
UNIT 23 MINORITIES

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23.0 OBJECTIVES

This unit deals with the problem of minorities in India and also minorities in contemporary societies the world over. The study of this unit should enable you to:

- understand the conceptual and the theoretical explanations of minority;
- analyse the rights of minorities and the need for that; and
- discuss the problem of minorities in the contemporary Indian society.

23.1 INTRODUCTION

We have discussed in the previous unit, the problem of Scheduled Tribe which is a problem essentially of the disparities and deprivations. The problem of minorities is also similar to that of many tribal groups. The minorities, because, of their relatively less numerical strength feel that their rights are persistently ignored. This unit discusses how minorities have emerged and the problems they face and also their rights. We will also talk about the social composition and rights of minorities and the constitutional provisions for them in India.

23.2 THE PROBLEM OF MINORITIES IN THE CONTEMPORARY WORLD

The problem of minority or minorities came to the fore-front after the World War-I when a number of new-states were carved out of the wreckage of the

Central European Empires and quite a few majority communities found themselves turned overnight into minorities in these states. For example, the Germans were reduced to a minority in Poland and the Austrians in Czechoslovakia. Lest the peace of the world be disturbed on account of ill-treatment of minorities treaties called the Project Guarantee Treaties had been entered into to instill a sense of loyalty among the new States under which they were placed and to enjoin upon the new governments to own the citizens of the erstwhile enemy countries as their new nationals and citizens.

23.2.1 The Dimensions of the Problem

In the past one hundred years or so the minority problems have occupied a very important place in the politics of countries the world over. Many issues have, however, remained unsolved. Even today minority problems in different forms appear very frequently in the West. Thus, race riots occur in England and the USA. Chechnya has been problem for Russia. In erstwhile Yugoslavia the Serbs and the Croats have fought wars of secession.

The position of the developing societies or the Third World is the same. Ethnic and communal riots are chronic part of their politics. The Indian case is one of the saddest ones. India has a record of over hundred years of minority problem. The major problem has been of the Muslims which split the country in 1947. Communal riots have become a recurring phenomenon in the present day Indian society.

23.2.1 Who are the Minorities?

In a very general sense, we can say that when a group of people is divided on any issue or approach or characteristics the difference usually produces a bigger sub-group and a smaller sub-group. **The smaller sub-group is called minority** whereas the bigger sub-group is called the majority. It is also possible that the two groups could be of equal strength or the smaller group may have control over power and other resources. **So, it is not always the numerical strength or non-strength, which is the deciding factor for a group to be called a minority.**

It is now widely felt that population size is not the only feature of minority status. **If a group is discriminated against on the basis of religion, race or culture it can be considered a minority group.** The sub-commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities set up under the Human Rights Commission which drafted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, has defined minorities as only those **non-dominant groups in a population which possess or wish to preserve stable, ethnic, religious or linguistic traditions or characteristics markedly different from those of the most of the population.**

In the International Encyclopaedia of the Social Science, Arnold Rose has defined minority without any quantitative connotations. He defines it as **‘a group of people differentiated from others in the same society by race, nationality, religion or language, who think of themselves as differentiated group and are thought of by others as a differentiated group with negative connotations. Further, they are relatively lacking in power and hence are subjected to certain exclusions, discrimination and other differential treatments.’**

In any country religious groups may now be divided into linguistic groups and vice-versa. This phenomenon is known as cross-cutting cleavage. Accordingly, a person may be a member of a religious minority and yet of a linguistic majority

or vice-versa. How such a person would behave depends on his or her interest from issue to issue.

Jagnath Pathy (1988) has also listed out the defining properties of minority group. In his opinion, the minorities are:

- subordinate in some way to the majority,
- distinguishable from the majority on the basis of physical or cultural features,
- collectively being regarded and treated as different and inferior on the basis of these features, and
- excluded from the full participation in the life of the society.

He further says, discrimination, prejudice and exclusion by the dominant group and self segregation by the subordinate or minority constitute the basis for minority identification (Pathy, 1988 : 28).

The wish to preserve distinctive features of one's social and cultural life is an essential feature of a minority community. As a consequence there are always groups which are different from other group in terms of language, religion etc. The dominant group tries to assimilate the minority groups. The non-conformist very often, are likely to be persecuted. This attitude of the majority group generates a greater consciousness among the members of the minority community for preserving their separate identity.

The wish to have separate identity often gives rise to political demands. The demands are for either special treatment, recognition of the need for preserving minority identity or in extreme cases for autonomy or secession from the area.

With these general properties a group can be identified as being a minority group. There are, however, operational problems of applying such specifications with minority, because a great deal depends on the situation existing in a particular society at a particular time. Social groups can only be properly identified in terms of their relationship to other groups. The nature of such relationship is determined largely by the system of control over economic and political resources prevailing in that society and the historical development of those relationships. The numerical strength is, thus, not an objective criterion to distinguish one group from the other. The concept of minority is, therefore, dynamic depending on the relation of domination and discrimination.

A minority group very often organises into a coherent group drawing on the shared values culture, language or religion. For example, the Muslims in India are a minority group on the basis of their religion in comparison to the majority of Hindus. But they constitute a majority in the state of Jammu and Kashmir. Similarly, Christians are a majority in Nagaland,. Meghalaya, Mizoram and so on. Besides having an identity on the basis of religion, a group may also identify itself on the ethnic basis. Thus, a Muslim may identify not only on the religious basis but also on the ethnic basis. He or she could consider himself or herself a Bengali or a Malayalee. A great deal depends on the politics of the situation. Thus, many minority groups are all ethnic groups for they group around shared values and culture.

The Constitution of India uses the term minority but does not defines it anywhere. The Supreme Court and various High Courts have so far depended on

the statistical criterion. Any community that does not constitute more than 50% in the state is thus called a minority. Furthermore, the Indian Constitution recognises two types of minorities based on language and/or religion. Thus in India about 82% people are by religious designation Hindu. The Muslims, Christians, Sikhs, Jains, Buddhists and Parsis and other from smaller group of minorities.

The Constitution does not recognize minorities based on culture, race or nationality.

Percentage of Population of Major Religions, 1991

State /UT	Hindus	Muslims	Christians	Sikhs	Buddhists	Jains	Others	Religion not stated
INDIA	82.00	12.12	2.34	1.94	0.76	0.40	0.39	0.05
States								
1. Andhra Pradesh	89.14	8.91	1.83	0.03	0.03	0.04	-	0.02
2. Arunachal Pradesh	37.04	1.38	10.29	0.14	12.88	0.01	36.22	2.04
3. Assam	67.13	28.43	3.32	0.07	0.29	0.09	0.62	0.05
4. Bihar	82.42	14.81	0.98	0.09	-	0.03	1.67	-
5. Goa	64.68	5.25	29.86	0.09	0.02	0.04	0.04	0.02
6. Gujarat	89.48	8.73	0.44	0.08	0.03	1.19	0.03	0.02
7. Haryana	89.21	4.64	0.10	5.81	0.01	0.21	-	0.02
8. Himachal Pradesh	95.90	1.72	0.09	1.01	1.24	0.02	-	0.02
9. Karnataka	85.45	11.64	1.91	0.02	0.16	0.73	0.01	0.08
10. Kerala	57.28	23.33	19.32	0.01	-	0.01	0.01	0.04
11. Madhya Pradesh	92.80	4.96	0.65	0.24	0.33	0.74	0.09	0.19
12. Maharashtra	81.12	9.67	1.12	0.21	6.39	1.22	0.13	0.14
13. Manipur	57.67	7.27	34.11	0.07	0.04	0.07	0.77	-
14. Meghalaya	14.67	3.46	64.58	0.15	0.16	0.02	16.82	0.14
15. Mizoram	5.05	0.66	85.73	0.04	7.83	-	0.27	0.42
16. Nagaland	10.12	1.71	87.47	0.06	0.05	0.10	0.48	0.01
17. Orissa	94.67	1.83	2.10	0.05	0.03	0.02	1.26	0.04
18. Punjab	34.46	1.18	1.11	62.95	0.12	0.10	0.01	0.07
19. Rajasthan	89.08	8.01	0.11	1.48	0.01	1.28	-	0.03
20. Sikkim	68.37	0.95	3.30	0.09	27.15	0.01	0.09	0.04
21. Tamil Nadu	88.67	5.47	5.69	0.01	-	0.12	0.01	0.03
22. Tripura	86.50	7.13	1.68	0.03	4.65	0.01	-	-
23. Uttar Pradesh	81.74	17.33	0.14	0.48	0.16	0.13	0.01	0.01
24. West Bengal	74.72	23.61	0.56	0.08	0.30	0.05	0.67	0.01

(Source: Census Data Online, 1991)

23.3 APPROACHES TO THE MINORITY PROBLEM

We can see that the problem of minorities has assumed importance all over the world. We have already mentioned that a minority issue is not just related to its numerical representation in a society. It is related to its oppression. Besides, it is to be perceived on the basis of language, culture, religion, etc. in relation to that of a dominant group which is, very often, a majority group in a society.

A whole lot of theories have been advanced about the nature, causes and implications of the problems of minorities. Many scholars have tried to understand the problems of minorities in various ways. Some consider, that **ethnic identity among minority groups is natural and primordial**. The scholars

who stress the cultural differences say that primordialism and linguistic differences among minority groups tend to generate conflict rather than cooperation among them. Other scholars consider the utilitarian bent of minority groups and state that it is representing a power struggle. They feel that cultural factors are incidental to this process. These scholars feel that the minority identity should be seen in the context of development where each group tries to forge an identity in its Struggle for scarce resources.

Various Approaches have been adopted towards a solution of the minority while some suggested assimilation, others suggested protection and for some the way out was to get rid of the minority community itself, by persecution, deportation etc.

23.3.1 Assimilation

The issue of minority and majority has been going on for centuries. Earlier the problem was seen as one of the conflict: of religions and ethnic groups. These days the problem is essentially related to national minorities. The concept of nation assumes that political boundaries must coincide with the characteristic of people living within it. A nation state prefers if possible a homogenous religion, language, ethnic identity etc. In the words of Clude “The rise of the problem of minorities was a logical consequence of the ascendancy of nationalism. It is injected into politics ... the principle that the state should be nationally homogeneous and a nation should be politically united.” (Clude, 1955. p. 81). This gave rise to unrestricted control over given territory, uniformity of laws, languages, customs etc., irrespective of differences. Homogeneity is never a reality thus there are constant efforts by the majority to assimilate the minority. The minorities are made to abandon their ethnic, religious cultural and linguistic characteristics which differentiate them from the dominant group. For instance in the erstwhile Soviet Union, this kind of homogeneity was imposed with the intent of making the national state secure and its institutions stable. The welfare and security of the state were primary consideration. As a result the minority considerations were sidelined. It was not long before the various majority ethnic groups realised this kind of subjugation and fought for their rights.

The assimilation of heterogeneous groups through coercion is not so bluntly adopted, states now prefer adopting other indirect methods. Discrimination is one such method.

23.3.2 Discrimination and Annihilation

While the minority groups are allowed to preserve their distinct characteristics they are also subjected to a great deal of discrimination. The discrimination may be in the form fewer government funds for minority educational institutions etc. Very often they are discriminated in their social life. They are subjected to ridicule and segregation which further compels them to stay away from the majority. That is why we find that minority groups stay together in ghettos away from the majority.

This discrimination in fact leads to assimilation among some ambitious members of the minority community. These people in order to advance themselves seek to rid themselves of their disabilities by deliberately surrendering their typical features. These disabilities may, many times, be

sufficient to induce assimilation, also certain encouragement is given to induce this change.

In case assimilation is found to be impossible, some states resort to the very direct method of annihilation. The members of minority group are eliminated by expulsion or by massacre. Genocide of the Jews by the Germans is a best example of this.

23.3.3 Tolerance and Equality

The policy of tolerance and fair treatment is adopted by many states when dealing with minority community. A great deal of leeway is given for the preservation and persurance of the minority social and cultural life. Though the state may have in mind the assimilation of various minority groups as the final goal. It will nevertheless adopt a tolerant attitude towards minority groups as long as the minority communities do not cause any destabilizing effect on the nation state.

We find this policy of tolerance and fair treatment guiding the provisions in our **Indian Constitution**. The Constitution establishes no state religion, guarantees equal opportunity to all irrespective of caste, creed and religion. The Constitution was not in favour of forced assimilation to preserve the rich harmony in Indian culture within the framework of national unity. The Constitution forbids discrimination against minorities. Thus, we find that Constitution envisages fair treatment for all.

However the question that has been asked many times is how are the minority groups faring under the Constitution? It is true that there is equality on the paper, but is it really practiced?

It is a contention of the many minority groups, also studies have revealed, that these groups suffer a great deal of discrimination in social life. They are often discriminated in all walks of life, in securing a job, in getting funds for educational institutions, in their social interaction and so on, inspite of the constitutional guarantees. In any case a great deal seems to depend on the **bargaining power a particular disadvantaged group has**. Some are at disadvantage in their effort to bring to state's notice that certain of their sociocultural rights need protection. For example, **the tribals of central India-Santhal, have been unable to get state recognition for their tribal language, inspite of the fact that there are large number of people speaking the language.**

Check Your Progress 1

- 1) Name some of the major minority conflicts which have troubled and are troubling the world politics.

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- 2) What are the various approaches adopted to understand and resolve the problem of minorities?

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23.4 MINORITIES AND THE POLITICO- LINGUISTIC VARIATIONS

Geographically, a minority may either be spread all over the country or concentrated in some regions. If a minority community is spread, it can carry out only some agitations for its rights. When it is geographically concentrated, it often resorts to movements for autonomy or even for secession. For example, the contemporary Jharkhand movement was a movement for regional autonomy while the Phizoite Naga movement is for secession. Further, if minorities are not found numerically spread in many areas but are influential in a few localities, they may field or sponsor their own candidates in elections and may form even their own political party. If they are weak, they support the candidates belonging to other communities in the elections. They support, however, those parties and candidates who, they think, are most likely to protect their interests. When minorities consistently support other individuals or political parties in the elections, they are said to constitute 'vote banks'.

In India as elsewhere linguistic groups are regionalised. Most of North Indians speak Hindi in different dialects., In South India the different Dravidian languages, namely Telugu, Tamil, Kannada and Malayalam, are spoken. Further, in Western India Marathi and Gujarati are major languages and Punjabi is spoken in Punjab. In Kashmir and Himachal Pradesh there are some smaller linguistic groups. In Eastern India Assamese, Bengali and Oriya are major languages. In the fringe areas and in between the major language groups of India there are small but distinct language groups. We cannot, therefore, call any Indian language group as the majority population. Hindi is spoken by the largest number about 30% of people. However, if we take the linguistic regions within India, we frequently find minority language groups. Almost all the Indian states have been reorganised to bring about some linguistic homogeneity of the regions. Yet a few minority languages exist in a state. For example, Konkani is found in South Western India where Marathi is the main language or the various tribal languages are spoken in Central and in the Northeast India.

Because of the peculiar political history, the Hindu-Muslim relation has emerged as the gravest political problem in modern India. During the British rule the economic condition of the Muslims deteriorated. The Muslims avoided English education and fell behind the Hindus in the competition for services and other avenues. A section of the Muslim elite advised the Muslims to accept English education and government services and to move away from the Indian National Congress which, they thought, was dominated by Hindus. The British followed their famous "divide and rule" policy and granted separate electorate for the Muslims as mentioned in the earlier sections of this unit. Separate electorate was later extended to the other minorities too. On the other hand, the insistence of the All-India -Muslim League upon the two nation theory led to the partition of India and large scale migrations from and to the country. Mostly the wealthier section of the Muslims went over to Pakistan and a substantial number of Muslims continued to live in India.

As already noted, the Indian Constitution did away with the concept of political minority. That is to say, under the Indian Constitution the minorities (except the Anglo-Indians) have no separate political rights apart from those which they enjoy as ordinary citizens of India. Every member of a minority-group enjoys rights only as a citizen of India. He/she is protected from all kinds of discrimination on the basis of race, religion, caste, sex, place of birth or any of them. Every citizen has equality before the law and the equal protection of law. They also enjoy equality of opportunity in matters relating to employment or appointment to any office under the State.

There is, however, the provision of the affirmative action of the State aimed at ameliorating the condition of the weaker sections of the people. Thus, legislative seats are reserved for the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. Special protection of land and wealth is provided through the restriction on their movement-from the places where they normally live. Government services and other facilities are reserved for members of the Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and other backward classes.

Yet, there is another set of rights which relate to the minorities. These belong to the domain of freedom. Specifically they are the freedom of speech and expression, to form associations or unions, to assemble peacefully and without arms, at a place or places, to move, reside and settle in any part of the territory of India. Minorities are also provided to acquire, hold and dispose of property and to practice any profession, or to carry on any occupation, trade or business. There is, of course the right to life and liberty besides the freedom of religion. However, the State can regulate or restrict any economic, political or other secular activities which may be associated with religious practice. The State may make any law providing for social welfare and reform of Hindu religious institution. The Sikhs have the right to wear and carry *Kirpans* (swords) but like the Jains and the Buddhists, they are regarded as Hindus, with reference to reform of Hindu religious institutions.

The second kind of rights of the minorities are group rights. Any section of citizens living in any part of India and having a distinct language, script or culture of its own shall have the right to conserve that. No citizen shall be denied admission into any educational institution maintained by the State or aided by the State on grounds only of religion, race, caste, language, or any of them.

Activity

Based on your observations and experiences, write a few lines on how you perceive the minority problems.

23.5 MINORITY RIGHTS IN MODERN INDIA

We have said that after World War I, a number of minority treaties were adopted for the new States. In India also before the transfer of power, the British thought of binding the successor regime to some special provisions regarding the minorities. But such treaties and provisions could not be effectively imposed upon sovereign States in Europe nor the special provision for Muslims could be successfully carried out in independent India.

The minorities, might, however, seek to ensure their group rights within the States of the sovereign constitutional systems. For example, the first representative system was introduced at the local government level in British India in 1872-83. Right at that time some Muslim leaders of Bengal and Punjab demanded separate electorate in which they wanted to elect their leaders themselves and not with the help of votes of other communities. They got, their rights with the support of some British officials though the Indian nationalists strongly opposed the political separation of the minorities. The separate electorate was introduced, more or less in the same way, in the provincial and central legislatures, when they were created by the Indian Councils Act of 1909. Thus under the Government of India Act, 1935 altogether 18 separate constituencies were created through the provisions of the separate electorate and reservation for minorities.

The modern sovereign States in the world do not favour the separate electorate system formalities. But there are two other constitutional devices. These are **collegial executive and proportional reservation**. The independent India not only abolished the system of separate electorate but also removed the concept of political minorities. Instead, it has granted special cultural and educational rights to the minorities over and above the rights to equality and freedom that they enjoy as individuals. **The cultural and educational rights** enable the minorities to run their own educational and cultural institutions or foundations, We have mentioned in Section 23.3 of this unit the various provisions laid in the Indian Constitution to safeguard interests of the minorities, the state has no authority to undertake social reform which tamper with the cultural and educational rights of the minority communities.

The question may arise here as to why a minority community should specialty be given a group right when the majority community has no such right. The answer is that a majority community by virtue of its number can guard its interest. But a minority community needs protection from the dominance of the majority community. The minority treaty or the system, of separate electorate or minority rights are but some legal-constitutional provisions for protection of minority. Both these two systems have operated in Switzerland successfully under the proportional representation system, multi-members constituencies are created and the voters are given as many preferences as there are seats. Those candidates who get the prescribed quota of votes are elected. The quota is fixed on the basis of dividing the number of votes by the number of seats. This enables the minority communities to send their representatives to legislatures in strength proportionate to their number in the total electorates of the country. Similarly, the collegial executive is elected by a legislature through proportional representation. This enables the communities to be represented in the executive in strength proportionate to their number in the legislature.

23.5.1 Equality for Minorities

Minority problem can politically be conceived in two broad forms: 1) in a democratic set-up, wherein all members of a given society or country have political freedom, and 2) in a colonial set-up where a minority is either the ruling class or being ruled in the social condition of slavery.

Thus in a democratic set up a minority community may compete as well as collaborate with the majority. The basic desire of the minority in such a situation

is for political, social and economic equality. Political equality takes the form of equal rights. Social equality takes the form of equal status. Economic equality takes the form of equal opportunity and prosperity. The liberal democratic constitution can furnish the principles of equality before law and equal protection of law besides equal opportunity in the affairs managed by the government. But they cannot guarantee equal prosperity or even social status to all which largely depends upon economic prosperity. Objectively, in a country like India, containing several minority groups, the economic status may vary from group to group. Thus, the Parsees and the Sikhs in India are as affluent as some of the majority community of the Hindus. The Muslims are less affluent. But the condition of the tribal groups is generally much worse. Such conditions may easily promote disaffection particularly in a situation with the increased communication facilities and frequent interaction among the different groups.

Contrary to this, in a colonial situation the ruling class, which is often in minority is mostly privileged, the example may be given of the British in India fifty years ago or of the white community in South Africa in recent. When the ruling class is in a majority like whites in North America the condition of the minority is like that of the American Indians which is miserable.

All religious and linguistic minorities have the right to establish and administer educational institutions of their choice. The State, while granting aid to educational institutions, shall not discriminate against any educational institution on the ground that it is under the management of a minority whether based on religion or language.

23.5.2 Controversies over Minority Rights

Some of the minority rights have become subjects of controversy. Regarding social reform among the Hindus, two kinds of **grievances** have been expressed. First, a **section of the Sikhs resent being regarded as Hindu for 'this purpose**. Actually, they are opposed to the reforms like the Hindu Marriage Act and the Hindu Succession Act which grant equal right to women and forbid bigamy of males. **A section of the Hindus, on the other hand, demand that minorities like the Muslims and the Christians be brought under the scope of such reforms and all sections of the citizens be governed by a common civil code**. But many Muslim leaders are opposed to it on the plea that the Muslim Personal Law is a part of the Muslim religion. However, by insisting in retaining the Muslim Personal Law they are also stopping progress of the Muslim women. The government of India regards it a sensitive issue and prefers to wait until the Muslim public opinion is sufficiently aroused in favour of bringing some change in it.

On the question of **minority educational institutions** too, there is some controversy. Many such **institutions allege governmental discrimination against them**. On the other hand, there are allegations of corruption and oppression of teachers in such institutions by their authorities. Moreover, many such institutions insist on religious or traditional education and thus oppose the modern scientific education. This keeps the minority youth deprived of modern education and thus lagging behind others.

For historical reasons, the Hindu-Muslim relationship has emerged as the central minority problem in India. We have mentioned earlier that the British fostered conflict and brought it ahead by partitioning the country. That was preceded

and followed by communal riots which had taken hundred of thousands of the lives of either community. Poverty and unemployment of the people have intensified conflicts among communities. Over and above all this, communal politics has become a part of the electoral strategy of most of the political parties in India. There is increasing intolerance of the rights of minorities in the country. While society needs to be tolerant of minorities, the State should be absolutely impartial about the different communities. Therefore, the principle of secularism has been enshrined in our Constitution according to which the State should keep away from the religious affairs and controversies of any community. Instead, it should strictly maintain law and order. This alone may maintain unity of the people and the unity of nations.

Check Your Progress 2

- 1) List out some of the minority group of our country.
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- 2) What are the provisions for minority rights enshrined in the constitution?
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- 3) What are the defining properties of minority group?
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23.6 LET US SUM UP

In this unit, we have discussed the problems of minorities. We find that it is a problem which is affecting practically every country. Though the problem is seen essentially in terms of numerical representation. We find that it goes beyond that, the problem arises because of subjugation, exploitation and discrimination by a stronger group towards the weaker group.

The status of minority group is defined not only by certain characteristic features but by the dynamics of politics which are prevalent from time to time. In a

democratic set up if a group is heard louder than others and if it can mobilise itself it often achieves some rights that it demands.

The unit discusses the various approaches adopted to tackle the problem of minority. We can see that no single approach is used at one time, often it is a combination of assimilation, discrimination and a policy of tolerance that is being followed.

We also talked about the minority rights, the controversies regarding this and the prevailing situation of minority problem in India.

23.7 KEYWORDS

Consensus	: Agreement in opinion of all people concerned.
Differentiated	: To cause difference or to change what was similar between things or people.
Dominant	: A dominant group is one which exercises control over other groups.
Discrimination	: To treat one with difference and prejudice.
Genocide	: A deliberate extermination of group or a race. The extermination of Jews by the Germans during Hitler's regime is a good example of genocide.
Segregation	: To keep apart, to isolate a group from others.
Utilitarian	: Concerned with looking at the usefulness of a thing.

23.8 FURTHER READINGS

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23.9 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Check Your Progress 1

- 1) The recent conflicts in Yugoslavia between the Serbs the Croations assumed a major significance for the world politics. We heard about the race riots in America where there was backlash from the American blacks. The ethnic struggles by various minority groups in the erstwhile Soviet Union has resulted in a change in the configuration of the state itself.
- 2) Some of the major approaches which are often adopted as a solution to minority conflicts is assimilation, discrimination, annihilation and attempts to a fair treatment.

Check Your Progress 2

- 1) Some of the major minority group in India are Muslims, Christians, Sikhs, Jains, Buddhists, Parsees, etc.
- 2) There are only two specific Articles (29 and 30) in the Constitution that explicitly guarantee the protection of the interest of minorities in India.
- 3) In the first instance the minority group is distinguishable from the majority on the basis of physical or cultural features. They are exclude from full participation in the life of the society, and are subordinate in someway to the majority. Discrimination, prejudice and exclusion dominant group constitute the basis for a minority group identification.