of the Constitution, they should remain neutral to gender and community consideration. It means there should not be any gender bias in legislation and application of law. If a male member has right to divorce his wife, female members of the community should also be allowed to enjoy the same privilege.

12. Government may consider using Friday prayer gatherings to convince and increase awareness about government programmes meant for the community. In this regard, government should take

efficient measures to ensure its effective implementation.

13 Interest of all educational institutes, by virtue of their contribution to the society, must be protected–irrespective of it being minority or majority. The facilities and protections, which are available to educational institutions of minority communities, should also be extended to educational institutions owned by the majority community. Therefore, the exclusion of minority educational institutions from 44th constitutional amendment should be extended to all educational institutions, irrespective of minority and majority.

Action Needed for the Communal Harmony

14 Government should establish 'Religious Conflict Resolution Committee' with a mandate to give recommendations to resolve all disputes related to religious places of national importance within particular time frame. Resolution of the religious issues are of utmost importance as they are making relationships between Hindu and Muslims acrimonious.

15 Government should make teaching of principal regional language of rspective areas mandatory in every school so that all communities understand local culture,

traditions and develop a sense of camaraderie among them. This is important to make students of all communities sensitive to the feelings of the people living in their surroundings.

16 For long time, need of a law is felt that bans political activities in a premise of a religious place. In a secular country, it is important to ensure that no community exploits or use premise of religious places, other than social and religious purposes.

17. Secularism' has been one of the fundamental spirits of the Indian Constitution in the sphere of governance. Despite espousal to the principle of secularism and division of a country on the basis of religion, post-independent India has not been completely free from communal disturbance. In fact, inappropriate practice of Constitutional secularism hampered 'natural secularism' of Indian society. Hence, government needs to take up measures to spread, strengthen and nurture 'natural secularism' of Indian society. Therefore, in order to create an environment of communal harmony among various religions, following messages should be made compulsory to display prominently on front gate and inside premises of all education institutes, minority or majority, and if possible, they also should be internalize in educational curriculum.

These are:

(I)   All religions are right and true and truth can be realized through all religions.

(ii) Negation of any religion or use of disparaging term against follower of any religion is (by making it) a culpable act. If complicity of any institution is found, concerned institution will be closed down and certificates issued by it will be declared null and void.

(iii) Teaching of any verse, which engenders hate and animosity towards any religion or towards followers of any religion, is prohibited to teach and preach in all educational institutions, irrespective of its association to any religion.

(iv) No religion is above the humanity. Religions are for the humans and humanity, not vice versa. Therefore, teaching of any verses that obstruct evolution of a good human being and hamper mental growth of a student should be strictly prohibited to teach and preach.

Acknowledgement

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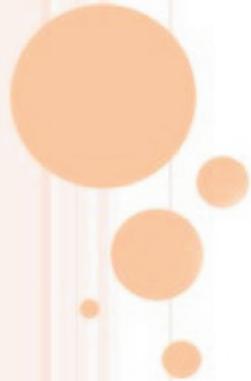
ANNEXURE

Table- 1
RELIGION-WISE DEMOGRAPHY OF STATES AND UNION TERRITORIES

Sl. No.	Name of States/Uts	Hindu	Muslim	Christian	Sikh	Buddhist	Jain	Other Religion	Not Stated
1.	Andaman-Nicobar Islands	69.45%	8.52%	21.28%	0.34%	0.09%	0.01	0.15%	0.18%
2.	Andhra Pradesh	88.46%	9.56%	1.34%	0.05%	0.04%	0.06%	0.01%	0.48%
3.	Arunachal Pradesh	29.04%	1.95%	30.26%	0.24%	11.77%	0.06%	26.20%	0.48%
4.	Assam	61.47%	34.22%	3.74%	0.07%	0.18%	0.08%	0.09%	0.16%
5.	Bihar	82.69%	16.87%	0.12%	0.02%	0.02%	0.02%	0.01%	0.24%
6.	Chandigarh	80.78%	4.87%	0.83%	13.11%	0.11%	0.19%	0.02%	0.10%
7.	Chhattisgarh	93.25%	2.02%	1.92%	0.27%	0.28%	0.24%	1.94%	0.09%
8.	Dadra and Nagar Haveli	93.93%	3.76%	1.49%	0.06%	0.18%	0.35%	0.09%	0.14%
9.	Daman and Dui	90.50%	7.92%	1.16%	0.07%	0.09%	0.12%	0.03%	0.10%
10.	Delhi	81.68%	12.86%	0.87%	3.40%	0.11%	0.99%	0.01%	0.08%
11.	Goa	66.08%	8.33%	25.10%	0.10%	0.08%	0.08%	0.02%	0.21%
12.	Gujarat	88.57%	9.67%	0.52%	0.10%	0.05%	0.96%	0.03%	0.10%
13.	Haryana	87.46%	7.03%	0.20%	4.91%	0.03%	0.21%	0.01%	0.17%
14.	Himanchal Pradesh	95.17%	2.18%	0.18%	1.16%	1.15%	0.03%	0.01%	0.12%
15.	Jammu and Kashmir	28.44%	68.31%	0.28%	1.87%	0.90%	0.02%	0.01%	0.16%
16.	Jharkhand	67.83%	14.53%	4.30%	0.22%	0.03%	0.05%	12.84%	0.21%
17.	Karnataka	84.00%	12.92%	1.87%	0.05%	0.16%	0.72%	0.02%	0.27%
18.	Kerala	54.73%	26.56%	18.38%	0.01%	0.01%	0.01%	0.02%	0.26%
19.	Lakshadeep	2.77%	96.58%	0.49%	0.01%	0.02%	0.02%	0.01%	0.10%
20.	Madhya Pradesh	90.89%	6.57%	0.29%	0.21%	0.30%	0.78%	0.83%	0.13%
21	Maharashtra	79.83%	11.54%	0.96%	0.20%	5.81%	1.25%	0.16%	0.25%
22	Manipur	41.39%	8.40%	41.29%	0.05%	0.25%	0.06%	8.19%	0.38%
23	Meghalaya	11.53%	4.40%	74.59%	0.10%	0.33%	0.02%	8.71%	0.32%
24	Mizoram	2.75%	1.35%	87.16%	0.03%	8.51%	0.03%	0.07%	0.09%
25	Nagaland	8.75%	2.47%	87.93%	0.10%	0.34%	0.13%	0.16%	0.12%
26	Orissa	93.63%	2.17%	2.77%	0.05%	0.03%	0.02%	1.14%	0.18%
27	Puducherry	87.30%	6.05%	6.29%	0.02%	0.04%	0.11%	0.01%	0.17%
28	Punjab	38.49%	1.93%	1.26%	57.69%	0.12%	0.16%	0.04%	0.32%
29	Rajasthan	88.49%	9.07%	0.14%	1.27%	0.02%	0.91%	0.01%	0.10%
30	Sikkim	57.76%	1.62%	9.91%	0.31%	27.39%	0.05%	2.67%	0.30%
31	Tamil Nadu	87.58%	5.86%	6.12%	0.02%	0.02%	0.12%	0.01%	0.26%
32	Tripura	83.40%	8.60%	4.35%	0.03%	3.41%	0.02%	0.04%	0.14%
33	Uttar Pradesh	79.73%	19.26%	0.18%	0.32%	0.10%	0.11%	0.01%	0.29%
34	Uttrakhand	82.97%	13.95%	0.37%	2.34%	0.15%	0.09%	0.01%	0.12%
35	West Bengal	70.54%	27.01%	0.72%	0.07%	0.31%	0.07%	1.03%	0.25%

Source: Census 2011

Table 2
GENDER BASED DISTRIBUTION OF POPULATION

Religion	Muslims	Hindus	Christians	Jains	Sikh	Buddhist
Total Population	17,22,45,156	96,62,57,353	2,78,19,588	44,51,753	2,08,33,116	84,42,972
Sex Ratio	951/1000	939/1000	1023/1000	954/1000	903/1000	965/1000
Percentage	48.7% Female	48.4% Female	49.4 % Female	48.8 % Female	47.4% Female	49.11 % Female
of Population	51.2 % Male	51.5 % Male	50.5 % Male	51.5 Male	52.55% Male	50.8 % Male

*Census 2011

Table 3
Population composition trend by religion (1951–2011)

Religion	1951 (%)	1961 (%)	1971 (%)	1981 (%)	1991 (%)	2001 (%)	2011 (%)
Hinduism	84.10	83.45	82.73	82.30	81.53	80.46	79.80
Islam	9.80	10.69	11.21	11.75	12.61	13.43	14.23
Christianity	2.30	2.44	2.60	2.44	2.32	2.34	2.30
Sikhism	1.79	1.79	1.89	1.92	1.94	1.87	1.72
Buddhism	0.74	0.74	0.70	0.70	0.77	0.77	0.70
Jainism	0.46	0.46	0.48	0.47	0.40	0.41	0.37
Zoroastrianism	0.13	0.09	0.09	0.09	0.08	0.06	NA
Others	0.43	0.43	0.41	0.42	0.44	0.72	0.90

Source: Census Reports

Table 4
List of Districts having Minority Population Above30%

S. No.	State	District	Hindus	Muslims	Christ-ans	Sikhs	Buddhists	Jains	Other religions	Not stated
1	UP	Bahraich	65.71%	33.53%	0.18%	0.24%	0.08%	0.03 %	0.00 %	0.23 %
2	UP	Balrampur	62.05%	37.51%	0.15%	0.04%	0.09%	0.01 %	0.00 %	0.15%
3	UP	Bareilly	63.64%	34.54%	0.33%	0.63%	0.10%	0.02 %	0.01 %	0.73%
4	UP	Bijnor	55.18%	43.04%	0.17%	1.37%	0.05%	0.06 %	0.00 %	0.13%
5	UP	Jyotiba Phule Nagar	58.44%	40.78%	0.32%	0.29%	0.01%	0.03 %	0.00 %	0.13%
6	UP	Saharanpur	56.74%	41.95%	0.19%	0.54%	0.06%	0.29 %	0.00 %	0.23%
7	UP	Shrawasti	68.79%	30.79%	0.13%	0.04%	0.03%	0.01 %	0.01 %	0.22%
8	AP	Hyderabad	51.89 %	43.45 %	2.22 %	0.29 %	0.03 %	0.50 %	0.05 %	1.58 %

S. No.	State	District	Hindus	Muslims	Christ-ans	Sikhs	Buddhists	Jains	Other religions	Not stated
9	Arunachal P.	Papumpare	32.30 %	3.48 %	47.80 %	0.18 %	2.70 %	0.08 %	12.79 %	0.68 %
10	Arunachal P.	Changlang	32.17 %	1.44 %	24.27 %	0.06 %	33.99 %	0.06 %	7.92 %	0.09%
11	Arunachal P.	Tirap	18.47 %	0.99 %	74.45 %	0.05 %	0.69 %	0.04 %	4.76 %	0.56 %
12	Arunachal P.	Kurung Kumey	5.28 %	0.51 %	55.59 %	0.05 %	0.13 %	0.09 %	37.10 %	1.25 %
13	Arunachal P.	West Kameng	37.24 %	2.35 %	10.08 %	0.39 %	42.99 %	0.08 %	6.62 %	0.24 %
14	Arunachal P.	East Kameng	15.67 %	0.83 %	47.19 %	0.05 %	0.57 %	0.03 %	35.41 %	0.24 %
15	Arunachal P.	Tawang	23.69 %	1.57 %	1.55 %	2.33 %	69.87 %	0.14 %	0.70 %	0.13 %
16	Assam	Barpeta	29.11 %	70.74 %	0.06 %	0.01 %	0.00 %	0.02 %	0.00 %	0.06 %
17	Assam	Bongaigaon	48.61 %	50.22 %	0.80 %	0.05 %	0.03 %	0.12 %	0.00 %	0.16 %
18	Assam	Darrang	35.25 %	64.34 %	0.18 %	0.05 %	0.01 %	0.08 %	0.00 %	0.09 %
19	Assam	Dhubri	19.92 %	79.67 %	0.21 %	0.01 %	0.01 %	0.09 %	0.00 %	0.08 %
20	Assam	Goalpara	34.51 %	57.52 %	7.72 %	0.08 %	0.02 %	0.05 %	0.01 %	0.10 %
21	Assam	Hailakandi	38.10 %	60.31 %	1.29 %	0.01 %	0.07 %	0.04 %	0.10 %	0.08 %
22	Assam	Karimganj	42.48 %	56.36 %	0.98 %	0.01 %	0.04 %	0.04 %	0.01 %	0.09 %
23	Assam	Morigaon	47.20 %	52.56 %	0.09 %	0.01 %	0.01 %	0.03 %	0.00 %	0.11 %
24	Assam	Nagaon	43.39 %	55.36 %	0.95 %	0.11 %	0.04 %	0.04 %	0.00 %	0.11 %
25	Bihar	Araria	56.68 %	42.95 %	0.15 %	0.01 %	0.01 %	0.07 %	0.00 %	0.14 %
26	Bihar	Katihar	54.85 %	44.47 %	0.28 %	0.09 %	0.01 %	0.02 %	0.07 %	0.21 %
27	Bihar	Kishanganj	31.43 %	67.98 %	0.34 %	0.02 %	0.01 %	0.09 %	0.00 %	0.13 %
28	N. E. Delhi		68.22 %	29.34 %	0. 0.92 % 41 %	0.78 %	0.11 %	1.10 %	0.00 %	0.05 %	-
29	Central Delhi		62.53 %	33.36 %	0.61 %	2.24 %	0.06 %	1.01 %	0.02 %	0.17 %	-
30	Goa	South Goa	53.34 %	9.93 %	36.21 %	0.13 %	0.08 %	0.09 %	0.01 %	0.19 %
31	Haryana	Mewat	20.37 %	79.20 %	0.11 %	0.05 %	0.05 %	0.13 %	0.00 %	0.09%
32	HP	Lahul and Spiti	36.91 %	0.23 %	0.67 %	0.11 %	62.01 %	0.01 %	0.00 %	0.06 %
33	J&K	Anantnag	1.22 %	97.99 %	0.13 %	0.57 %	0.01 %	0.00 %	0.00 %	0.08 %
34	J&K	Badgam	1.34 %	97.65 %	0.20 %	0.74 %	0.01 %	0.00 %	0.00 %	0.06 %
35	J&K	Bandipora	2.15 %	97.39 %	0.15 %	0.14 %	0.01 %	0.00 %	0.00 %	0.15 %
36	J&K	Baramula	3.04 %	95.15 %	0.15 %	1.47 %	0.01 %	0.00 %	0.00 %	0.18 %
37	J&K	Doda	45.77 %	53.82 %	0.12 %	0.10 %	0.01 %	0.01 %	0.01 %	0.18 %
38	J&K	Ganderbal	1.88 %	97.69 %	0.14 %	0.16 %	0.01 %	0.00 %	0.00 %	0.12 %
39	J&K	Kargil	7.34 %	76.87 %	0.43 %	0.83 %	14.29 %	0.02 %	0.00 %	0.21 %
39	J&K	Kishtwar	40.72 %	57.75 %	0.12 %	0.20 %	0.91 %	0.00 %	0.22 %	0.09 %
40	J&K	Kulgam	1.01 %	98.49 %	0.11 %	0.24 %	0.01 %	0.01 %	0.00 %	0.14 %
41	J&K	Kupwara	4.27 %	94.59 %	0.20 %	0.64 %	0.01 %	0.00 %	0.00 %	0.29 %
42	J&K	Leh	17.14 %	14.28 %	0.49 %	0.82 %	66.40 %	0.08 %	0.04 %	0.75 %
43	J&K	Pulwama	2.47 %	95.49 %	0.20 %	1.68 %	0.01 %	0.00 %	0.00 %	0.15 %
44	J&K	Punch	6.84 %	90.45 %	0.20 %	2.35 %	0.02 %	0.00 %	0.00 %	0.15 %
45	J&K	Rajouri	34.54 %	62.71 %	0.15 %	2.41 %	0.03 %	0.00 %	0.00 %	0.15 %
46	J&K	Ramban	28.56 %	70.68 %	0.15 %	0.27 %	0.02 %	0.00 %	0.09 %	0.25 %

S. No.	State	District	Hindus	Muslims	Christ-ans	Sikhs	Buddhists	Jains	Other religions	Not stated
47	J&K	Reasi	48.91 %	49.66 %	0.38 %	0.99 %	0.00 %	0.00 %	0.00 %	0.05 %
48	J&K	Srinagar	3.44 %	95.19 %	0.22 %	0.99 %	0.02 %	0.01 %	0.00 %	0.13 %
49	Jharkhand	Gumla	30.19 %	5.02 %	19.75 %	0.02 %	0.05 %	0.00 %	44.62 %	0.34 %
50	Jharkhand	Khunti	26.11 %	2.47 %	25.65 %	0.01 %	0.05 %	0.03 %	45.37 %	0.32 %
51	Jharkhand	Simdega	33.61	2.52 %	51.14 %	0.01 %	0.13 %	0.02 %	12.33 %	0.25 %
52	Karnataka	Dakshina Kannada	67.18 %	24.02 %	8.20 %	0.03 %	0.02 %	0.50 %	0.01 %	0.05 %
53	Kerala	Malappuram	27.60 %	70.24 %	1.98 %	0.00 %	0.00 %	0.00 %	0.01 %	0.15 %
54	Kerala	Thiruvanan-thapuram	66.46 %	13.72 %	19.10 %	0.01 %	0.01 %	0.00 %	0.03 %	0.67 %
55	Kerala	Kozhikode	56.21 %	39.24 %	4.26 %	0.01 %	0.01 %	0.02 %	0.02 %	0.23 %
56	Kerala	Palakkad	66.76 %	28.93 %	4.07 %	0.01 %	0.01 %	0.00 %	0.01 %	0.20 %
57	Kerala	Kollam	64.42 %	19.30 %	16.00 %	0.01 %	0.01 %	0.00 %	0.02 %	0.25 %
58	Kerala	Alappuzha	68.64 %	10.55 %	20.45 %	0.01 %	0.01 %	0.00 %	0.01 %	0.33 %
59	Kerala	Kottayam	49.81 %	6.41 %	43.48 %	0.01 %	0.02 %	0.00 %	0.03 %	0.23 %
60	Kerala	Wayanad	49.48 %	28.65 %	21.34%	0.01 %	0.04 %	0.22 %	0.03 %	0.23 %
61	Lakshadweep	Lakshadweep	2.77 %	96.58 %	0.49 %	0.01 %	0.02 %	0.02 %	0.01 %	0.10 %

Source: Census Report 2011

List of Muslim Other Backward Classes communities in India as per Central List and State List.

Below is a list of Muslim communities that have been accorded Other Backward Classes status by the Government of India in the state of Andhra Pradesh.[3]

Entry number	Caste/community	Resolution no. and date
*37	Mehtar	12011/68/93-BCC(C) dt. 10 September 1993 and 12011/9/2004- BCC dt. 16 January 2006
*43	Dudekula Laddaf, Pinjari or Noorbash (Muslim)	12011/68/93-BCC(C) dt. 10 September 1993
*62	Arekatika, Katika, Quresh (Muslim butchers)	12011/68/93-BCC(C) dt. 10 September 1993 and 12011/4/2002- BCC dt. 13 January 2004
*33	(Muslim butchers)	12011/68/93-BCC(C) dt. 10 September 93 and 12011/4/2002- BCC dt. 13 January 2004

State list
list of Muslim communities that have been accorded Other Backward Classes status by the Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka state government:

1. Achchukattalavandlu, Singali, Singamvallu, Achchupanivallu, Achchukattuvaru, Achukatlavandlu.

2. Attar Saibulu, Attarollu

3. Dhobi Muslim / Muslim Dhobi / Dhobi Musalman, Turka Chakla or Turka Sakala, Turaka Chakali, Tulukka Vannan, Tsakalas, Sakalas or Chakalas, Muslim Rajakas

4. Faqir, Fhakir Budbudki, Ghanti Fhakir, Ghanta Fhakirlu, Turaka Budbudki, Darvesh, Fakeer

5. Garadi Muslim, Garadi Saibulu, Pamulavallu, Kani-kattuvallu, Garadollu, Garadiga

6. Gosangi Muslim, Phakeer Sayebulu

7. Guddi Eluguvallu, Elugu Bantuvallu, Musalman Keelu Gurralavallu

8. Hajjam, Nai, Nai Muslim, Navid

9. Labbi, Labbai, Labbon, Labba

10. Pakeerla, Borewale, Deera Phakirlu, Bonthala

11. Qureshi / Qassab, Kureshi / Khureshi, Khasab, Marati Khasab, Muslim Katika, Khatik Muslim

12. Siddi, Yaba, Habshi, Jasi

13. Turaka Kasha, Kakkukotte Zinka Saibulu, Chakkitakanevale, Terugadu Gontalavaru, Thirugatigantla, Rollaku Kakku Kottevaru, Pattar Phodulu, Chakketakare, Thuraka Kasha

14. Other Muslim groups, excluding Mughal, Moghal, Vip, Irani, Bohara, Bohra, Cutchi-Memon, Jamayat, Navayath

Assam

1. Maimal

2. Pangal

3. Maimal (Saikh)

4. Jolha

5. Maria (M-0BC)

Bihar

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Central list

List of Muslim communities that have been accorded Other Backward
Classes status by the Government of India in the state of Bihar.

</div>

Entry Number	Caste/community	Resolution no. and date
*1	Abdal	12011/68/93-BCC(C) dt. 10 September 1993
*5	Kasab (Kasai) (Muslim)	-do-
*9	Kalandar	12011/68/93-BCC(C) dt. 10.09.9bbbbsss
*16	Kagzi	12011/68/93-BCC(C) dt. 10 September 1993
*30	Gaddi	-do-
*38	Chik (Muslim)	12011/68/93-BCC(C) dt. 10 September 93 and 12011/21/95-BCC dt. 15 May 1995
*42	Churihar (Muslim)	-do-
*46	Dafali (Muslim)	-do-bhagi
*53	Teli	
*57	Dhobi (Muslim)	-do-
*58	Dhunia (Muslim)	-do-
*63	Nat (Muslim)	-do-
*67	Nalband (Muslim)	-do-
*68	Pamaria (Muslim)	-do-
*84	Bhathiara (Muslim)	-do-
*91	Madari (Muslim)	12011/68/93-BCC(C) dt. 10 September 93
*92	Mehtar, Lal Begi, (Muslim) Halalkhor, Bhangi	-do-
*93	Miriasin (Muslim)	12011/68/93-BCC(C) dt. 10 September 93 and 12011/21/95-BCC dt. 15May 1995
*99	Mukri (Mukeri) (Muslim)	-do-
*102	Mirshikar (Muslim)	-do-
*103	Momin / Ansari (Muslim)	12011/68/93-BCC(C) dt. 10 September 93 and 12015/15/2008- BCC dt. 16 June 2011, 12015/15/2008- BCC dt.16/06/2011
*109	Rangrez (Muslim)	12011/68/93-BCC(C) dt. 10 September 93 and 12011/21/95- BCC dt. 15 May 1995
*111	Rayeen or Kunjra (Muslim)	-do-

Entry Number	Caste/community	Resolution no. and date
*119	Idrisi or Darzi (Muslim)	12011/68/93-BCC(C) dt. 10 September 93 and 12011/21/95- BCC dt. 15 May 1995
*124b	Kalal, Kalwar, Kalar or Araqi	-do-
*125	Kulahia	-do-
*126	Shershahbadi	-do-
*129	Saikalgar (Sikligar) (Muslim)	12011/4/2004-BCC dt. 13 January 2004
*130	Bakho (Muslim)	12011/9/2004-BCC dt. 17 January 2006
*131	Thakurai (Muslim)	12011/9/2004-BCC dt. 17 January 2006
*132	Shariff	-

State List

Below is a list of Muslim communities that have been accorded OBC status by the state government of Bihar:

Sl. No.	Name of the castes/sub-castes/synonyms	Entry number in the Communities Central List
*1	Abdal(Muslim)	1
*6	Bakho (Muslim)	130
*15	Bhathiara (Muslim)	84
*22	Chik (Muslim)	38
*25	Pathani Manihar	-
*26	Dafali (Muslim)	46
*35	Dhobi (Muslim)	57
*36	Dhunia (Muslim)	58
*37	Gaddi (Muslim)	30
*46	Idrisi or Darzi (Muslim)	119
*50	Kagzi (Muslim)	16
*51	Kalandar(Muslim)	9
*52b	Kalar or Kalal	124b
*56	Kasab (Kasai) (Muslim)	5
*76	Madari (Muslim)	91
*77	Mehtar, Lal Begi, Halalkhor, (Muslim)	92

Sl. No.	Name of the castes/sub-castes/synonyms	Entry number in the Communities Central List
*86	Miriasin (Muslim)	93
*87	Mirshikar (Muslim)	102
*88	Momin (Muslim)	103
*89	Mukri (Mukeri) (Muslim)	99
*92	Nat (Muslim)	63
*99	Pamaria (Muslim)	68
*109	Rangrez (Muslim)	109
*111	Rayeen or Kujra (Muslim)	111
*114	Sayee (Muslim)	116
*115	Malik (Muslim)	76
*1126	Shershahbadi (Muslim)	126
*126	Thakuraibjgsxfxxz (Muslim)	131
*131	Saikalgar (Sikligar) (Muslim)	129

Dadra and Nagar Haveli

1. Makrani
2. Chippi

Delhi

Below is a list of Muslim communities that have been accorded Other Backward Classes status by the Government of India in Delhi.[7]

Central list

Entry No.	Caste/community	Resolution no. and date
*1	Mohd Rafi Abbasi village Gasupur bayabugrasi	12011/7/95-BCC dated 24 May 1995
*4	Arain, Rayee, Kunjra	-do-
*11	Bazigar, Nat, Kalandar (excluding those in Sch. Caste)	-do-
*13	Bhat	12011/7/95-BCC dt. 24 May 1995
*14	Bhatiara	-do-

Entry No.	Caste/community	Resolution no. and date
*15	Chak	-do-
*16	Chippi, Tonk, Darzi, Idrishi1	12011/7/95-BCC dt. 24 May 1995 and 12011/04/2002-BCC dt. 19 June 2003
*19	Dhobi (other than those who are already included in the list of Scheduled Castes of Delhi) Qassar1	12011/7/95-BCC dt. 24 May 1995 and 12011/68/98-BCC dt. 27 October 1999
*20	Dhunia, Pinjara, Kandera-Karan, Dhunnewala, Naddaf, Mansoori3	12011/7/95-BCC dt. 24 May 1995, 12011/7/95-BCC dt.17 July 1995 and 12011/04/2002-BCC dt. 19 June 2003.
*21	Fakir	12011/7/95-BCC dt. 24 May 1995.
*22	Gadaria, Gadheri, Gaddi, Garri4	-do-
*23	Ghasiara, Ghosi5	-do-
*24	Gujar, Gurjar6	-do-
*25	Jogi, Goswami7	-do-
*26	Julaha (whose traditional occupation isweaving, excluding those in Scs)	12011/7/95-BCC dt. 24 May 1995, 12011/04/2002-BCCdt. 19 June 2003 and 12015/13/2010-B.C.II dt. 8December 2011.
*28	Kasai, Qassab, Quraishi	-do-
*31	Khatik (excluding those in Sch. Caste)8	-do-
*32	Kumhar, Prajapati9	-do-
*34	Lakhera, Manihar	-do-
*36	Luhar, Bhubhalia, Saifi10	12011/7/95-BCC dt. 24 May 1995 and 12011/68/1998- BCC dt. 27 October 1999
*37	Machi, Machhera11	12011/7/95-BCC dt. 24 May 1995
*39	Memar, Raj12	-do-
*41	Merasi, Mirasi	-do-
*42	Mochi (excluding those in Sch. Caste)13	-do-
*43	Nai, Hajjam, Nai (Sabita), Salmani	12011/7/95-BCC dt. 24 May 1995 and 12011/04/2002-BCC dt. 19 June 2003
*44	Nalband	12011/7/95-BCC dt. 24 May 1995
*45	Naqqal	-do-
*46	Pakhiwara	-do-
*49	Rangrez	-do-
*50	Sunar	-do-
*51	Teli, Teli-Malik14	12011/7/95-BCC dt. 24 May 1995 and 12011/68/1998-BCC dt. 27 October 1999

Notes:

1. Only the Darzi community are Muslims.
2. Only Muslim Dhobis are in the OBC list; the Hindu section have Scheduled Caste status.
3. Mansoori is the preferred self-designation for the Dhunia community
4. Only the Gaddi community are Muslims.
5. Only the Ghosi community are Muslims.
6. Largely Hindu community with a small Muslim minority
7. Largely Hindu community with a small Muslim minority
8. Largely Hindu community with a small Muslim minority
9. Partly Hindu and partly Muslim community
10. The Saifi are Muslim Lohars.
11. Largely Muslim community with a small Hindu minority
12. Largely Muslim community with a small Hindu minority
13. Only Muslim Mochis are in the OBC list; the Hindu section have Scheduled Caste status.
13. Largely Hindu community with a small Muslim minority
14. The Teli Maliks are Muslims.

State list

List of Muslim communities that have been accorded OBC status by the state government of Delhi.[8]

Entry Number	Caste/community
*1	Abbasi, Bhishti, Sakka
*4	Arain, Rayee, Kunjra
*11	Bazigar, Nat, Kalandar (excluding those in Sch. Caste)
*14	Bhatiara
*15	Chak
*16	Chippi, Tonk, Darzi, Idrishi, Chhimba 1
*19	Dhobi (other than those who are already included in the list of Scheduled Castes of Delhi) Qassar2
*20	Dhunia, Pinjara, Kandera-Karan, Dhunnewala, Naddaf, Mansoori3
*21	Fakir, Alvi4

Entry Number	Caste/community
*24	Gujar, Gurjar5
*26	Julaha, Ansari (whose traditional occupation is weaving, excluding those in Scs)
*28	Kasai, Qassab, Quraishi
*31	Khatik (excluding those in Sch. Caste)6
*32	Kumhar, Prajapati7
*34	Khakhora, Manihar
*36	Luhar, Bhubhalia, Saifi 8
*37	Machi, Machhera9
*39	Memar, Raj10
*40	Mina/ Meena
*41	Merasi, Mirasi
*42	Mochi (excluding those in Sch. Caste)11
*43	Nai, Hajjam, Nai(Sabita), Salmani
*44	Nalband
*45	Naqqal
*46	Pakhiwara
*49	Rangrez
*51	Sunar12
*52	Teli13
*54	Jat14
*60	Meo

Notes:

1. Only the Darzi community are Muslims.
2. Only Muslim Dhobis are in the OBC list; the Hindu section have Scheduled Caste status.
3. Mansoori is the preferred self-designation for the Dhunia community
4. Alvi is now the preferred self-designation of the Faqir community, but not all Alvis are Faqirs.
5. largely Hindu community with a small Muslim minority
6. largely Hindu community with a small Muslim minority
7. Partly Hindu and partly Muslim community
8. the Saifi are Muslim Lohars
9. largely Muslim community with a small Hindu minority
10. largely Muslim community with a small Hindu minority
11. Only Muslim Mochis are in the OBC list; the Hindu section have Scheduled Caste status.
.12 largely Hindu community with a small Muslim minority
13 largely Muslim community with a small Hindu minority
14 largely Hindu community with a small Muslim minority

Gujarat

list of Muslim communities that have been accorded Other Backward Classes status in Gujarat.[9]

Sl. No.	Name of the castes/ sub-castes/synonyms	Resolution no. and date
*3	Bafan (Muslim)	-do-
*13	Chunara 1	-do-
*19	Dafer (Hindu & Muslim)	-do-
*19	Fakir or Faquir (Muslim)	-do-
*20	Gadhai (Muslim)	-do-
*22	Galiara (Muslim)	12011/68/93-BCC(C) dt. 10 September 1993 and12011/21/95-BCC dt. 15 May 1995
*23a	Ghanchi (Muslim)	12011/68/93-BCC(C) dated 10 September 1993
*26	Hingora (Muslim)	-do-
*27a	Julaya, Ansari (Muslim)	12011/21/95-BCC dt. 15 May 1995
*27b	Garana, Tariya Tari (Muslim)	12011/88/98-BCC dt. 6 December 1999
*28	Jat (Muslim)	12011/68/93-BCC(C) dt. 10 September 1993
*32	Khatki or Kasai Chamadia Khatki Halari Khatki (all Muslim)	-do-
*35	Kharwa-Bhadela	-do-
*40	Mir Dhadhi, Langha, Mirasi (all Muslim)	-do-
*44	Makrani (Muslim) -do-	
*45	Matwa or Matwa-Kureshi (Muslim), Gavli (Hindu)	-do-
*46	Me or Meta	-do-
*49	Miyana, Miana (Muslim)	-do-
*54	Pinjara, Ghanchi-Pinjara and Mansuri-Pinjara(all Muslim)	-do-
*59	Sandhi (Muslim)	12011/68/93-BCC(C) dt. 10 September 1993
*64	Siddi (where they are not Scheduled Tribes)	-do-

Sl. No.	Name of the castes/ sub-castes/synonyms	Resolution no. and date
*65	Sipahi, Patni Jamat and Turk Jamat (all Muslim)	-do-
*70	Theba (Muslim)	-do-
*73b	Hajjam (Muslim), Khalipha (Muslim), Babar(Hindu)	12011/44/96-BCC dated 6 December 1996
*76	Vanzara and Kangsiwala (Hindu) and Vanzara(Muslim) of Dangs district only	-do-
*78	Wagher (Hindu and Muslim)	12011/68/93-BCC(C) dated 10 September 1993
*80	Pakhali2	12011/44/96-BCC dated 6 December 1999
*82b	Baghban, Rayeen	12011/36/99-BCC dated 4 April 2000
*91	Luhar/Lohar/Panchal3	-do-
*96	Bharbhunja	12011/36/99-BCC dated 4 April 2000
*97	Chhipa4	12015/9/2000-BCC dated 6 September 2001
*101	Arab (Muslim)	12015/15/2008-BCC dated 16 June 2011
*103	Somra, sumra (Muslim)'	-do-

Notes:

1. The Chunara include a Muslim minority.
2. The Pakhali are known as Bhishti elsewhere in India.
3. The Lohar are partly Muslim.
4. The Chhipa are largely Muslim

Haryana

Central list

Below is a list of Muslim communities that have been accorded Other Backward Classes status by the Government of India in Haryana.[10]

Sl. No.	Name of the castes/ sub-castes/synonyms	Resolution no. and date
*10	Bhat, Bhatra, Darpi, Ramaiya 1	12015/36/1999-BCC dt. 4 April 2000 and 12015/9/2000-BCC dt. 6 September 2001
*12	Changar	-do-

Sl. No.	Name of the castes/ sub-castes/synonyms	Resolution no. and date
*17	Dhobi2	-do-
*19	Dhimar, Mallah, Kashyap-Rajpoot, Kahar,Jhinwar or Jhiwar, Dhiwar, Khewat, Mehra,Nishad, Sakka, Bhisti, Sheikh-Abbasi 3	12011/68/93-BCC(C) dt.10 September 1993, 12011/68/98-BCC dt. 27 October 1999 and 12015/2/2007-BCC dt. 18 August 2010
*21	Faquir	12011/68/93-BCC(C)dt. 10 September 1993
*24	Ghasi, Ghasiara or Ghosi 4	12011/68/93-BCC(C) dt. 10 September 1993 and12011/21/95-BCC dt. 15 May 1995
*29	Hajjam, Nai, Nais, Sain, Salmani5	12011/68/93-BCC(C) t. 10 September 1993, 12011/68/98-BCC t. 27 October 1999 and12015/2/2007-BCC dt. 18 August 2010
*32	Kanjar or Kanchan6	12011/68/93-BCC(C) dt. 10 September 1993
*35	Kamboj7	-do-
*39	Lakhera rajpoot, Manihar siddiqui, Kacheratomar8	12011/68/93-BCC(C) dt. 10 September 1993 and 12015/2/2007-BCC dt. 18 August 2010
*40	Lohar or Luhar, Saifi, Panchal9	12011/68/93-BCC(C) dt. 10 September 1993, 12011/68/98-BCC dt. 27 October 1999 and 12011/44/99-BCC dt. 21 September 2000
*41	Madari	12011/68/93-BCC(C) dt. 10 September 1993
*42	Mochi (excluding those who are included inScheduled Castes)10	-do-
*43	Mirasi	12011/68/93-BCC(C) dt. 10 September 1993
*46	Nalband	12011/68/93-BCC(C)dt. 10 September 1993
*47	Pinja, Penja	12011/68/93-BCC(C) dt. 10 September 1993
*53	Singlikant or Singikant, Singiwala11	12011/68/93-BCC(C) dt. 10 September 1993 and12011/21/95-BCC dt. 15 May 1995
*54	Sunar, Zaragar, Soni12	12011/68/93-BCC(C) dt. 10 September 1993 and12011/44/99-BCC dt. 21 September 2000
*56	Teli13	-do-
*57	Vanzara, Banzara, Banjara or Vanjara 14	12011/68/93-BCC(C) dt. 10 September 1993 and12015/2/2007-BCC dt. 18 August 2010
*61	Nat (other than those who are already includedin the List of Scheduled Castes for Haryana) 15	12011/44/96-BCC dt. 6 December 1996

Sl. No.	Name of the castes/ sub-castes/synonyms	Resolution no. and date
*67	Meo	12011/44/96-BCC dt. 6 December 1996
*68	Gujjar16	-do-
*71	Rangrez, Nilgar, Leelgar, Lallari	-do-
*73	Soni (Dawala), Nyaria17	12011/36/99-BCC dt. 4 April 2000 and 12015/9/2000-BCC dt. 6 September 2001
*74	Julaha (Muslim), Momin Ansari18	12015/36/1999-BCC dt. 4 April 2000 and 12015/9/2000-BCC dt. 6 September 2001

Notes:

1. The Bhat include a Muslim minority.

2. The Dhobi include a small Muslim minority.

3. The Sheikh-Abbasi include a small Muslim minority.

4. The Ghosi are Muslim.

5. The Hajjam or Salmani are Muslim.

6. The Kanjar include a Muslim minority.

7. The Kamboh include a Muslim minority.

8. The Manihar are Muslim.

9. The Saifi are Muslim Lohar.

10. Only Muslim Mochis are in the OBC list; the Hindu section have Scheduled Caste status.

11. The Singiwala are partly Muslim.

12. The Zaragar Muslim Sonar

13. The Haryana Teli are almost entirely Muslim.

14. The Banjara are partly Muslim.

15. Only Muslim Nat are in the OBC list; the Hindu section has Scheduled Caste status.

16. The Gujjar are only partly Muslim.

17. The Nyaria are partly Muslim sections.

18. Ansari are Muslim Julaha (weaver).

Himachal Pradesh

This is a list of Muslim communities that have been accorded Other Backward Classes status in the state of Himachal Pradesh, India.[11]

Sl. No.	Name of the castes/ sub-castes/synonyms	Resolution no. and date
*13	Changar	-do-
*18	Faquir	-do-
*26	Hajjam, Nai1	12015/2/2007-BCC dt. 18 August 2010
*30	Kumhar, Prajapati, Kumbar, Ghumar, Ghumhar2	12015/2/2007-BCC dt. 18 August 2010
*32	Kanjar, Kanchan3	-do-

Sl. No.	Name of the castes/ sub-castes/synonyms	Resolution no. and date
*36	Madari	-do-
*37	Mirasi	-do-
*41	Nalband	-do-
*43	Pinja or Penja, Panja, Nadaf, Nadaaf	-do- and 12015/2/2007-BCC dt. 18 August 2010
*48	Gujjar or Gujar (in merged areas only)4	12011/68/93-BCC(C) dt. 10 September 1993 and 12011/21/95-BCC dt. 15 May 1995
*49	Julaha, Ansari5 (other than those included in the list of SCs)2	12015/36/1999-BCC dt. 4 April 2000 and 12015/9/2000- BCC dt. 6 September 2001

Notes:

1. The Hajjam are Muslim Nai.
2. The Ghumar are Punjabi speaking Muslim Kumhar.
3. The Kanjar include a Muslim minority.
4. Most Muslim Gujjar in Himachal Pradesh have Scheduled Tribe status.
5. The Ansari are Muslim; most Himachal Pradesh Julaha are Kabirpanth.
6. The Muslim Mallah caste are included in the OBC state list.

Sl. No.	Name of the castes/ sub-castes/synonyms	Resolution no. and date
*1	Bahach Hanjie and Shikara Wallas (excluding house-boatowners)	12011/7/95-BCC dated 24 April 1995
*3	Hajam (barbers) (rural only)	-do-
*4	Bhand	-do-
*5	Dambali Faqir	-do-
*6	Doom (excluding those in Scheduled Castes)	-do-
*7	Fishermen including Gada Hanz	-do-
*10	Kulfaqir	-do-
*11	Kumhar, Kumahar (village potters)	-do-
*12	Madari, Bazigar	-do-
*13	Mirasi	-do-
*15	Shaksaz	-do-
*16	Shoe-repairers (working without the aid of machines)	-do-

Sl. No.	Name of the castes/ sub-castes/synonyms	Resolution no. and date
*17	Shupri Wattal (excluding those in Sch. Caste)	-do-
*19	Teli, Teeli 1	-do-
*20	Village washermen	-do-
*21	Lohar, Tarkhan2	12015/9/2000-BCC dated 6September 2001

Notes:

1. largely Hindu community with a small Muslim minority
2. Largely Hindu community with a small Muslim minority

Madhya Pradesh

Central list

Below is a list of Muslim communities that have been accorded OBC status by the Government of India in the state of Madhya Pradesh.[13]

Sl. No.	Name of the castes/ sub-castes/synonyms	Resolution no. and date
*59	Islamic groups	
*1	Rangrej	12011/68/93-BCC(C) dt. 10 September 1993
*2	Bhisthi, Bhishti-Abbasi	12011/68/93-BCC(C) dt. 10 September 1993 12011/21/1995-BCC dt. 15May 1995 and 12011/36/99-BCC dt. 4 April 2000
*3	Chippa/Chhipa	12011/68/93-BCC(C) dt. 10 September 1993
*4	Hela	12011/68/93-BCC(C) dt. 10 September 1993 and 12011/21/95-BCC dt.15 May 1995
*5	Bhatiyara	12011/68/93-BCC(C) dt. 10 September 1993
*6	Dhobi	-do-
*7	Mewati, Meo	12011/68/93-BCC(C) dt. 10 September 1993 and 12011/68/98-BCC dt.27 October 1999
*8	Pinjara, Naddaf,Fakir/Faquir, Behna,Dhuniya, Dhunkar, Mansoori	12011/68/93-BCC(C) dt. 10 September 1993, 12011/21/95-BCC dt. 15May 1995 and 12011/88/98
*9	Kunjara, Raine	12011/68/93-BCC(C) dt. 10 September 1993 and 12011/68/98-BCC dt.27 October 1999
*10	Manihar	12011/68/93-BCC(C) dt. 10 September 1993 and12011/21/1995-BCC dt. 15 May 1995

Sl. No.	Name of the castes/ sub-castes/synonyms	Resolution no. and date
*11	Kasai, Kasab, Kassab, Qussab, Qassab-Qurreshi	12011/68/93-BCC(C) dt. 10 September 1993, 12011/21/95-BCC dt. 15May 1995 and 12011/36/99-BCC dt. 4 April 2000
*12	Mirasi	12011/68/93-BCC(C) dt. 10 September 1993
*13	Barhai (carpenter)	-do-
*14	Hajjam(Barber), Nai (barber), Salmani	12011/68/93-BCC(C) dt. 10 September 1993, 12011/21/95-BCC dt. 15May 1995, 12011/68/98-BCC dt. 27 October 1999 and 12011/88/98-BCCdt. 6 December 1999
*15 •	Julaha-Momin, Julaha- Ansari, Momin-Ansari	12011/68/93-BCC(C) dt. 10 September 1993, 12011/21/1995-BCC dt. 15May 1995, 12011/36/99-BCC dt. 4 April 2000 and 12015/9/2000-BCC dt.6 September 2001
*16	Luhar, Saifi, Nagauri Luhar, Multani Luhar	12011/68/93-BCC(C) dt. 10 September 1993, 12011/68/98-BCC dt. 27October 1999 and 12011/36/99-BCC dt. 4 April 2000
*17	Tadavi	12011/68/93-BCC(C) dt. 10 September 1993
*18	Banjara, Mukeri, Makrani	12011/68/93-BCC(C) dt. 10 September 1993 and12011/44/99-BCC dt. 21 September 2000
*19	Mochi	12011/68/93-BCC(C) dt. 10 September 1993
*20	Teli, Nayata, Pindari(Pindara)	-do- and 12011/21/1995-BCC dt. 15 May 1995
*21	Kalaigar	12011/88/98-BCC dt. 6 December 1999
*22	Pemdi	-do-
*23	Nalband	-do-
*24	Mirdha (excluding JatMuslims)	12011/88/98-BCC dt. 6 December 1999
*25	Nat (other than those	12011/36/99-BCC dt. 4 April 2000
*59	Islamic groups	
*26	Niyargar, Niyargar, Niyaria	12011/36/99
*27	Gaddi	-do-

2. Attar
3. Bagwan
4. Chhaparband
5. Dhawad
6. Darwesi
7. Fakir Bhandarwala
8. Gavandi
9. Gavil Muslim
10. Khateek
11. Mansoori
12. Muslim Madari
13. Nalba
14. Naqqash
15. Nilgar
16. Pan Faroshs
17. Putligar
18. Sanpagarudi
19. Qassab
20. Muslim Teli
21. Muslim Maniyar, Manyar, Bangdiwala, Caste No. 309
22. Mujawar, Caste No. 339
23. Tamboli
24. Muslim Beldar, Caste No. 330
25. Muslim Julaha Ansari
26. Muslim Teli sSamaj

Punjab

Below is a list of Muslim communities granted OBC status in the Government of India in the state of Punjab.[14]

Sl. No.	Caste/community	Resolution no. and date
*4	Changar	12011/9/1994-BCC dated 10 September 1993
*8	Kanjar or Kanchan1	-do-
*20	Kumhar / Ghumiar, Prajapati / Parjapatra1	12011/9/1994-BCC dt. 10 September 1993, 12011/21/95-BCC dt. 15 May 1995 and 12011/4/2002-BCC dt. 13January 2004
*23	Kamboh3	-do-
*36	Faqir	12011/9/1994-BCC dt. 10 September 1993 and 12011/21/95-BCC dt. 15 May 1995
*41	Hajjam, Nai4	12011/9/1994-BCC dt. 10 September 1993
*48		12011/9/1994-BCC dt. 10 September 1993 and12011/21/95-BCC dt. 15 May 1995
*50	Madari	-do-
*51	Lohar, Saifi, Ramgarhia Turkhan (removed from here and now included with Entry No. 40)5	12011/68/98-BCC dt. 27 October 1999

Sl. No.	Caste/community	Resolution no. and date
*52	Mochi (other than Scheduled Castes)6	12011/9/1994-BCC dt. 10 September 1993
*53	Mirasi	-do-
*55	Nalband	-do-
*57	Pinja, Penja	12011/9/1994-BCC dt. 10 September 1993 and 12011/21/95-BCC dt. 15 May 1995
*60	Teli	-do-
*62	Gujjar7	12011/9/1994-BCC dt. 10 September 1993
*64	Arain	-do-

Notes:

1. largely Hindu community with a small Muslim minority
2. The Ghumiar are Punjabi speaking Muslim Kumhars.
3. Largely Hindu community with a small Muslim minority in Malerkotla
4. The Hajjam are Muslim Nais.
5. The Saifis are Muslim Lohar.
6. Only Muslim Mochis are on the OBC list; the Hindu and Sikh section have Scheduled Caste status.
7. Largely Hindu community with a small minority of Muslim nomadic Gujjars

Rajasthan

Central list

List of Muslim communities who have been granted Other Backward Class status by the Government of India in the state of Rajasthan.[15]

Sl. No.	Caste/community	Resolution no. and date
*3	Badhai, Jangir, Khati, Kharadi, Suthar, Tarkhan1	12011/9/94-BCC dt. 19 October 1994 and 12011/68/98-BCC dt. 27 October 1999
*5	Banjara, Baladia, Labana2	-do-
*6	Bharbhunja3	-do-
*8	Chhipa (Chhipi), Nama, Bhavsar4	12011/9/94-BCC dt. 19 October 1994 and 12011/88/98-BCC dt.6 December 1999
*12	Darzi	12011/9/94-BCC dated 19 October 1994
*14	Dhivar, Kahar, Bhoi, Sagarvanshi-Mali, Keer, Mallah, Mehra, Nishad, Bhisti5	12011/9/94- BCC dt. 19 October 1994 12015/15/2008- BCC dt.16 June 2011

Sl. No.	Caste/community	Resolution no. and date
*15	Gaderia(Gadri), Ghosi (Gvala), Gaddi, Gayri6	12011/9/94-BCC dt. 19 October 1994 12011/36/99-BCC dt. 4April 2000 12015/9/2000-BCC dt. 6 September 2001 12015/15/2008- BCC dt. 16 June 2011
*17	Ghanchi	-do-
*19	Gujjar7	-do-
*20	Hela8	-do-
*22	Jogi, Nath9	12011/9/94-BCC dt. 19 October 1994
*23	Julaha (Hindu and Muslim)	-do-
*27	Kandera, Pinjara, Mansoori10	12011/9/94-BCC dt. 19 October 1994 and 12011/68/98-BCC dt.27 October 1999
*30a	Kumhar11	12011/9/94-BCC dt. 19 October 1994
*31	12	12011/9/94-BCC dt. 19 October 1994 and 12011/68/98-BCC dt.27 October 1999
*33	Lohar, Panchal13	12011/9/94-BCC dt. 19 October 1994
*35	daar (Muslim) Mali, Bagwan, Rayee/Rayeen, Kunjra14	12011/9/94-BCC dt. 19 October 1994, 12011/68/98-BCC dt. 27October 1999 and 12011/36/99-BCC dt. 4 April 2000
*36	Mer (Mehrat-Kathat, Mehrat-Ghodat, Cheeta)15	12011/9/94-BCC dt. 19 October 1994
*37	Mirasi, Dhadi	-do-
*39	Nai, Sain, Baid Nai16	12011/9/94-BCC dt. 19 October 1994 and 12011/88/98-BCC dt.6 December 1999
*40	Nyaria	12011/9/94-BCC dt. 19 October 1994
*53	Sakka-Bhishti, Saqqa-Bhishti, Bhishti-Abbasi	12011/68/98-BCC dated 27 October 1999
*54	Mochi17 (other than those who are included in the List of Scheduled Castes for Rajasthan)	-do-
*55	Dhobi18 (other than those who are included in the List of Scheduled Castes for Rajasthan)	12011/68/98-BCC dt. 27 October 1999
*56	Rangrez, Nilgar	-do-
*57	Chungar	-do-

Sl. No.	Caste/community	Resolution no. and date
*58	Jat (except in Bharatpur and Dhaulpur Districts)	-do-
*60	Faqir / Faquir (Kadiris Chistis and Naqshbandias are not included)	-do-
*61	chut	12011/36/99-BCC dated 4 April 2000
*62	Silawat (except Sompura Murtikar)	12011/4/2002-BCC dated 19 June 2003
*64	Bhatiara	-do-
*66	Mev	12015/15/2008- BCC dated 16 June 2011
*67	Sindhi Musalman	12015/15/2008- BCC dated 16 June 2011
*68	Deshwali	12015/15/2008- BCC dated 16 June 2011

Notes:

1. The Barhai and Suthar are largely Hindu communities with a small Muslim minority.

2. The Banjara include a small Muslim minority.

3. The Bharbhunja include a small Muslim minority.

4. The Chhipa are Muslim.

5. The Bhishti are Muslim, while Mallah include a Muslim minority.

6. The Ghosi and Gaddi are Muslim.

7. The Gujjar are only partly Muslim.

8. Only Muslim Bhangis such as the Hela are in the OBC list; the Hindu sections have Scheduled Caste]status.

9. The Jogi are only partly Muslim.

10. The Kandera are partly Muslim, while the Pinjara are entirely Muslim.

11. The Kumhar are partly Muslim sections.

12. The Manihar are Muslim.

13. The Lohar are partly Muslim.

14. The Bagwan are Muslim Mali, while the Rayeen or Kunjra are entirely Muslim.

15. The Merat and Cheetahs are Muslims.

16. The Nai are partly Muslim.

17. Only Muslim Mochis are in the OBC list; the Hindu section have Scheduled Caste status.

18. Only Muslim Dhobis are in the OBC list; the Hindu section have Scheduled Caste status.

Explanation: In the above list for the State of Rajasthan, all castes, which are known by the name of their respective traditional hereditary occupations and whose members follow different religions, include all members of those castes, irrespective of whether they follow the Hindu religion or Islam or any other religion

(Vide Resolution No. 12011/4/2002-BCC dt. 19 June 2003).

State List

This is a list of Muslim communities accorded OBC status by the state government of Rajasthan, India.[16]

Entry number	Caste/community
*5	Banjara, Baladia, Labana1
*6	Badhai, Jangir, Khati, Kharadi, Suthar, Tarkhan2
*7	Bharbhunja3
*8	Chhipa (Chhipi), Nama, Bhavsar4
*12	Darzi
*15	Gaderia(Gadri), Gayri, Ghosi (Gvala)5
*17	Ghanchi
*20	Gujjar6
*21	Hela 7
*23	Julaha
*27	Kandera, Pinjara8
*31	Kumhar (Prajapati), Kumawat, Suara, Moyla 9
*32	10
*34	Lohar, Panchal
*35	Maha-Brahman (Acharai), Fakir11 (working in Kabristan)
*36	Mali, Bagwan12
*37	Mer (Mehrat-Kathat, Mehrat-Ghodat, Cheeta)13
*38	Mirasi, Dhadi, Langa/Mangniyar
*40	Nai, Sain, Sen, Vednai14
*41	Nyaria (Nyargar)
*54	Jat
*56	Halali, Kasai
*61	Mev
*62	Gaddee
*63	Farooki Bhatiyara
*64	Silawat (other than Sompura and Murtikaar)
*66	Dhobi (Muslim)15
*67	Kayamkhani
*68	Kunjada, Raen

Entry number	Caste/community
*69	Sapera (Non Hindu Caste)16
*70	Madari, Bazigar (non-Hindu Caste)
*71	Nut (non-Hindu Caste)17
*73	Sindhi Musalman
*74	Kheldar
*75	Chungar
*76	Rath
*77	Multanies
*78	Orphan Children18
*79	Mochi (non-Hindu caste)19
*80	Deshwali
*82	Chobdaar
*84	Bisayati

Notes:

1. largely Hindu community with a small Muslim minority

2. The Suthar include a small Muslim minority.

3. The Bharbhunja include a small Muslim minority.

4. The Chhipa are Muslim.

5. The Ghosi are Muslim.

6. The Gujjar are only partly Muslim.

7. Only Muslim Bhangis such as the Hela are in the OBC list; the Hindu sections have Scheduled Caste status.

8. The Kandera are partly Muslim, while the Pinjara are eniterely Muslim.

9. The Muslim Kumhar are now added as Moyla.[17]

10. The Manihar are Muslim.

11. The Faqir are Muslim.

12. The Bagwan are Muslim Mali.

13. The Merat and Cheetahs are Muslims

14. The Nai are partly Muslim

15. Only Muslim Dhobis are in the OBC list; the Hindu section have Scheduled Caste status.

16. Only Muslim Sapera are in the OBC list; the Hindu section have Scheduled Caste status.

17. Only Muslim Nat are in the OBC list; the Hindu section have Scheduled Caste status.

18. Includes Muslims

19. Only Muslim Mochis are in the OBC list; the Hindu section have Scheduled Caste status.

Tamil Nadu

- **Dhakni Muslim**
- **Dudekula**
- **Lebbai, Rowther and Marakayar**
- **Mapilla**
- **Patani**

Uttar Pradesh

<div align="center"><u>Central list</u></div>

List of Muslim communities that have been accorded Other Backward Classes status in Uttar Pradesh.[18]

Sl. No.	Caste/community	Resolution no. and date
*4	Kahar, Tanwar, Singhariya1	12011/68/93-BCC(C) dt. 10 September 1993 and12011/36/99-BCC dt. 4 April 2000
*5	Kewat or Mallah2	12011/68/93-BCC(C) dt. 10 September 1993
*8	Kumhar, Prajapati3	12011/68/93-BCC(C) dt. 10 September 1993 and12011/21/95-BCC dt. 15 May 1995
*10	Kasgar	12011/68/93-BCC(C) dt. 10 September 1993
*11	Kunjra or Rayeen	12011/68/93-BCC(C) dt. 10 September 1993 and12011/21/95-BCC dt. 15 May 1995
*13	Gujjar4	-do-
*15	Gaddi, Ghosi	12011/68/93-BCC(C) dt. 10 September 1993 and12011/96/94-BCC dt. 9 March 1996
*17	Chikwa, Qassab, (Qureshi), Kasai / Qassai,Chak5	12011/68/93-BCC(C) dt. 10 September 1993, 12011/44/96-BCC dt. 6 December 1996, 12011/68/98- BCC dt. 27 October 1999 and 12011/88/98-BCC dt. 6December 1999
*18	Chhipi, Chhipe6	12011/68/93-BCC(C) dt. 10 September 1993 and12011/21/95-BCC dt. 15 May 1995
*19	Jogi7	12011/68/93-BCC(C) dt. 10 September 1993
*20	Jhojha	-do-
*21	Dafali	-do-
*23	, , Rogangar, Malik (Muslim), | Hindu For Teli Sahu, Teli Rathore8	12011/68/93-BCC(C) dt. 10 September 1993, 12011/68/98-BCC dt. 27 October 1999 and 12011/88/98-BCC dt. 6 December 1999

Sl. No.	Caste/community	Resolution no. and date
*24	Darzi	12011/68/93-BCC(C) dt. 10 September 1993
*26	Naqqal	-do-
*27	Nat9 (excluding those who are included in Scheduled Castes)	-do-
*29	Faqir	-do-
*30	Banjara, Mukeri, Ranki, Mekrani10	12011/68/93-BCC(C) dt. 10 September 1993, 12011/36/99-BCC dt. 4 April 2000 and 12015/09/2000-BCC dt. 6 September 2001
*31	Barhai, Badhai, Viswakarma, Ramgarhia11	12011/68/93-BCC(C) dt. 10 September 1993, 12011/88/98-BCC dt. 6 December 1999 and 12011/68/93-BCC(C) dt. 10 September 1993
*37	Bhurji, Bharbhuja, Bharbhunja, Bhooj,Kandu12	12011/68/93-BCC(C) dt. 10 September 1993, 12011/21/95-BCC dt. 15 May 1995 and 12011/44/96-BCC dt. 6 December 1996
*38	Bhatiara	12011/68/93-BCC(C) dt. 10 September 1993
*39	Mali, Baghban13	12011/68/93-BCC(C) dt. 10 September 1993, 12011/96/94-BCC dt. 9 March 1996 and 12011/04/2001-BCC dt. 13 January 2004
*40	Siddiqui Manihar, Kacher Tomar, Lakher Brahmans (excluding Lakhera sub-caste of Brahmans in Tehri Garhwal region), Churihar14	12011/68/93-BCC(C) dt. 10 September 1993, 12011/68/98-BCC dt. 27 October 1999 and 12011/88/98-BCC dt. 6 December 1999
*42	Momin (Ansar, Ansari), Julaha	12011/68/93-BCC(C) dt. 10 September 1993, 12011/68/98-BCC dt. 27 October 1999 and 12011/88/98- BCC dt. 6 December 1999
*43	Mirasi	12011/68/93-BCC(C) dt. 10 September 1993
*44	Muslim Kayastha	-do-
*45	Sheikh Mansoori, Naddaf (Dhunia), Dhunia, Mansoori, Behna, Kandere, Kadere, Pinjara	12011/68/93-BCC(C) dt. 10 September 1993, 12011/96/94-BCC dt. 9 March 1996 and 12011/88/98-BCC dt. 6 December 1999
*47	Rangrez, Rangwa15	12011/68/93-BCC(C) dt. 10 September 1993 and12011/44/96-BCC dt. 6 December 1996
*49	Lohar, Luhar, Saifi 16	12011/68/93-BCC(C) dt. 10 September 1993 and12011/68/98-BCC dt. 27 October 1999
*52	Halwai17	-do-

Sl. No.	Caste/community	Resolution no. and date
*53	Hajjam (Nai), Salmani, Nai, Sain (Nai)18	12011/68/93-BCC(C) dt. 10 September 1993, 12011/96/94-BCC dt. 9 March 1996, 12011/44/96-BCCdt. 6 December 1996 and 12011/36/99-BCC dt. 4 April2000
*54	Halalkhor, Hela, Lal Begi (other than those who are included in the list of Scheduled Castes)19	12011/96/94-BCC dt. 9 March 1996, 12011/36/99-BCC dt. 4 April 2000 and 12015/9/2000-BCC dt. 6 September 2001
*55	Dhobi20 (other than those who are already included in the list of Scheduled Castes for UP)	12011/96/94-BCC dt. 9 March 1996
*56	Meo, Mewati	12011/13/97-BCC dt. 3 December 1997
*57	Saqqa-Bhisti, Bhisti-Abbassi	BCC 16-4-2017
*59	Khumra, Sangtarash, Hansiri	12011/68/98-BCC dt. 27 October 1999
*61	Atishbaz, Darugar	-do-
*62	Madari	-do-
*63	Nalband, Sais	-do-
*64	Bhand	12011/88/98-BCC dt. 6 December 1999
*65	Mochi (excluding those who are included inthe list of SC of Uttar Pradesh) 21	-do-
*66	Raj (Memar)	-do-
*67	Sheikh Sarvari (Pirai), Peerahi	12011/36/99-BCC dt. 4 April 2000 and 12015/09/2000-BCC dt. 6 September 2001
*71	Kalal, Kalwar22	-do-
*76	Gada	12015/15/2008- BCC dt. 16 June 2011

Notes:

1. largely Hindu community with a small Muslim minority
2. The Mallaah include a small Muslim minority.
3. The Kumhar are evenly divided between the Hindu and Muslim sections.
4. The nomadic Van Gujjar are entirely Muslim, while the settled Gujjars of western UP include a large Muslim minority.
5. The Chikwa and Qureshi Qassab are entirely Muslim, while the Chak are Hindu.
6. The Chippe are largely Hindu with a small Muslim minority.
7. largely Hindu with a small Muslim minority
8. The Teli Malik are Muslim.

9. Only Muslim Nat are in the OBC list; the Hindu section have Scheduled Caste status.

10. The Banjara are partly Muslim, while the Mukeri are entirely Muslim.

11. The Barhai are partly Musli

12. The Bharbhunja are partly Muslim.

13. The Baghban are Muslim Mali.

14. The Manihar are Muslim, while the Churihar are largely Muslim.

15. The Rangrez are Muslim and Rangwa Hindu.

16. The Saifi are Muslim Lohar.

17. The Halwai are partly Muslim.

18. The Hajjam are Muslim Nai.

19. Only Muslim Bhangis such as the Halalkhor and Lalbegi are in the OBC list; the Hindu sections have Scheduled Caste status.

20. Only Muslim Dhobis are in the OBC list, the Hindu section have Scheduled Caste status.

21. Only Muslim Mochis are in the OBC list, the Hindu section have Scheduled Caste status.

22. Caste mahigeer faruki ob list

23. The mansoori are muslim dhunai.

Explanation: In the above list for Uttar Pradesh for all castes linked with traditional hereditary occupations, except those entered with specific mention of name of religion, are included, irrespective of whether their members follow Hinduism, Islam or any other religion.

West Bengal

Central list

List of Muslim communities that have been accorded by OBC status by the Government of India in the state of West Bengal.[19]

Entry No.	Caste/community	Resolution no. and date
*23	Jolah (AnsariMomin)	12011/96/94-BCC dt. 9 March 1996 and 12015/9/2000-BCC dt. 6September 2001
*29	Fakir, Sain	12011/68/98-BCC dt. 27 October 1999
*45	Kasai-Quraishi	12011/36/99-BCC dt. 4 April 2000—
*53	Rayeen (Kunjra)	-do-
*55	Nashya-Sekh	12011/1/2001-BCC dt. 20 June 2003
*56	Shershabadia	12011/1/2001-BCC dt. 20 June 2003
*60	Patidar	12015/15/2008- BCC dt. 16 June 2011
*62	Pahadia Muslim	12015/15/2008- BCC dt. 16 June 2011

Central list

List of Muslim communities that have been accorded OBC status by the state government of West Bengal.[20]

SI	Caste	Particulars of connected orders
16	Jolah (Ansari Momin)	Notification No.705
*31	Fakir, Sain	Notification No. 183
*44	Hawari	Notification No. 93-TW/EC dt. 1 February 1997
*49	Dhunia	
*50	Patidar	
*51	Kasai	
*54	Nashya-Sekh	Notification No. 84-BCW/RC dt. 01.03.1999
*63	Shershabadia	Notification No. 5001-BCW Dt.7-10-02
*65	Hajjam	Notification No.3230 - BCW dt. 04-12-08 read with No. 264/BCW dt. 28-01-09
*66	Chowduli	Notification No. 485/BCW dt. 20 February 2009
*68	Beldar Muslim	Notification No. 771-BCW/MR-436/*69 Khotta
*70	Sardar	Muslim 1999 dt. 05-03-2010
*68	Beldar Muslim	
*71	Nikari	Notification No. 1403-BCW/MR-436/99(I)
*72	Mahalda	dt. 26 April 2010
*73	Dhukr	
*74	Basni / Bosni	
*75	Abdal	
*76	Kan	
*77	Tutia	Notification No. 1639-BCW/MR-436/1999
*78	Gaven	dt. 14 May 2010
*79	Bhatia Muslim	
*80	Midde	Notification No. 1929-BCW/MR-436/99(I)
*81	Mallick	dt. 2 June 2010
*83	Laskar	
*84	Baidya Muslim	
*86	Chutor Mistri	
*87	Dafadar	
*88	Mal Muslim	

*89	Majhi / Patni Muslim	
*90	Muchi / Chamar Muslim	
*91	Nehariya	Notification No. 2317-BCW/MR-436/99 dated 1 July 2010
*92	Muslim Haldar	
*93	Siuli (Muslim)	
*94	Muslim Mandal	
*95	Muslim Sanpui/Sapui	
*96	Muslim Biswas	
*97	Muslim Mali	
*98	Ghosi	
*99	Darji / Ostagar / Idrishi	Notification No. 5045-BCW/MR-436/99(I) dated 31 August 2010
*100	Rajmistri	
*101	Bhatiyara	
*102	Molla	
*103	Dhali (Muslim)	
*104	Tal-Pakha Benia	
*105	Muslim Piyada	
*106	Muslim Barujibi / Barui	
*107	Bepari / Byapari Muslim	Notification No. 6305-BCW / MR-436/99(I) dated 24 September 2010
*108	Penchi	
*109	Bhangi (Muslim)	Notification No. 1673-BCW / MR-209/11 dated 11 May 2012
*110	Dhatri/Dai/Dhaity (Muslim)	
*111	Gharami (Muslim)	
*112	Ghorkhan	
*113	Halsana (Muslim)	
*114	Kayal (Muslim)	
*115	Naiya (Muslim)	
*116	Shikari/Sikari (Muslim)	
*117	Adaldar (Muslim)	
*118	Adaldar (Muslim)	
*119	Akunji/Akan/Akhan(Muslim)	
*120	Bag (Muslim)	
*121	Chaprashi (Muslim)	
*122	Churihar	
*123	Daptari (Muslim)	
*124	Dewan (Muslim)	

*125	Dhabak (Muslim)	
*126	Gazi (Muslim)	
*127	Khan (Muslim)	
*128	Kolu Muslim (Shah, Sahaji, Sadhukhan, Mondal)	
*129	Majhi	
*130	Malita/Malitha/Malitya(Muslim)	
*131	Sekh (Muslim)	
*132	Paik (Muslim)	
*133	Pailan (Muslim)	
*134	Purkait (Muslim)	
*135	Sana (Muslim)	
*136	Sareng (Muslim)	
*137	Sardar (Muslim)	
*138	Sarkar (Muslim)	
*139	Shah(Fakir)/Shah/Sha/Sahaji)	
*140	Tarafdar (Muslim)	
*141	Gavara	
*142	Mouli (Muslim)	
*143	Sepai (Muslim)	
*144	Sekh/Seikh	Notification No. 845-BCW/sekhMR-147/12 dated 10 October 2012
*145	Bayen (Muslim)	
*146	Bhuiya/Bhunya (Muslim)	Order No. 2770-BCW/MR-116/12 dated 29 August 2014 read with Corrigendum published in Kolkata Gazette dated 9 December 2014
*147	Borah / Bara/Bora(Muslim)	
*148	Gorey (Muslim)	
*149	Hati (Muslim)	
*150	Jatuya (Muslim)	
*151	Khondekar/Khonkar(Muslim)*	
*152	Pahar (Muslim)	
*153	Raptan (Muslim)	
*154	Baradi (Muslim)*	
*155	Dalal (Muslim)	
*156	Hoseni Goyala (Muslim)	
*157	Khalashi (Muslim)	
*158	Kichni (Muslim)	
*159	Mukti/Mufti (Muslim)	

About the Author

Durga Nand Jha, Executive Chairman of Centre for Policy Analysis, has been Project Director of number of research projects covering diverse sectors and issues such as: FDI, Agriculture, Labour, decentralization and Panchayatiraj. He was also member of a 'Committee on Vision 2020' constituted by the erstwhile Planning Commission, in 2000. He has presented a number of papers on the issues of governance, development and strategic affairs in various national and international conferences. In 2017, he was member of a committee constituted by the Ministry of Panchayatiraj to review use of grants by various states under Fourteenth Finance Commission.

Besides academic activities, he has been active on various social issues. He has convened number of meetings since 2013 between distinguished persons from Hindu and Muslim Community- drawing from various walks of life-to resolvedisputes on various social and religious issues.

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