

## **SOCIOLOGY MODULE 4**

### **Sociology of Indian Society**



**Basis of Indian Society**

India offers astounding variety in virtually every aspect of social life.

Diversities of **ethnic, linguistic, regional, economic, religious, class, and caste** groups crosscut Indian society, which is also permeated with immense urban-rural differences and gender distinctions.

Differences between north India and south India are particularly significant, especially in systems of kinship and marriage.

Indian society is multifaceted to an extent perhaps unknown in any other of the world's great civilizations—it is more like an area as varied as Europe than any other single nation-state.

Adding further variety to contemporary Indian culture are rapidly occurring changes affecting various regions and socioeconomic groups in disparate ways. Yet, amid the complexities of Indian life, widely accepted cultural themes enhance social harmony and order.

## **Themes In Indian Society**

### **Hierarchy**

India is a hierarchical society. Whether in north India or south India, Hindu or Muslim, urban or village, virtually all things, people, and social groups are ranked according to various essential qualities. Although India is a political democracy, notions of complete equality are seldom evident in daily life.

Societal hierarchy is evident in caste groups, amongst individuals, and in family and kinship groups. Castes are primarily associated with Hinduism, but caste-like groups also exist among Muslims, Indian, Christians, and other religious communities. Within most villages or towns, everyone knows the relative rankings of each locally represented caste, and behaviour is constantly shaped by this knowledge.

Individuals are also ranked according to their wealth and power. For example, some powerful people, or “big men,” sit confidently on chairs, while “little men” come before them to make requests, either standing or squatting, not presuming to sit beside a man of high status as an equal.

Hierarchy plays an important role within families and kinship groupings also, where men outrank women of similar age, and senior relatives outrank junior relatives.

Formal respect is accorded family members—for example, in northern India, a daughter-in-law shows deference to her husband, to all senior in-laws, and to all daughters of the household. Siblings, too, recognize age differences, with younger siblings addressing older siblings by respectful terms rather than by name.

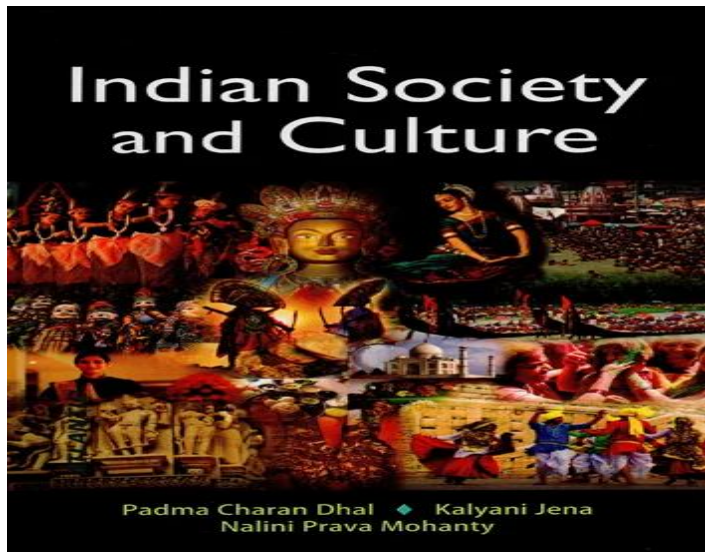
## **Purity and Pollution**

Many status differences in Indian society are expressed in terms of ritual purity and pollution, complex notions that vary greatly among different castes, religious groups, and regions.

Generally, high status is associated with purity and low status with pollution. Some kinds of purity are inherent; for example, a member of a high-ranking Brahmin, or priestly, caste is born with more inherent purity than someone born into a low-ranking sweeper, or scavenger, caste. Other kinds of purity are more transitory—for example, a Brahmin who has just taken a bath is more ritually pure than a Brahmin who has not bathed for a day.

**Purity** is associated with ritual cleanliness—daily bathing in flowing water, dressing in freshly laundered clothes, eating only the foods appropriate for one’s caste, and avoiding physical contact with people of significantly lower rank or with impure substances, such as the bodily wastes of another adult. Involvement with the products of death or violence is usually ritually polluting.

## Social Interdependence



One of the great themes pervading Indian life's social interdependence. People are born into groups—families, clans, subcastes, castes, and religious communities—and feel a deep sense of inseparability from these groups. People are deeply involved with others, and for many, the greatest fear is the possibility of being left alone, without social support.

Psychologically, family members typically experience intense emotional interdependence. Economic activities, too, are deeply embedded in a social nexus. Through a multitude of kinship ties, each person is linked with kin in villages and towns near and far. Almost everywhere a person goes, he can find a relative from whom he can expect moral and practical support.

In every activity, social ties can help a person and the absence of them can bring failure.

Seldom do people carry out even the simplest tasks on their own. When a small child eats, his mother puts the food into his mouth with her own hand. When a girl brings water home from the well in pots on her head, someone helps her unload the pots.

A student hopes that an influential relative or friend can facilitate his college admission. A young person anticipates that parents will arrange his or her marriage. Finally, a person facing death expects that relatives will conduct the proper funeral rites ensuring his own smooth passage to the next stage of existence and reaffirming social ties among mourners.

This sense of interdependence extends into the theological realm. From birth onward, a child learns that his “fate” has been “written” by divine forces and that his life is shaped by powerful deities with whom an ongoing relationship must be maintained.

## **Family and Kinship**



### **Family Ideals**

The essential themes of Indian cultural life are learned within the bosom of a family. The joint family is highly valued, ideally consisting of several generations residing, working, eating, and worshipping together. Such families



include men related through the male line, along with their wives, children, and unmarried daughters.

A wife usually lives with her husband's relatives, although she retains important bonds with her natal family. Even in rapidly modernising India, the traditional joint household remains for most Indians the primary social force, in both ideal and practice.

Large families tend to be flexible and well suited to modern Indian life, especially for the more than two-thirds of Indians who are involved in agriculture. As in most primarily agricultural societies, cooperating kin help provide mutual economic security. The joint family is also common in cities, where kinship ties are often crucial to obtaining employment or financial assistance. Many prominent families, such as the Tatas, Birlas, and Sarabhais, retain joint family arrangements as they cooperate in controlling major financial empires.

The ancient ideal of the joint family retains its power, but today actual living arrangements vary widely. Many Indians live in nuclear families—a couple with their unmarried children—but belong to strong networks of beneficial kinship ties. Often, clusters of relatives live as neighbours, responding readily to their kinship obligations.

As they expand, joint families typically divide into smaller units, which gradually grow into new joint families, continuing a perpetual cycle. Today, some family members may move about to take advantage of job opportunities, typically sending money home to the larger family.

### **Family Authority and Harmony**

In the Indian household, lines of hierarchy and authority are clearly drawn, and ideals of conduct help maintain family harmony. [i] All family members

are socialised to accept the authority of those above them in the hierarchy. The eldest male acts as family head, and his wife supervises her daughters-in-law, among whom the youngest has the least authority. Reciprocally, those in authority accept responsibility for meeting the needs of other family members.

Family loyalty is a deeply held ideal, and family unity is emphasised, especially in distinction to those outside the kinship circle. Inside the household, ties between spouses and between parents and their own children are de-emphasized to enhance a wider sense of family harmony. For example, open displays of affection between husbands and wives are considered highly improper.

Traditionally, males have controlled key family resources, such as land or businesses, especially in high-status groups. Following traditional Hindu law, women did not inherit real estate and were thus beholden to their male kin who controlled land and buildings. Under Muslim customary law, women can—and do—inherit real estate, but their shares have typically been smaller than those of males. Modern legislation allows all Indian women to inherit real estate. Traditionally, for those families who could afford it, women have controlled some wealth in the form of precious jewellery.

## **Veiling and the Seclusion of Women**

A significant aspect of Indian family life is purdah (from Hindi parda, or “curtain”), or the veiling and seclusion of women. In much of northern and central India, particularly in rural areas, Hindu and Muslim women follow complex rules of veiling the body and avoidance of public appearance, especially before relatives linked by marriage and before strange men. Purdah practices are linked to patterns of authority and harmony within the family.

Hindu and Muslim purdah observances differ in certain key ways, but female modesty and decorum as well as concepts of family honor and prestige are essential to the various forms of purdah. Purdah restrictions are generally stronger for women of conservative high-status families.

Restriction and restraint for women in virtually every aspect of life are essential to purdah, limiting women's access to power and to the control of vital resources in a male-dominated society. Sequestered women should conceal their bodies and even their faces with modest clothing and veils before certain categories of people, avoid extramarital relations, and move about in public only with a male escort. Poor and low-status women often practise attenuated versions of veiling as they work in the fields and on construction gangs.

Hindu women of conservative families veil their faces and remain silent in the presence of older male in-laws, both at home and in the community. A young daughter-in-law even veils from her mother-in-law. These practices emphasise respect relationships, limit unapproved encounters, and enhance family lines of authority.

For Muslims, veiling is especially stressed outside the home, where a conservative woman may wear an all-enveloping black burka. Such purdah shelters women—and the sexual inviolability of the family—from unrelated unknown men.

In south India, purdah has been little practised, except in certain minority groups. In northern and central India today, purdah practices are diminishing, and among urbanites and even the rural elite, they are rapidly vanishing. Chastity and female modesty are still highly valued, but as education and employment opportunities for women increase, veiling has all but disappeared in progressive circles.



## Life Passages

The birth of an infant is celebrated with rites of welcome and blessing, typically much more elaborate for a boy than for a girl. Although India boasts many eminent women and was once led by a powerful woman prime minister, Indira Gandhi, and while goddesses are extensively worshipped in Hindu rituals, statistics reveal that girls are, in fact, disadvantaged in India. The 2001 Census counted only 933 females per 1000 males, reflecting sex-selective abortion, poorer medical care and nutrition, and occasional infanticide targeting females.

Parents favour boys because their value in agricultural activities tends to be higher, and after marriage a boy continues residing with his parents, supporting them as they age. In contrast, a girl drains family resources, especially when a large dowry goes with her to her husband's home. In recent decades, demands for dowries have become quite exorbitant in certain groups.

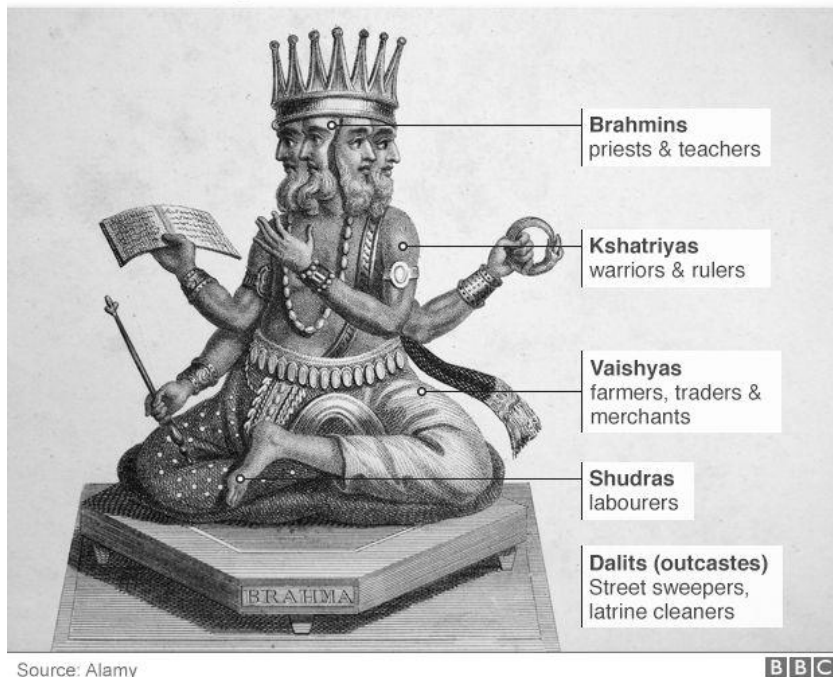
**Marriage** is deemed essential for virtually everyone in India, marking the great watershed in life for the individual. For most of Hindu northern and central India, marriages are arranged within the caste between unrelated young people who may never have met.

Among some south Indians communities and many Muslims, families seek to strengthen existing kin ties through marriages with cousins whenever possible. For every parent, finding the perfect partner for one's child is a challenging task. People use their existing social networks, and increasingly, matrimonial newspaper advertisements.

The advertisements usually announce religion, caste, educational qualifications, physical features, and earning capacity, and may hint at dowry size (even though giving or accepting dowries is actually illegal).

## Caste and Class

Brahma and the origins of caste

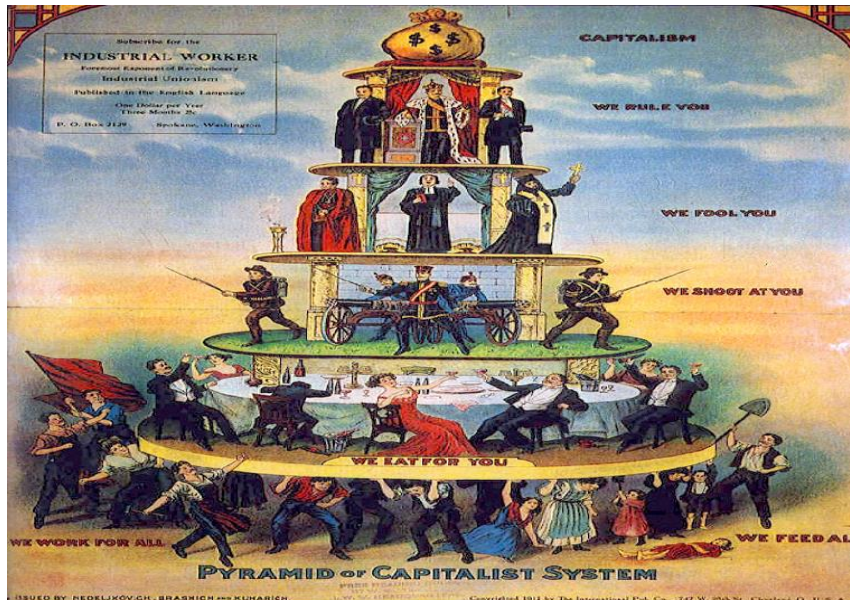


### Varna, Caste, and Other Divisions

Social inequality exists throughout the world, but perhaps nowhere has inequality been so elaborately constructed as in the Indian institution of caste. Caste has existed for many centuries, but in the modern period it has been severely criticised and is undergoing significant change.

Castes are ranked, named, endogamous (in-marrying) groups, membership in which is achieved by birth. There are thousands of castes and subcastes in India, involving hundreds of millions of people. These large kinship-based groups are fundamental to South Asian social structure. Caste membership provides a sense of belonging to a recognized group from whom support can be expected in a variety of situations.

## Classes



Most Indians reside in villages, where caste and class affiliations overlap. Large landholders are overwhelmingly upper caste, and small scale farmers middle caste, while landless labourers typically belong to the lowest-ranking castes.

These groups tend to form a three-level class system of stratification in rural areas, and members of the groups are drawing together within regions across caste lines in order to enhance their economic and political power. For example, since the late 1960s, some of the middle-ranking cultivating castes of northern India, spurred by competition with higher-caste landed elites, have cooperated politically in order to advance their common economic interests. In cities, class lines adhere less obviously to caste affiliations, as vested interests strongly crosscut caste boundaries.

### Village Structure and Unity

About three-fourths of India's people live in some 500,000 villages, where India's most basic business—agriculture takes place. Most villages have fewer than 1,000 inhabitants, but some have as many as 5,000 people. Indian villages are often quite complex and are not isolated socially or economically.



Most villages include a multiplicity of economic, caste, kinship, occupational, and even religious groups linked vertically within each settlement. Residents typically range from priests and cultivators to merchants, artisans, and labourers. Various crucial horizontal linkages connect each village with many others and with urban areas both near and far. In daily life and at colourful festivals and rituals, members of various groups provide essential goods and services for one another.

## Urban Life



The acceleration of urbanisation is profoundly affecting the transformation of Indian society. Slightly more than one-quarter of the country's population is urban. Mumbai (Bombay) is currently the sixth largest urban area in the world at 18 million, and Kolkata (Calcutta) ranks fourteenth at 13 million. In recent years, India's largest cities have grown at twice the rate of its small towns and villages, with many of the increases due to rural-urban migration.



The largest cities are densely populated, congested, noisy, polluted, and deficient in clean water, electricity, sanitation, and decent housing. Slums abound, often cheek-by-jowl with luxury apartment buildings, with the roads overrun with pedestrians, cattle, refuse, and vehicles spewing diesel fumes.

## DIVERSITY



### Meaning of Diversity

- ❖ Ordinarily diversity means differences. For our purposes, however, it means something more than mere differences. It means collective differences, that is, differences which mark off one group of people from another.
- ❖ These differences may be of any sort: biological, religious, linguistic etc. On the basis of biological differences,
- ❖ For example, we have racial diversity. On the basis of religious

- ❖ differences, similarly, we have religious diversity. The point to note is that diversity refers to collective differences.
- ❖ The term diversity is the opposite of uniformity. Uniformity means similarity of some sort that characterises a people. 'Uni' refers to one; 'form' refers to the common ways. So when there is something common to all the people, we say They show uniformity.
- ❖ When students of a school, members of the police or the army wear the same type of dress, we say they are in 'uniform'. Like
- ❖ diversity, thus, uniformity is also a collective concept. When a group of people share a similar characteristic, be it language or religion or anything else, it shows uniformity in that respect. But when we have groups of people hailing from different races, religions and cultures, they represent diversity.
- ❖ D.N.Majumdar wrote a book with the title, Races and Cultures of India. Mark the words in the plural:
- ❖ Races (not Race); Cultures (not Culture).
- ❖ Thus, diversity means variety. For all practical purposes it means a variety of groups and cultures.
- ❖ We have such a variety in abundance in India. We have here a variety of races, of religions, of languages, of castes and of cultures. For the same reason India is known for its socio-cultural diversity.



**Meaning of Unity**



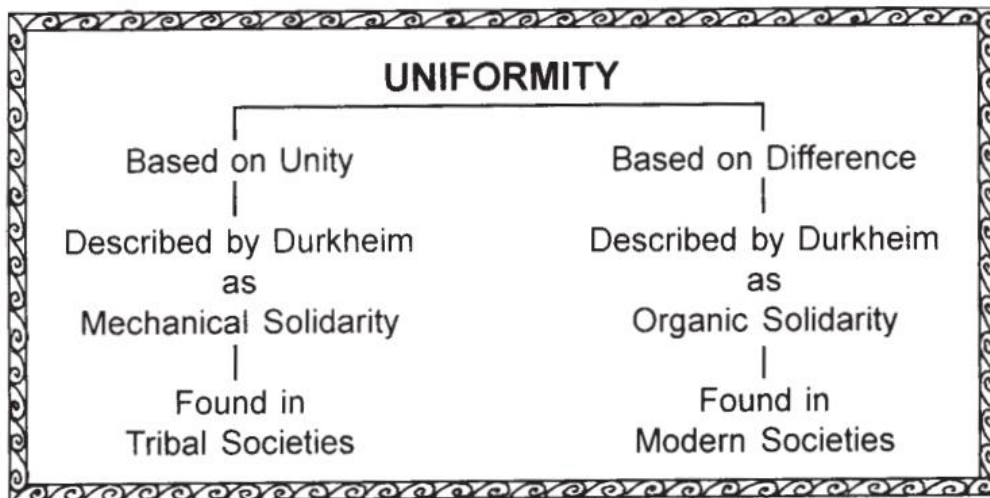
Unity means integration. It is a social psychological condition. It connotes a sense of one-ness, a sense of we-ness. It stands for the bonds, which hold the members of a society together.

There is a difference between unity and uniformity.

Uniformity presupposes similarity, unity does not. Thus, unity may or may not be based on uniformity.

Unity may be born out of uniformity. Durkheim calls this type of unity a mechanical solidarity. We find this type of unity in tribal societies and in traditional societies. However, unity may as well be based on differences. It is such unity, which is described by Durkheim as organic solidarity. This type of unity characterises modern societies.

Let us see it in a diagram



**Fig. 1.1: Two types of unity**

## **FORMS OF DIVERSITY IN INDIA**

As hinted earlier, we find in India diversity of various sorts. Some of its important forms are the following: racial, linguistic, religious and caste-based. Let us deal with each one of them in some detail.

## Racial Diversity



You may have seen people of different races in India. A race is a group of people with a set of distinctive physical features such as skin colour, type of nose, form of hair, etc.

Herbert Risley had classified the people of India into seven racial types.

These

are **(i) Turko-Iranian, (ii) Indo-Aryan, (iii) Scytho-Dravidian, (iv) Aryo Dravidian, (v) Mongolo-Dravidian, (vi) Mongoloid, and (vii) Dravidian.**

These seven racial types can be reduced to three basic types—the Indo-Aryan, the Mongolian and the Dravidian. In his opinion the last two types would account for the racial composition of tribal India. He was the supervisor of the census operations held in India in 1891 and it was data from this census, which founded the basis of this classification. It was based mainly on language-types rather than physical characteristics; Risley's classification was criticised for its shortcomings.

Other administrative officers and anthropologists, like J.H. Hutton, D.N.

Majumdar and B.S. Guha, have given the latest racial classification of the Indian people based on further research in this field.

**Hutton's and Guha's Classifications** are based on 1931 census operations.

B.S. Guha (1952) has identified six racial types

**(1) the Negrito,**

- (2) the Proto Australoid,**
- (3) the Mongoloid,**
- (4) the Mediterranean,**
- (5) the Western Brachycephals,**
- (6) the Nordic.**



Besides telling you what the various types denote, we shall not go into the details of this issue, because that will involve us in technical matters pertaining to physical anthropology. Here, we need only to be aware of the diversity of racial types in India.

**Negritos** are the people who belong to the black racial stock as found in Africa. They have black skin colour, frizzle hair, thick lips, etc. In India some of the tribes in South India, such as the Kadar, the Irula and the Paniyan have distinct Negrito strains.

The **Proto-Australoid** races consist of an ethnic group, which includes the Australian aborigines and other peoples of southern Asia and Pacific Islands. Representatives of this group are the Ainu of Japan, the Vedda of Sri Lanka, and the Sakai of Malaysia. In India the tribes of Middle India belong to this strain. Some of these tribes are the Ho of Singhbhum, Bihar, and the Bhil of the Vindhya ranges.

**The Mongoloids** are a major racial stock native to Asia, including the peoples of northern and eastern Asia. For example, Chinese, Japanese, Burmese, Eskimos, and often American Indians also belong to this race. In India, the North Eastern regions have tribes of brachycephalic Mongoloid strain. A slightly different kind of Mongoloid racial stock is found in the Brahmaputra Valley. The Mikir-Bodo group of tribes and the Angami Nagas represent the best examples of Mongoloid racial composition in India.

The **Mediterranean** races relate to the caucasian physical type, i.e., the white Unity and Diversity race. It is characterised by medium or short stature, slender build, long head with cephalic index (the ratio multiplied by 100 of the maximum breadth of the head to its maximum length) of less than 75 and dark (continental) complexion.

The **Western Brachycephals** are divided into the following three sub-groups:

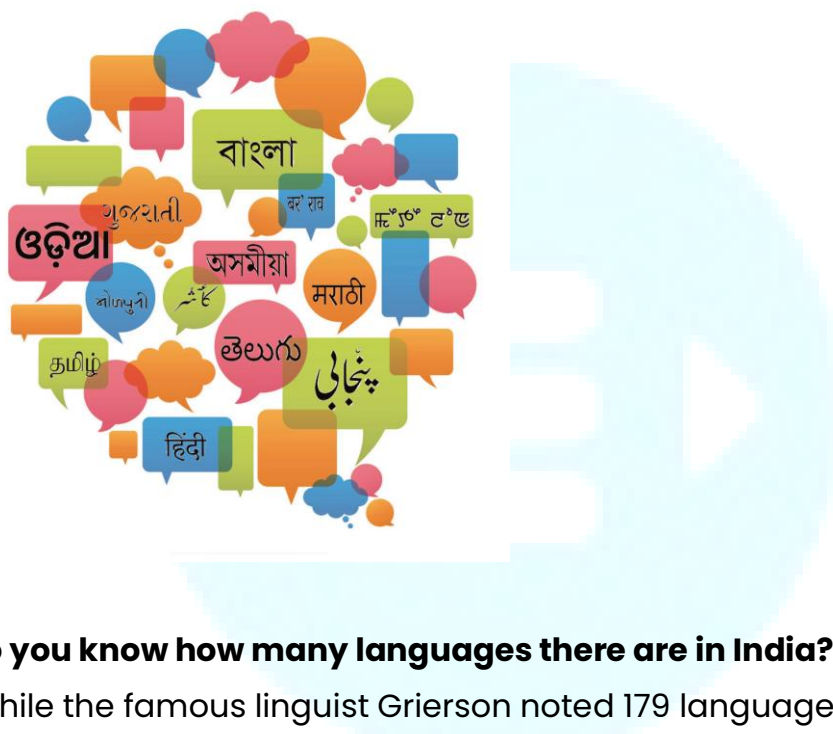
- (i) The **Alpenoid** are characterised by broad head, medium stature and light skin, found amongst Bania castes of Gujarat, the Kayasthas of Bengal, etc.
- (ii) The **Dinaric**— They are characterised by broad head, long nose, tall stature and dark skin colour, found amongst the Brahmin of Bengal, the non-Brahmin of Karnataka,
- (iii) **The Armenoid**— They are characterised by features similar to Dinaric. The Armenoid has a more marked shape of the back of head, a prominent and narrow nose. The Parsi of Bombay show the typical characteristics of the Armenoid race

Finally, the **Nordic races** belong to the physical type characterised by tall stature, long head, light skin and hair, and blue eyes. They are found in Scandinavian countries, Europe. In India, they are found in different parts of the north of the country, especially in Punjab and Rajputana.

The Kho of Chitral, the Red Kaffirs, and the Khatash are some of the representatives of this type.

Research suggests that the Nordics came from the north, probably from south east Russia and south west Siberia, through central Asia to India.

## Linguistic Diversity



### Do you know how many languages there are in India?

While the famous linguist Grierson noted 179 languages and 544 dialects, the 1971 census on the other hand, reported 1652 languages in India which are spoken as mother tongue. Not all these languages are, however, equally widespread.

Many of them are tribal speeches and these are spoken by less than one percent of the total population. Here you can see that in India there is a good deal of linguistic diversity. Only 18 languages are listed in Schedule VIII of the Indian Constitution.

These are **Assamese, Bengali, Gujarati, Hindi, Kannada, Kashmiri, Konkani, Malayalam, Manipuri, Marathi, Nepali, Oriya, Punjabi, Sanskrit, Sindhi, Tamil, Telugu and Urdu.**

Out of these 18 languages, Hindi is spoken by 39.85 percent of the total population; Bengali, Telugu and Marathi by around 8 percent each; Tamil and Urdu by 6.26 and 5.22 percent, respectively; and the rest by less than 5 percent each as per 1991 census report (India 2003).

The above constitutionally recognised languages belong to two linguistic families:

Indo-Aryan and Dravidian. Malayalam, Kannada, Tamil and Telugu are the four major Dravidian languages. The languages of the Indo-Aryan family are spoken by 75 percent of India's total population while the languages of the Dravidian family are spoken by 20 percent.

This linguistic diversity notwithstanding, we have always had a sort of link language, though it has varied from age to age. In ancient times it was Sanskrit, in mediaeval age it was Arabic or Persian and in modern times we have Hindi and English as official languages.

## **Religious Diversity**





- India is a land of multiple religions. We find here followers of various faiths, particularly of **Hinduism, Islam, Christianity, Sikhism, Buddhism, Jainism, Zoroastrianism**, among others.
- You know that Hinduism is the dominant religion of India. According to the census of 1981 it is professed by 82.64 percent of the total population. Next comes Islam, which is practised by 11.35 percent. This is followed by Christianity having a following of 2.43 percent, Sikhism reported by 1.96 percent, Buddhism by 0.71 percent and Jainism by 0.48 percent. The religions with lesser following are Judaism, Zoroastrianism and Bahaism.
- While Hinduism saw a slight reduction in the percentage of their followers by the year 1991, most of the other religions increased their strength though by a very narrow margin.
- According to the 1991 census, **Hinduism has 82.41 percent of the total population. 11.67 percent followed Islam and 2.32 percent followed Christianity. Sikhism, Buddhism and Jainism followed by 1.99, 0.77 and 0.41 percent, respectively. And 0.43 reported to follow other religions.**
- Then there are sects within each religion. Hinduism, for example, has many sects including **Shaiva, Shakta and Vaishnava**. Add to

them the sects born or religious reform movements such as Arya Samaj, Brahmo Samaj, Ramakrishna Krishna Mission. More recently, some new cults have come up such as Radhaswami, Saibaba, etc. Similarly, Islam is divided into Shiya and Sunni;

- Sikhism into Namdhari and Nirankari; Jainism into Digambar and Shvetambar; and Buddhism into Hinayan and Mahayan. While Hindu and Muslim are found in almost all parts of India, the remaining minority religions have their pockets of concentration.
- **Christians** have their strongholds in the three southern states of Kerala, Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh and in the north-eastern states like Nagaland and Meghalaya. Sikhs are concentrated largely in Punjab, Buddhists in Maharashtra, and Jains are mainly spread over Maharashtra, Rajasthan and Gujarat, but also found in most urban centres throughout the country.

## **Caste Diversity Unity and Diversity**

India, as you know, is a country of castes. The term caste is generally used in two senses: sometimes in the sense of Varna and sometimes in the sense of Jati.

(i) **Varna** refers to a segment of the four-fold division of Hindu society based on functional criteria.

The four Varna are **Brahman, Kshatriya, Vaishya and Shudra** with their specialised functions as learning, defence, trade and manual service.

The Varna hierarchy is accepted all over India.

(ii) **Jati** refers to a hereditary endogamous status group practising a specific traditional occupation. You may be surprised to know that there are more than 3,000 jati in India. These are hierarchically graded in

different ways in different regions. It may also be noted that the practice of caste system is not confined to Hindus alone.

- We find castes among the Muslim, Christian, Sikh as well as other communities. You may have heard of the hierarchy of Shaikh, Saiyed, Mughal, Pathan among the Muslim.
- Furthermore, there are castes like teli (oil pressure), dhobi (washerman), darjee (tailor), etc. among the Muslim.
- Similarly, caste consciousness among the Christian in India is not unknown.
- Since a vast majority of Christians in India are converted from Hindu fold, the converts have carried the caste system into Christianity.
- Among the Sikh again you have so many castes including Jat Sikh and Majahabi Sikh (lower castes). In view of this you can well imagine the extent of caste diversity in India.
- In addition to the above described major forms of diversity, we have diversity of many other sorts like settlement patterns – tribal, rural, urban; marriage and kinship patterns along religious and regional lines; cultural patterns reflecting regional variations, and so on.

## **BONDS OF UNITY IN INDIA**

In the preceding section we have illustrated the diversity of India. But that is not the whole story. There are bonds of unity underlying all this diversity.

These bonds of unity may be located in a certain underlying uniformity of life as well as in certain mechanisms of integration.

Census Commissioner in 1911,

Herbert Risley (1969), was right when he observed: "Beneath the manifold diversity of physical and social type, language, custom and

religion which strikes the observer in India there can still be discerned .... a certain underlying uniformity of life from the Himalayas to Cape Comorin”.

We will describe the bonds of unity of India in this section. These are geo-political unity, the institution of pilgrimage, tradition of accommodation, and tradition of interdependence. We will now describe each of them in that order.

### **Geo-political Unity**

The first bond of unity of India is found in its geo-political integration. India is known for its geographical unity marked by the Himalayas in the north end and the oceans on the other sides. Politically India is now a sovereign state.

The same constitution and same parliament govern every part of it. We share the same political culture marked by the norms of democracy, secularism and socialism.

Although it has not been recognised till recently, the geo-political unity of India was always visualised by our seers and rulers. The expressions of this consciousness of the geo-political unity of India are found in Rig-Veda, in Sanskrit literature, in the edicts of Asoka, in Buddhist monuments and in various other sources. The ideal of geo-political unity of India is also reflected in the concepts of **Bharatvarsha** (the old indigenous classic name for India),

**Chakravarti** (emperor), and **Ekchhatradhipatya** (under one rule).

### **The Institution of Pilgrimage**



Another source of unity of India lies in what is known as temple culture, which is reflected in the network of shrines and sacred places.

From Badrinath and Kedarnath in the north to Rameshwaram in the south, Jagannath Puri in the east to Dwaraka in the west the religious shrines and holy rivers are spread throughout the length and breadth of the country.

Closely related to them is the age-old culture of pilgrimage, which has always moved people to various parts of the country and fostered in them a sense of geo-cultural unity.

As well as being an expression of religious sentiment, pilgrimage is also an expression of love for the motherland, a sort of mode of worship of the country.

It has played a significant part in promoting interaction and cultural affinity among the people living in different parts of India. Pilgrimage can, therefore, rightly be viewed as a mechanism of geo-cultural unity.

### **Tradition of Accommodation**

Have you heard of the syncretic quality of Indian culture, its remarkable quality of accommodation and tolerance?

There is ample evidence of it. The first evidence of it lies in the elastic character of Hinduism, the majority religion of India. It is common



knowledge that Hinduism is not a homogeneous religion, a religion having one God, one Book and one Temple.

Indeed, it can be best described as a federation of faiths. Polytheistic (having multiple deities) in character, it goes to the extent of accommodating village level deities and tribal faiths.

For the same reason, sociologists have distinguished two broad forms of Hinduism: sanskritic and popular. Sanskritic is that which is found in the texts (religious books like Vedas, etc.) and popular is that which is found in the actual life situation of the vast masses.

Robert Redfield has called these two forms as great tradition of **Ramayana and Mahabharata** and the little tradition of worship of the village deity.

And everything passes for Hinduism.

What it shows is that Hinduism has been an open religion, a receptive and absorbing religion, an encompassing religion. It is known for its quality of openness and accommodation.

Another evidence of it lies in its apathy to conversion. Hinduism is not a Unity and Diversity **proselytising** religion. That is, it does not seek converts.

Nor has it ordinarily resisted other religions to seek converts from within its fold. This quality of accommodation and tolerance has saved the way to the coexistence of several faiths in India.

Mechanisms of coexistence of people of different faiths have been in existence here for long. Take for example, the case of Hindu-Muslim amity.

Hindus and Muslims have always taken part in each other's functions, festivities and feasts.

**How did they do it?**



They did it by evolving the mechanism of providing for a separate hearth and a set of vessels for each other so as to respect each other's religious sensibility. This always facilitated mutual visiting and sharing in each other's joy and grief.

They have also done so by showing regards for each other's saints and holy men. Thus, both Hindus and Muslims have shown reverence to the saints and Pirs of each other. And this holds as well for the coexistence of other religious groups like Sikh, Jain, Christian and so on.

### **Tradition of Interdependence**

We have had a remarkable tradition of interdependence, which has held us together throughout centuries. One manifestation of it is found in the form of the Jajmani **system**, i.e., a system of functional interdependence of castes.

The term "**jajman**" refers generally to the patron or recipient of specialised services.

The relations were traditionally between a food producing family and the families that supported them with goods and services. These came to be called the **jajmani relations**. Jajmani relations were conspicuous in village life, as they entailed ritual matters, social support as well as economic exchange.

The whole of a local social order was involved (the people and their values) in such jajmani links. A patron had jajmani relations with members of a high caste (like a Brahmin priest whose services he needed for rituals). He also required the services of specialists from the lower jati to perform those necessary tasks like washing of dirty clothes, cutting of hair, cleaning the rooms and toilets, delivery of the child etc. Those associated in these interdependent relations were expected to be and were broadly supportive of each other with qualities of ready help that generally close kinsmen were expected to show.

The jajmani relations usually involved multiple kinds of payment and obligations as well as multiple functions.

We shall also discuss the jajmani system in the next unit on Rural Social Structure. Here it will suffice to note that no caste was self-sufficient. If anything, it depended on many things on other castes. In a sense, each caste was a functional group in that it rendered a specified service to other caste groups. Jajmani system is that mechanism which has formalised and regulated this functional interdependence. Furthermore, castes cut across the boundaries of religious communities.

## **Approaches to the study of Indian Society –**

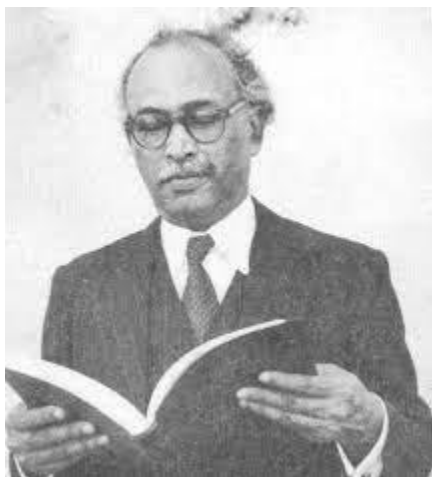
### **1. Indological Approach – G.S. Ghurye**

#### **Indology: Meaning and Definition**

Indology is known as the science of Indian Society. The Indological perspective claims to understand Indian Society through the concepts, theories and frameworks that are closely associated with Indian Civilization.

It made a claim that Indian Society is unique in structure, function and dynamics and cannot be associated with the European Society. Indology relies on book view and culture and denounces rigorous empirical investigation.

#### **G. S. Ghurye Indological Approach**



Ghurye stands as the commander in the Indian Sociological frontiers. He has often been acclaimed as the „**father of Indian Sociology**“.. Ghurye’s “**Caste and Race in India**” tried to make a reconstruction of a very orthodox traditional and age old social institution of India i.e. Caste. In this landmark work he made a long journey from the traditional textual interpretation of caste from Sanskrit literature to its modern social reality with changing function.

#### **Methodological approach of Ghurye:**

Ghurye adopted a **historical - comparative - anthropological - diffusionist** approach and many of his works focused heavily on culture. He supplemented study of Sanskrit texts with theoretical perspectives. His study of Indian society was from the point of view of continuities from the past as well as changes induced by British rule.

Despite his training at Cambridge under W.H.R. Rivers and his broad acceptance of the structural-functional approach, Ghurye did not strictly conform to the functionalist tradition when interpreting the complex facets of Indian society and culture, which he chose to investigate.

It was said that “Ghurye insisted on fieldwork, though he himself was an armchair scholar”. It would be appropriate to characterise Ghurye as a practitioner of **‘theoretical pluralism’**. Basically, interested in inductive empirical exercises and depicting Indian social reality using any source material – primarily Indological. One of the major themes that Ghurye worked on was that of **‘tribal’ or ‘aboriginal’** cultures.

In fact, it was his writings on this subject, and specially his debate with Verrier Elwin which first made him known outside sociology and the academic world.

Ghurye became the best-known exponent of the nationalist view and insisted on characterising the tribes of India as ‘backward Hindus’ rather than distinct cultural groups unlike the Western anthropologists.

### **MODERN INDOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE:**

Indology refers to the historical and comparative study of Indian society and culture, by using ancient Indian texts and scriptures. Thus, indologists use ancient history, epics, religious manuscripts and texts (Puranas, Manu Smriti, Ramayana, Mahabharata) etc. in the study of Indian social institutions.

**The Indological approach** rests on the basic assumption that Indian society and culture are unique and that this contextual specificity of Indian social realities could be grasped better through these texts. Therefore, it is often called the “textual view” or “textual perspective” of social phenomena as it depends upon texts.

Sociologists like G.S. Ghurye, Louis Dumont, K.M. Kapadia, P.H. Prabhu and Irawati Karve have tried to explore Hindu social institutions and practices, either with reference to religious texts or through the analysis of contemporary practices.

### **CENTRAL IDEAS**

#### **1.CASTE AND RACE**

Ghurye's "Caste and Race in India" tried to make a reconstruction of a very orthodox traditional and age-old social institution of India i.e. Caste. In this book, Ghurye provided a detailed critique of the then dominant theories about the relationship between race and caste

### **FEATURES OF CASTE GIVEN BY GHURYE**

Ghurye explains caste in India on the basis of six distinctive characteristics:

- Segmental division of society;
- Hierarchy;
- Civil and religious disabilities and privileges;
- Lack of unrestricted choice of occupation;
- Restriction on food, drinks and social intercourse;
- Endogamy.

### **TRIBES IN INDIA**



Ghurye's works on the tribes were general as well as specific. He wrote a general work on scheduled tribes in which he dwelt with the historical, administrative and social dimensions of Indian tribes. He also wrote on specific tribes such as the Kolis of Maharashtra. Ghurye presented his thesis on tribes at a time when a majority of the established anthropologists and administrators were of the opinion that the separate identity of the tribes is to be maintained at any cost.



Ghurye was of the view that the Indian tribes were like “backward Hindus”. Their backwardness was due to their imperfect integration into Hindu society.

The Santhals, Bhils, Gonds, etc. who live in South-Central India are examples of it.

For Ghurye, the incorporation of Hindu values and norms into tribal life was a positive development. With increasing contact with the Hindu social groups, the tribes had slowly absorbed certain Hindu values and style of life and came to be considered part of the Hindu caste society.

The tribes gave up liquor-drinking, received education and improved their agriculture under Hindu influence.

Ghurye presents a huge data on the thoughts, practices and habits of the tribes inhabiting the Central Indian region. He quotes extensively from various writings and reports to show that Kataris, Bhuiyas, Oraons, Khonds, Gonds, etc. have substantially adopted Hinduism as their religion.

Ghurye suggests that the economic motivation behind the adoption of Hinduism is very strong among the tribes. They can come out of their tribal crafts and adopt a specialised type of occupation, which is in demand in society.

In his later works on north-eastern tribes, Ghurye documented secessionist trends. He felt that unless these were held in check, the political unity of the country would be damaged.

## **RURAL-URBANISATION IN INDIA**

Ghurye says that urbanisation in India was not just due to the industrial growth; rather it started within the rural areas itself.

He took the references from Sanskrit texts and documents to illustrate the

growth of urban centres from the need for market felt in a rural hinterland.

Development of agriculture needed more and more markets to exchange the surplus in food grains. So, in many rural areas, one part of a village started functioning as a market. This led to a township, which in turn developed **administrative, judicial and other institutions**.

In the past, urban centres were based on feudal patronage, which had demands for silk cloths, jewellery, metal artefacts, weapons etc. which led to

the growth of urban centres such as Banaras, Kanchipuram, Jaipur, Moradabad etc

In brief, it may be said that Ghurye's approach to 'rural-urbanisation' reflects the indigenous source of urbanism.

## **2. Structural Approach – M.N.Srinivas,**



### **STRUCTURAL FUNCTIONALIST APPROACH**

Structural-functional Approach is, perhaps, the most popular of all

approaches to the understanding of Indian society. Significantly, it gives more importance to the empirical structure than to the normative framework of culture.

The followers of structural functionalist approach never take 'truth' for granted. They believe that it happens in social context that requires empirical investigation as opposed to the textual view followed by the Indological approach.

Thus, one must go to the field for first-hand information. It rules out the glorification of the past on the basis of available texts. For a structural functionalist, social structure is an empirical reality present at a given point of time.

This approach became very popular after India's independence, spearheaded by M.N. Srinivas. It was used for the study and analysis of rural community, caste structure, family structure, kinship structure, religious structure, and political structure.

M.N. Srinivas not only used a structural-functional approach himself but also inspired his colleagues and students to apply it in understanding Indian society.

His classic study of '**Religion and Society among the Coorgs**', Rampura Village and '**Social Change in Modern India**' are important examples of application of structural functionalist approach. S.C. Dube's study of Indian Village is another important example.

All of these and similar studies used field study approach to the understanding of Indian society. Though the major strength of this approach is its strong empirical foundation, its critics are of the view that it suffers from its limitation of neglecting the cultural and historical dimensions.

Srinivas explained two basic concepts to understand Indian society:

**a) Book view-** Knowledge about the elements which make up Indian society like religion, varna, caste, family, village, etc, come from sacred texts and books. This view is also known as the Indological approach.

**b) Field view-** Srinivas believed that knowledge about different regions of the Indian society can be attained through field work. This he called field view. Srinivas used the field view and the empirical method of ethnography to study the caste system in village settings.

### **1. Westernization**

### **2. Sanskritization**

To explain the process of social change

Also introduces the term **“Dominant Caste”** to show flexibility & mobility within the caste i.e. where in a caste of lower social rituals could still have powers.

Have political and economical control in an area.

His structural and functional approach allowed the exclusion of religious minorities/groups who were not in the Hinduism fold.

### **WESTERNIZATION**

It refers to the changes brought about as consequences of the contact with the western world culture (particularly with British).

S.N. Srinivas first used this concept in an essay titled “A NOTE ON SANSKRITIZATION AND WESTERNIZATION” in a journal for eastern quarterly in 1956 and subsequently included in a book Caste in Modern India in 1962.

### **SANSKRITIZATION**

The term “Sanskritization” was first used in Srinivas work i.e, Religion and Society among the coorgs of South India.

Sanskritization is used to explain the process of upward mobility within the Hindu caste system.

For him Indian traditions are those who are manifest within the caste system and village (Hindus and in no sense secular).

Hindutva ideology (Dominant caste, Sanskritization).

**The proponents of this perspective focus on the:-**

**1. Ordering (understanding).**

**2. Patterning of the social world.**

As our life is guided by social structure which are stable patterns of social behaviour.

**Social structure gives shapes to our lives :-**

**1. Family**

**2. Community**

**3. Certain rituals i.e. Handshake etc.**

**4. religious organisation**

### **3.Marxian Approach – A.R.Desai**





- Akshay Ramanlal Desai (1915–1994) was born on April 16, 1915 at Nadiad in Gujarat. In 1946, he graduated from Bombay University under the
- supervision of G S Ghurye. In 1948, the publication of his **“magnum opus”**
- The Social Background of Indian Nationalism made him well known in academic circles.
- A.R. Desai had consistently advocated and applied a dialectical-historical **model in his sociological studies.**
- His studies of nationalism and its social configuration, his examination of community development programmes for economic development in villages, his diagnosis of the interface between state and society in India or the relationship between polity and social structure, his treatment of urban slums and their demographic problems, and finally his
- The study of peasant movements are all based on a Marxist method of **historical-dialectical materialism.**
- Desai has been one of the only sociologists who has consistently applied Marxist methods in his treatment of Indian social structure and its processes.
- The Marxist approach gives central importance to property structure in the
- analysis of society. His sociology is essentially a secular phenomenon where
- He relies on economics to understand and analyse social structures.
- According to Desai, Marxist approach helps to understand the social reality of India through the means of production, division of labour, and social relations of production.
- For Desai property relations are crucial because they shape the purpose,

- nature, control, direction and objectives underlying the production. It also shapes the hierarchy and division in the society since it decides who gets how much and on what grounds.
- For A.R. Desai, contradictions emerging in the Indian process of social
- transformation arises mainly from the growing nexus among the capitalist bourgeoisie, rural petty-bourgeoisie and the state apparatus.

### **Subaltern approach – Dr.B.R.Ambedkar.**



**Ambedkar's subaltern approach is as follows:**

- As a result of Ambedkar's participation in politics, new aspects for social reforms were opened up. He believes that unless and until the disadvantaged fight for their rights and for themselves, no one would be able to help them out of their predicament.
- The most effective method of removing the evils from society is by self-awakening. Ambedkar, in his subaltern approach, used to preach that liberty cannot be granted as a gift; rather, it must be battled for in order to obtain it.
- Neither the benefits of others nor one's own struggle and deed will bring one to a higher level of self-elevation. For those who lacked the necessary guts to carry out their own missions and visions, Ambedkar equipped them with those things.
- According to Ambedkar, throughout Hinduism, the Vedas, smritis, and shastras were utilised as a means to inflict severe punishment on the dalits, untouchables, who were considered to be lower castes.
- As a result, he considered the Vedas, smritis, and shastras to be merely a system of governance that deprives the untouchables of their basic requirements while also creating prejudice in society. As a result, there is nothing wrong with dismantling this religion, and it isn't even considered irreligious.
- Another important feature of Ambedkar's subaltern approach is the formation of Indian nationalism, which is a fundamental component of his methodology. It took into consideration the national perception and aspirations of the oppressed.
- Not only is Ambedkar's alternative form of nationalism distinct from the dominant discourse of Hindu nationalism as represented by Raja Rammohan Roy, B.G. Tilak, Mahatma Gandhi, Jawahar Lal Nehru, and Shyama Prasad Mukherjee on the one hand and Communist-

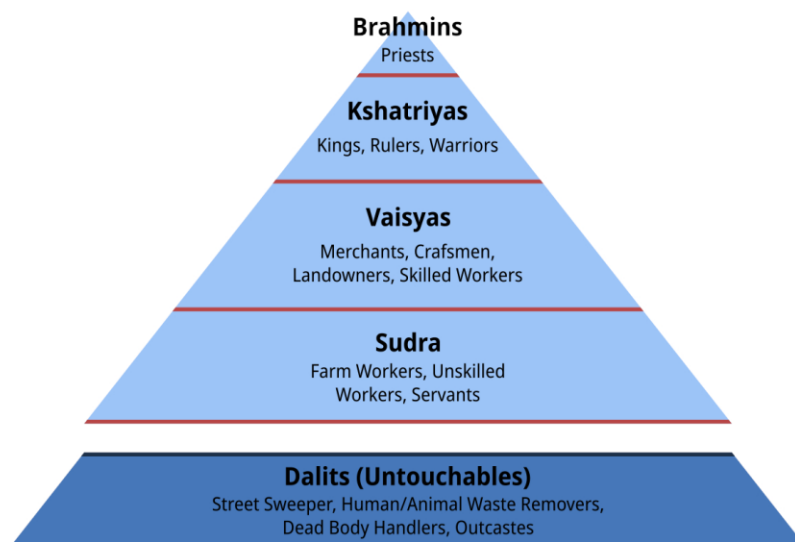
secular- socialist nationalism as represented by M. N. Roy, R. P. Duta, T. Nagi Reddy, and E. M. S.

- The communist-secular nationalism, in contrast to Hindu nationalism, focused on consolidating Brahminical supremacy in post-colonial India. Despite its efforts to abolish class, it was blind to the plight of Dalits because its ideologies were also derived from the upper castes, as was the case with Hindu nationalism.
- So Ambedkar's '**Dalit Bahujan Samaj**' became a vehicle for an anti-Hindu and anti-Brahminical rhetoric of Indian nationalism that continues to this day. Essentially, the goal of this nationalism was to establish a casteless and classless society in which there would be no discrimination based on one's birthplace or one's employment.

## BASIC INSTITUTIONS IN INDIAN SOCIETY

### CASTE

#### Indian Caste System



The word caste has been defined from the Portuguese word *Casta*, which means race, breed or kind. Risley defines caste as 'a collection of families or groups of families bearing a common name, claiming a common descent from a mythical ancestor, human or divine, professing to follow the same hereditary calling and is regarded by those who are competent to give an opinion as forming a single homogenous community'.

The caste system in India has been studied from the following three different perspectives:

**Indological:** The Indologists have viewed caste from the scriptural point of view and believe that the ancient Hindu scriptures have given birth to the concept of caste. They maintain that the varnas have originated from **Brahma—the Virat Purusha (the Great Man)**—and castes are units within the varna system, which have developed as a result of hypergamy and hypogamy. The rituals to be performed by the four varnas are status bound and laid down in the Brahmanas (800 BC), while the customs and laws to be followed by each caste are laid down in the Smritis (100–200 BC).

The Brahmins were given the pre-eminent position in the society as it was believed that they had the divine right to interpret law and religion. The Indologists believe that the caste system would continue to exist as it was divinely ordained and cannot be dismantled by human beings.

**Social-anthropological:** The social anthropologists have studied caste from the cultural point of view. The organisational and structural approaches of Hutton consider caste as a unique system found in India alone. The institutional approach of Kroeber and Risley does not view the caste system as relevant only to India.

They find it in ancient Egypt, mediaeval Europe and present-day Southern United States. The relational approach finds caste situations in Army, Business, Factory, etc. It states that the presence/absence of caste in a society depends upon the absence/presence of mobility in groups. If mobility is normal, there is no caste system and vice versa.



**Sociological:** Sociologists have viewed caste from the stratificational point of view. They study caste in terms of social stratification in a society. They study it as a phenomenon of social inequality. According to them, society has certain structural aspects and it distributes its members in social positions. The interaction is the basis of social structures and types of interactions along with associated norms categorise social structures.

### **Characteristics of the Indian Caste System**

According to Dr G. S. Ghurye, any attempt to define caste 'is bound to fail because of the complexity of the phenomenon.' He has outlined the following characteristics of the Indian caste society:

- Segmental division of society
- Hierarchy of castes
- Restrictions on commensality and social intercourse
- Differential civil and religious privileges and disabilities
- Restrictions on occupational choice
- Restrictions on marriage

### **Structural changes:**

- ❖ The following are some of the major structural changes in the caste system:
- ❖ **Decline in the supremacy of the Brahmins:** Due to the forces of
- ❖ modernization and rapid economic development, Brahmins have lost their dominance of yore.
- ❖ **Dilution of caste hierarchy:** Factors like migration to urban areas,
- ❖ diversification of jobs, etc. have reduced the gaps between different castes and there is greater intercourse amongst members of various castes.
- ❖ **Socio-economic empowerment of Dalits and Harijans:** The

- ❖ Government's policy of affirmative action in case of the oppressed castes has led to an upwards movement of their social status.
- ❖ Attitudinal changes: The attitudinal changes in the caste system are as follows:
- ❖ **Decline of the concept of ascriptive status:** The processes of
- ❖ **modernization, westernisation, industrialization,** etc. have seriously eroded the hold of the caste system. People do not accept the notion of ascriptive status anymore as it is determined only by birth. Status is now achieved through ability, efficiency, wealth, political power, etc.
- ❖ Philosophical basis of caste system has become unacceptable:
- ❖ The belief of people that the caste system is divinely ordained has undergone change. They have no faith on the philosophical basis of the caste system because they have stopped accepting the doctrine of karma.

## **CASTE AND POLITICS**

Ideologically, caste and democracy differ from each other and cannot co-exist because caste advocates fragmentation of society whereas democracy stands for the unification of society. Caste is based on inequality by birth.

Democracy is based on principles of equality. Caste advocates social exclusion and democracy advocates social inclusion.

Caste provides wealth, power and status to specific groups but democracy provides equal chance to all categories irrespective of bias.

However, the irony is that both caste system and democracy coexist in Indian society. Rather than becoming insignificant with political modernisation and growth of democracy, caste became

an important determinant on elections and political mobilisations in India.

The relationship between caste and politics has been analysed at two levels: one, how caste affects politics, and two, how politics affects caste.

Politics provides mainly three things to caste people: – prestige and power, economic benefits and administrative patronage.

Caste, on the other hand provides, leadership, vote bank and an organisational base to the political players

## **CASTE ASSOCIATIONS**

Caste associations are formal organisations which often encompass several endogamous castes or jatis of similar name, occupation and rank.

**Rudolph and Rudolph** identified them as para communities which enable members of castes to pursue social mobility, political power, and economic advantage.

Caste associations resemble in many ways the voluntary associations or interest groups found in industrially advanced societies. Generally such associations have a governing body operating under a constitution and they publish newspapers advocating the cause of its members, hold meetings, negotiate disputes, represent the association in its relations with outside agencies, and endorse political candidates.

However, unlike the voluntary associations, caste associations are characterised by a shared sense of culture, character and status, which gives it solidarity not found in voluntary associations.

### **Functional changes of caste:**

The functional changes in the caste system are as follows:

- Birth no longer the sole determinant of status: Unlike earlier, birth is no longer the sole factor determining social status. Wealth, education, occupation, etc. have become the determinants of status and caste as an ascriber of status has been relegated to the background.
- Change due to occupational diversity: Occupation is no longer hereditarily determined. The so-called high-status occupations are accessible to members of all castes. On the other hand, members of high castes have also taken to manual work to earn a decent and dignified living.
- **Dilution of restrictions on marriage:** The Special Marriages Act, 1954 and the Hindu Marriage Act, 1955 have removed the restrictions on inter-caste marriages by legalising them. Caste endogamy is no more the basis of choosing a mate.
- **Change in commensality:** Restrictions on food intake by members of various castes have been virtually removed.
- **Lifestyle changes:** Due to westernisation and modernization, the sharp differences in lifestyle of various caste members have come down. A common lifestyle is emerging, which breaks the caste barriers.
- **Educational restrictions removed:** Education is no more the preserve of the high caste people. Government policies have resulted in providing access to education to all citizens. The amendment of the Constitution to make the right to education a fundamental right is going to improve the situation further.
- **Changes in political system:** Democracy and universal adult franchise have ensured that every citizen of this country exercise political power through the ballot. Reservation of seats for members of the Scheduled Castes and Tribes to contest elections has also empowered them politically

# FAMILY



The family is the most important primary group in society. It is often called the basic social institution because of its important functions of procreation and socialisation. Robert Bierstedt is of the opinion that 'the family, almost without question, is the most important of any of the groups that human experience offers.

Other groups we join for longer or shorter periods of time for the satisfaction of this interest or that. The family, on the contrary, is with us always or rather more precisely, we are with it.'

## Characteristics of family

The basic characteristics of family are as follows:

**Mating relationship:** A family is based on mating relationship, that is to say that family comes into existence when a man and a woman establish mating relations between them.

**A form of marriage:** The mating relationship is established through the



institution of marriage. It is an institutional arrangement made by the society according to which the individuals establish marital relationships among themselves. Marriages may be of the following types:

- o **Monogamy**

- o **Polygamy**

- o **Group Marriage**

A system of nomenclature: Every family is known by a name and has its own system of recognizing descent. Descent may be traced through the male line, i.e., patrilineal or through the female line, i.e., matrilineal or through both the lines, i.e., bilateral.

**Economic provisions:** Every family has certain economic needs and the head of the family looks into ways and means to satisfy these needs. He has to ensure the comfort of the family members.

**Common habitation:** Each family has a common habitation that implies that the members of a family must reside together under one roof.

### **Distinctive Features of Family**

Family is a very important component of our social structure and occupies a central position. Its distinctive features are discussed as follows:

**Universality:** The family is universal. There is no society in which some form or the other of the family does not exist. A typical family consists of mother, father and their progeny. It is found in all communities.

**Emotional basis:** The family is grounded in emotions and sentiments. It is based upon our impulses of mating, procreation, maternal devotion, fraternal love and parental care. It is built upon sentiments of love, affection, sympathy, cooperation and friendship.

**Limited size:** A family usually means a small-sized organisation. As a primary group its size is necessarily limited. Biological conditions are primarily responsible for the small size.

**Formative influence:** Family helps in the formulation of the characters of its members and in shaping their personalities. Freud and other psychologists have proved that a child exhibits the same character and mental tendencies in adulthood, which he has acquired in the family.

**Nuclear position in the social structure:** The family is the nucleus of all other social organisations and controls the social life of the individual. It influences the whole life of the society.

**Responsibility of the members:** Every member of the family has certain responsibilities, duties and obligations. The smooth running of the family depends on how best the members discharge their responsibilities in coordination with the other members of the family.

**Social regulations:** The family is guarded by social taboos and legal regulations. The society takes steps to safeguard this organisation from any possible breakdown due to divorce, desertion or separation.

**Permanent and temporary:** The family is a permanent institution. Since it is based on the organic and emotional nature of man, it continues to exist. But family as an association may be temporary in character.

### **Functions of Family**

The family fulfils a number of functions. According to Goode, a family has the following functions:

- **Procreation**
- **Socio-economic security to family members**
- **Determination of status of family members**
- **Socialisation and emotional support**
- **Social control**

## **The Joint Family System**



The joint family system can be seen across societies in various forms of extended families. However, it is more prevalent in India and has certain peculiar Indian Characteristics.

The joint family has been defined as a mode of combining smaller families into larger units through the extension of three or more generations. It has also been defined as one which consists of members related through blood and spread over several generations living together under one roof and working under a common head.

C.B. Memoria has observed that the fundamental principle of the Hindu A joint family is the tie of sapindaship without which such a family cannot be formed.

He defines a joint family as a kin group consisting of all the male descendants from a common ancestor, their wives and their unmarried daughters.

Daughters, on their marriage, become members of their husbands' families. Normally, a joint family is composed of members of three generations. However, at times it may include members of four or more generations.

All the members of a joint family are related to one another as sapindas.

In the Hindu society in India, the joint family, the caste system and the village system is considered as the three pillars on which the social edifice is built. It is a very old system and is regarded by the Hindus as a sacred institution having been derived from religion.

There are two types of joint family:

- **Patriarchal joint family**
- **Matriarchal joint family**

### **Both types are found in India.**

The patriarchal joint family is father-dominated and the matriarchal joint family is mother-dominated. The patriarchal joint families are found among the Nambudaris of Malabar, the Mundas of Chotanagpur and the Angami Nagas of Assam. The matriarchal joint families are found among the Nairs of Malabar and the Khasis and Garos living on the Garo hills of Assam.

### **Characteristics of the Joint Family System**

The following are the important characteristic features of the joint family system in India:

**Collection of generations:** The joint family consists of people belonging to at least three generations. Besides, it also has people related to each other and belonging to a particular generation.

**Common roof:** Normally, the members of a joint family reside together under one roof. Due to housing problem, educational problem and employment problem, people are sometimes unable to continue with the joint family under a common roof. But they still continue to maintain contact and relationships with each other.

**Joint kitchen:** Merely living together under one roof does not constitute a joint family. There has to be a common kitchen for the family and all

the members must eat food cooked at one hearth. Separation of kitchen implies breaking up of the joint family. Normally, in patriarchal families, the eldest female member is in charge of this joint kitchen. The womenfolk of the family serve the food to the male members first and eat only after the male members have finished eating.

**Common property:** The members of a joint family hold property in common. Melley observes, 'a joint family is a co-operative institution similar to a joint stock company in which there is a joint property.' The earnings of the family are pooled together and household expenses are met out of the pool. The joint property is managed by the head of the family who is known as the **karta**.

**Joint worship:** The Hindu joint family derives its strength from religion and is associated with various religious practices and rituals. Members of the family pray together and have a common family deity.

**Exercise of authority:** In patriarchal joint families, the eldest male member is the head of the family and his directions are obeyed by all other members.

He exercises complete authority in family matters. Similarly, in joint matriarchal families, this role is played by the eldest female member in the family. This exercise of supreme authority by one member is a key feature of the joint family.

**Arranged marriages:** In the Hindu joint family, the head of the family arranges the marriages of the younger members by choosing the prospective bride or bridegroom, as the case may be. The individual members of a joint family in India do not have the freedom to choose their life partners. They rarely challenge the decisions made by the elders and the family head. However, this trend is slowly changing.

**Procreation:** In a joint family, procreation is regarded as a religious duty. As a result, the rate of production in such families is higher. As no birth control measures are adopted by the married couples, the size of

joint families is usually big. However, with modernization, this is changing, and family sizes are getting smaller.

**Self-sufficiency:** In the past, joint families used to be fully self-reliant. The members of the families derived their economic, emotional, educational, recreational and other needs from the family itself. However, things have changed today and no family can remain self-reliant in that manner as interdependence has increased in society.

**Family obligations:** Members of a joint family identify themselves strongly with their family obligations. They discharge their duties towards the family diligently and the family, in turn, protects their interests.

### **Changes in Structure and Functions of Family**

The institution of joint family has started undergoing change and is moving towards disintegration. This is primarily the result of the forces of modernization, which is transforming Indian society.

Industrialization and urbanisation have resulted in the breakdown of the joint family because the latter is better placed to handle agricultural societies. With industrialization, family has ceased to be the unit of production as it used to be in an agrarian set-up. People leave their villages in search of employment in new industries coming up in urban areas and break their link with their joint family.

Thus, the new industry-based economy has shaken the foundations of the joint family system.

**Industrialization** has been helped further by the modern means of transportation and communication. Bus and train services from rural areas to the towns and cities have enabled people to travel to urban areas in search of employment opportunities. This has quickened the pace of the decline of the joint family.

With the spread of telecom facilities, especially with the easy availability of mobile telephony, people can stay connected with their families without staying together under a common roof. Due to this, the



dependence of people on their traditional family occupation, which was a major factor for the survival and importance of the joint family, has reduced. They are migrating to urban areas for better employment opportunities.

The influence of the Western countries on our thinking and way of life is also an important factor that has changed the joint family system in India.

The family structure of the Western world is characterised by the nuclear family. This is so because they base their family on the ideas of freedom, equality, love between husband and wife and communication. The Indian joint family has very little scope for all of these. Therefore, the younger generation in India prefers the nuclear family. The joint family is trying to adapt to this situation and the family heads are trying to provide more space to all the members by **decentralising power**.

Notwithstanding this, **westernisation** has resulted in greatly reducing the importance of the joint family system.

Indian women have managed to break the shackles of male-domination upon them to a significant extent. This has happened due to the empowerment of women through the forces of education and employment. For women to come of age, it was important for them to get out of the conservative and oppressive environment prevalent in joint families. The status of women was very low in joint families and an enhancement in their status is directly linked to the decline of such families. Thus, higher status of women can be said to have adversely affected the joint family system in India.

The joint family system has faced serious challenges from progressive social legislations enacted during the British Rule and after independence.

Legislations **The Civil Marriage Act, 1872**; The Hindu Marriage Act, 1955 and **The Hindu Succession Act, 1956** have eroded the pre-dominant position of the joint family system in Indian society. These acts resulted

in empowering women by giving them various rights relating to marriage, divorce and inheritance of property. This empowerment of women shook the joint family system in which women used to be treated with scant respect. As a result, joint families in India are reinventing themselves and women are being given the respect that they deserve. But the trend is towards more individualistic or nuclear families as they provide greater freedom and privacy to the young couples.

Another reason for the decline of the joint family is the shortage of residential space in urban areas. Since houses are small; it is not possible for a large number of family members to cohabit.

In villages, even if the houses were small, there were vast open spaces in and around the house, which is not the case in towns and cities.

Therefore, the family size had to be necessarily small in urban areas.

This aspect goes against the joint family system.

The quarrels among the members of the joint family are yet another reason for its decline. The presence of many members, especially the women members hailing from different families, often resulted in such quarrels.

Nuclear families became the preferred option for people as they wanted to avoid such frequent quarrels. The changes and the causes of those changes discussed above would indicate that the joint family system in India is disintegrating. However, scholars have pointed out, it would be wrong to say that joint family has been or would be completely replaced by nuclear families.

## **MARRIAGE**



According to Edward Westermarck, 'marriage is the more or less durable connection between male and female lasting beyond the mere act of propagation till after the birth of offspring'. It is 'a contract for the production and maintenance of children', as per Malinowski. 'Marriage is a socially sanctioned sex relationship involving two or more people of the opposite sex, whose relationship is expected to endure beyond the time required for gestation and the birth of children', opined Duncan Mitchell.

### **Characteristics of Marriage**

The general characteristics of marriage are as follows:

**Universality:** Marriage is more or less a universal institution. It is found among the pre-literate as well as literate people. It is enforced as a social rule in some societies.

Among the Hindus, marriage is a sacrament which is regarded as more or less obligatory. According to the Chinese philosopher Confucius, an individual who remains unmarried throughout his life commits a great crime.

Relationship between man and woman: Marriage is a union of man and woman. It indicates a relationship between one or more men to one or more women.

Who should marry whom? One should marry how many?

are the questions which represent social rules regarding marriage which differ significantly.

**Marriage bond is enduring:** Marriage indicates a long-lasting bond between the husband and wife. Hence, it is not coextensive with sex life. Marital relationship between man and woman lasts even after the sexual satisfaction is obtained. The Hindus, for example, believe that marriage is a sacred bond between the husband and wife which even death cannot break.

**Marriage requires social approval:** A union of man and woman becomes a marital bond only when the society gives its approval. When a marriage is given the hallmark of social approval, it becomes a legal contract.

**Marriage is associated with some civil or religious ceremony:** Marriage gets its social recognition through some ceremony which may have its own rites, rituals, customs, formalities, etc. It means marriage has to be concluded in a public and solemn manner. Sometimes it receives as a sacrament the blessings of religion. Marriage among the Hindus is connected with rituals such as—Homa, Saptapadi, Panigrahana, Mangalya-Dharana, etc.

**Marriage creates mutual obligations:** Marriage imposes certain rights and duties on both the husband and wife—both are required to support each other and their children.

### **Recent Trends in Marriage**

The practice of marriage is not uniform throughout the country of India. It varies from place to place, religion to religion, caste to caste, and even class to class. There are multiple customs and rituals, which are performed in these marriages, which could have common elements or differ completely.

### **Hindu Marriage as a Sacrament**

In Christian faith, sacrament is a token custom, where any common person connects oneself with the Almighty Lord. The Baltimore Catechism defines a sacrament as 'an outward sign instituted by Christ to give grace'.

That connection, called inner grace, is transmitted to a parishioner by a priest or bishop and he uses detailed rules of phrases and actions in one of seven particular rituals.

**In Hindu culture, marriage is a samskara** (purificatory ceremony or sacrament). According to the Hindu religious practices, this rite is the last in the list of ten sacraments, which is used for admonishment by a person for cleaning one's body from inherited taints.

**'Vivah'**, which is a Sanskrit term, literally means the commemoration of 'carrying away' the wife to the home of the husband.

by R. N. Sharma. According to him, marriage is **"a religious sacrament** in which a man and a woman are bound in permanent relationship for the physical, social and spiritual purposes of dharma, procreation and sexual pleasure".

The marriage has also been defined in the Vedas, according to which, **"the union of flesh with flesh and bone with bone"**.

In the words of K.M. Kapadia,

**"Hindu marriage continues to be a sacrament; only it is raised to an ethical plane"**.

### **Trends in marriage:**

Indian society has been witnessing a number of changes in the institution of marriage:

**1. Changes in the rituals of marriage:**

The rituals of marriage have been minimised particularly among the Hindu society.

**2. Exogamous marriage:**

Marriage between the members of different communities has become a common feature.

**3. Increase in the age of marriage:**

Age of marriage is restricted by the government. The age of marriage is fixed as 18 years for girls and 21 years for boys. Apart from the legal restriction late marriage has become common since there is a desire for higher education, and economic independence both among boys and girls.

**4. Decline in parental control over selection of mates:**

Traditionally, it was the responsibility of parents to arrange marriages. But in recent days boys and girls choose their life partner according to their own wishes.

**5. Pomp and Luxury:**

In recent days, celebration of marriage on a grand scale with a lot of pomp and luxury has become a common feature. To a certain extent marriage has lost its Sanctity and more importance is given to luxurious celebration rather than customs and traditions.

**6. Dowry system:**

It has emerged as an evil practice in Indian society.



**“Dowry”** refers to a specified amount of cash, jewels and other articles to be given by the bride as precondition of marriage. Non-payment of dowry would result in breaking of marriages, torturing the wife and dowry deaths.

In spite of passing the legislation on Dowry prohibition Act, Dowry evils continue to exist. Particularly in north India.

### **7. Dissolution of Marriages:**

In recent days, the stability of marriage is in question. Instances of “divorce” have become a common feature. As per the reports given by the law department, at least 3,000 divorce cases are being filed every year before the family court in the city of Bangalore alone. The reasons of divorce may be due to dowry harassment or lack of compatibility on account of changing roles of women.

### **8. Widow Remarriage:**

It is a drastic change particularly among the Hindu society. Widow Remarriage is considered as very much legal. In the pre independent period there was absolutely no provision for widow remarriage. But in the modern days, a broad view is taken and widow remarriage has become a common feature. The Hindu Widow Remarriage Act 1950 has been passed to this effect.

### **9. Changing role of Husband and wife:**

In the traditional system, there was a clear cut division of labour in the family. Husband was the bread earner of the family and the role of wife was confined to household work and nurturing children. But in the modern days the role of wife has expanded and it is a common feature that married women take up employment. There is a sharing of responsibility between the husband and wife. The husband has to

assume some of the household responsibility to assist the wife. This has reduced male domination in the system of marriage.

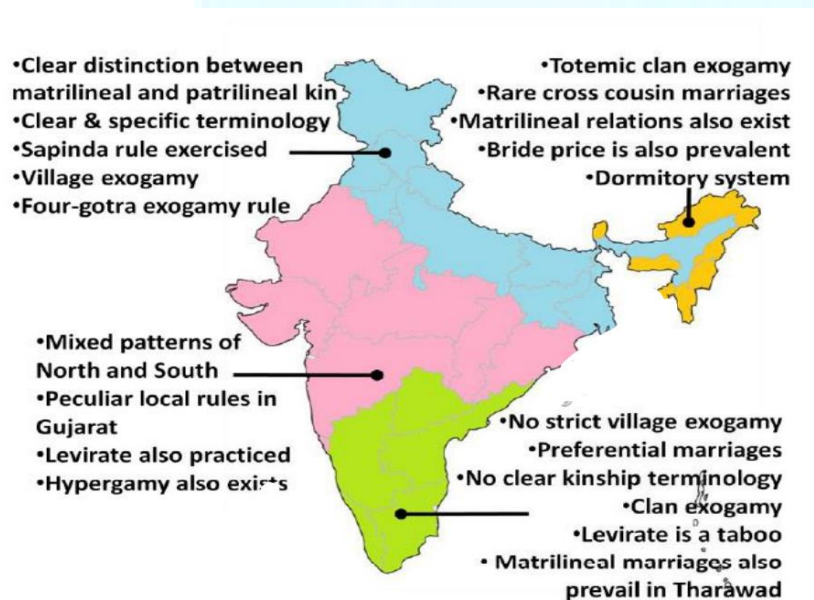
### 10. Management Perspective:

Marriage being an important social system influences the practices of an organisation.

E.g.: Organisations consider “marriage” as a valid ground for granting leave for employees.

“Marital status” is one of the information which every organisation seeks to obtain from prospective employees.

### KINSHIP IN SOUTH INDIA



The regions that come under south India are Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Kerala etc.

If we compare southern and northern kinship we can state that in southern areas

we can say there is no difference between the family of birth and the family of marriage and in the northern part we have the clear-cut difference.

- **Patrilineal and Patrilocal systems** dominate, but there are matrilineal and **matrilocal traditions that are** also there among the Nayars, the Titans, and some Moplahs in Malabar region. Tharawad consists of a woman, her brother and sisters, her own and her sister's sons and daughters. No affinal relatives live in Dharwad and there are no husband-wife and father children relationship in Dharwad.

- **Village exogamy** is not a fixed rule in the south and different clans within a village marry each other.

- Like North, castes are divided into exogamous clans in South as well.

- Preferential marriages are followed in the South.

Marriages with elder sister's daughter, father's sister's daughter, and mother's brother's daughter are preferred. However, there is a taboo on marrying with the younger sister's daughter and the mother's sister's daughter. So, a cousin can also become a wife.

- **Levirate** is also a taboo in the South, while it is practised in some areas in both North and Central India.

- There is no distinction between family of birth and family of marriage.

- **Kinship terminology overlap.** For example – Ai is used for elder sister as well as for mother, Anna is used for both an elder brother and father. As a result, there is also no clear-cut classification of kin on the basis of generation. Instead, kinship terms denote age relations instead and the respect thereof

## **Rural and Tribal communities in India**



‘In its simplest form the tribe is a group of bands occupying a contiguous territory or territories and having a feeling of unity deriving from numerous similarities in culture, frequent contacts and a certain community of interest.’ – Ralph Linton

- **With territorial affiliation**
- **Endogamous**
- **With no specialisation of functions**
- **Ruled by tribal officers, hereditary or otherwise**
- **United in language and dialect**
- **Recognising social distance with other tribes or castes, without any social obligation attaching to them, as it does in the caste structure**
- **Following tribal traditions, beliefs and customs**
- **Illiberal of naturalisation of ideas from alien sources**
- **Above all conscious of homogeneity of ethnic and territorial integration**

### **SOCIAL INSTITUTIONS AMONG INDIAN TRIBES**

## **Marriage**

Indian tribes like tribes of other parts of the world practise several forms of marriage as a matter of convenience and social acclimatisation in their respective cultural-ecological settings.

### **Monogamy**

Majority of Indian tribes practise monogamy. Example Kamar tribe of Madhya Pradesh.

### **Polygamy**

Polygyny is found among the Naga tribes, the Gond, the Baiga, the Toda, the Lushai and most of the proto-Australoid tribes of middle India. In most cases such form of marriage comes into existence as a result of disequilibrium in sex ratio. This type of marriage is generally resorted to, to facilitate a better division of labour.

**Polyandry** is comparatively much restricted in distribution. This type of Matrimonial alliance is found in the Himalayan tract stretching from Kashmir to Assam and is popular among the Indo-Aryan and Mongoloid tribes. In its classical form it is prevalent among the Tiyan, the Toda, the Kota, the Khasa and the Ladakhi Bota. It is also popular among Tibetans.

## **Tribal Revolts of Mainland**

### **Pahariyas' Rebellion**

- The British expansion on their territory led to an uprising by the martial Pahariyas of the RajMahal Hills in 1778.
- The British were forced to usher in peace by declaring their territory as damni-kol area.

### **Chuar Uprising**

- Famine, enhanced land revenue demands and economic distress goaded the Chuar aboriginal tribesmen of the Jungle Mahal of Midnapore district and also of the Bankura district (in Bengal)
- to take up arms.
- These tribal people were basically farmers and hunters. The uprising lasted from 1766 to 1772 and then, again surfaced between 1795 and 1816.
- The Chuars were prominent in Manbhum and Barabhum, especially in the hills between Barabhum and Ghatsila.
- In 1768, Jagannath Singh, the zamindar of Ghatsila, went up in arms, along with thousands of Chuars. The Company government capitulated.
- In 1771, the Chuar sardars, Shyam Ganjan of Dhadka, Subla Singh of Kaliapal and Dubraj rose in rebellion.
- The most significant uprising was under Durjan (or Durjol) Singh in 1798. Durjan Singh was the zamindar of Raipur from which he was dispossessed owing to the operations of Bengal Regulations.
- The revolt was brutally suppressed by the British.
- Other leaders of the Chuars were Madhab Singh, the brother of the raja of Barabhum, Raja Mohan Singh, zamindar of Juriah and Lachman Singh of Dulma.

### **Kol Mutiny (1831)**

- The Kols, along with other tribes, are inhabitants of Chotanagpur. This covered Ranchi, Singhbhum, Hazaribagh, Palamau and the western parts of Manbhum.
- The trouble in 1831 started with large-scale transfers of land from Kol headmen to outsiders like
- Hindu, Sikh and Muslim farmers and money-lenders who were oppressive and demanded heavy taxes.



The Kols resented this and in 1831, under the leadership of Buddho Bhagat, the Kol rebels killed or burnt about a thousand outsiders. Only after large-scale military operations order was restored.

### **Ho and Munda Uprisings (1820–1837)**

- The Raja of Parahat organised his Ho tribals to revolt against the occupation of Singhbhum
- (now in Jharkhand). The revolt continued till 1827 when the Ho tribes were forced to submit.
- However, later in 1831, they again organised a rebellion, joined by the Mundas of Chota Nagpur, to protest against the newly introduced farming revenue policy and the entry of Bengalis into their region.
- In 1899–1900, the Mundas in the region south of Ranchi rose under Birsa Munda.
- The Ulgulan was one of the most significant tribal uprisings in the period 1860–1920.
- The rebellion which began as a religious movement gathered political force to fight against
- introduction of feudal, zamindari tenures, and exploitation by money-lenders and forest contractors.
- The Mundas claimed Chhotanagpur as their area in 1879.

### **The Santhal Rebellion (1855–56)**

Continued oppression of the Santhals, an agricultural people, who had fled to settle in the plains of the Rajmahal hills (Bihar) led to the Santhal rebellion against the zamindars.

The money-lenders who had the support of the police among others had joined the zamindars to subject the peasants to oppressive exactions and dispossession of lands.

Under Sidhu and Kanhu, two brothers, the Santhals proclaimed an end to Company rule, and declared the area between Bhagalpur and Rajmahal as autonomous.

### **Khond Uprisings (1837–1856)**

From 1837 to 1856, the Khonds of the hilly tracts extending from Odisha to the Srikakulam and Visakhapatnam districts of Andhra Pradesh revolted against Company rule.

Chakra Bisnoi, a young raja, led the Khonds who were joined by the Ghumsar, Kalahandi and other tribals to oppose the suppression of human sacrifice, new taxes, and the entry of zamindars into their areas.

A later Khond rebellion in 1914 in the Orissa region hoped that foreign rule would end and they could gain an autonomous government.

### **Koya Revolts**

The Koyas of the eastern Godavari tract (modern Andhra), joined by Khonda Sara chiefs, and rebelled in 1803, 1840, 1845, 1858, 1861 and 1862.

They rose once again in 1879–80 under Tomma Sora.

Their complaints were oppression by police and moneylenders, new regulations and denial of their customary rights over forest areas.

After the death of Tomma Sora, another rebellion was organised in 1886 by Raja Anantayyar.

### **Bhil Revolts**

The Bhils who lived in the Western Ghats controlled the mountain passes between the north and the Deccan.

They revolted against Company rule in 1817–19, as they had to face famine, economic distress and misgovernment.

The Bhils revolted again in 1825, 1831 and in 1846. Later, a reformer, Govind Guru helped the Bhils of south Rajasthan (Banswara, Sunth states) to organise themselves to fight for a Bhil Raj by 1913.

### **Ramosi Risings**

The Ramosis, the hill tribes of the Western Ghats, had not reconciled to British rule and the British pattern of administration. After the annexation of the Maratha territories by the British, the Ramosis, who had been employed by the Maratha administration, lost their means of livelihood.

They rose under Chittur Singh in 1822 and plundered the country around Satara. Again, there were eruptions in 1825–26 under Umaji Naik of Poona and his supporter Bapu Trimbakji Sawant, and the disturbances continued till 1829.

Generally the British followed a pacifist policy towards the Ramosis, and even recruited some of them into the hill police.

### **Khasi Uprising**

After having occupied the hilly region between Garo and Jaintia Hills, the East India Company wanted to build a road linking the Brahmaputra Valley with Sylhet. A large number of outsiders including Englishmen, Bengalis and the labourers from the plains were brought to these regions. The Khasis, Garos, Khamptis and the Singphos organised themselves under Tirath Singh to drive away the strangers from the plains.

### **Singphos Rebellion**

The rebellion of the Singphos in Assam in early 1830 was immediately quelled but they continued to organise revolts. Chief Nirang Phidu led an uprising in 1843, which involved an attack on the British garrison and the death of many soldiers. Some of the smaller movements were those of the Mishmis (in 1836);

the Khampti rebellion in Assam between 1839 and 1842; the Lushais' revolt in 1842 and 1844, when they attacked villages in Manipur.

### **Rural communities**



They reside in rural areas. Rural areas as per census consider the village as the basic area of habitation. A village is usually

considered as the smallest area of habitation. The village generally follows the limits of a revenue village that is recognized by the local administration. The revenue village need not necessarily be a single agglomeration of the habitations. It could comprise a large village or a cluster of very small villages. It has a definite boundary and a definite name. But the revenue village has a definite surveyed boundary and each village is a separate administrative unit with separate village accounts.

It may have one or more hamlets. The entire revenue village is one unit. There may be unsurveyed villages within forests etc., where the locally recognized boundaries of each habitation area are followed within the larger unit of say the forest range officer's jurisdiction.

Village, community, family and caste are the basic components of the rural social structure. They encompass the entire field of life: social, economic, political and cultural life of the rural people. The complexity of social norms and values, statuses and rules, rights and obligations is reflected in them. These are long enduring rural social institutions which have millennia old historical roots and structures.

Rural social structure would refer to the inter-relationship, interconnectedness and interdependence of the different parts of the rural society. Caste system is

One unique social structure and the inter relationship of the different units (castes) constitutes the structure of the rural society. Society, caste and Panchayat have Profile of Rural Communities Control over the individual.

### **Caste System**

Caste is the fundamental principle of social organisations in the Indian village. The structural basis of Hinduism is the caste system. Caste is also seen as a 'monopolistic guild'. The occupation on which a caste has monopoly may be very simple. Village is conceptualised as an aggregate of castes, each traditionally associated with an occupation. The members of the castes are spread over a region in more than one village. The members of a caste have matrimonial relations with the neighbouring villages. Sometimes, the castes are also named after the corresponding occupations, eli caste, dholi caste, chakali-washerwomen, Kammari- potters etc. Members of the caste marry within their own caste-but usually outside their village. In other words, the village is exogamous, while the caste is endogamous. There are some systems of marriage in which the men of upper castes marry women of lower castes allowing lower caste women to move up the hierarchy. This is known as hypergamy, (anuloma). For political purposes, social control and matrimony, the members of the caste in a village are dependent upon their caste group located in other villages. Society, caste and Panchayat have control over the individual.

It is also true that all caste occupations are not found in the village. A village has some castes – but for services it may depend on members belonging to various other castes from neighbouring villages. Caste and class are linked to each other with high castes usually being associated with higher classes.

### **Inter-caste Relations**

Inter-caste relations at the village level constitute vertical ties. The castes living in a village are bound together by economic ties.



Generally peasant castes are numerically preponderant in villages and to perform agricultural work, they need the services of carpenter, blacksmith and leather worker castes. It is unlikely that all castes are located within a village, consequently they depend on neighbouring villages for certain services, skills and goods.

Inter-caste relations are mediated by a system known as **Jajmani System**. Jajmani is sort of mutual give and take form of relationship in which one family is hereditarily entitled to supply goods and render services to the other in exchange of the same. The person rendering the services or supplying the goods is known as kameen or prajin and the person to whom the services are rendered is called a jajman. Thus under jajmani system a permanent informal bond is made between jajman and kameen to meet each other's need for goods and services. Exclusive and durable relations exist because when the family moves out it becomes its moral duty to find an alternative service provider for its patrons. These rights are also sold. Jajmani system is characterised by an unbroken hereditary and multidimensional relationship based on the barter system.

### **Family and Kinship Relations**

Rural families function as the unit of economic, cultural, religious and political activity. In agricultural societies the family becomes the unit of production, distribution and consumption. Marriage is a decision of the family governed by rules of kinship. Family has strict control and administrative powers over the individual. Both nuclear and joint families with their modifications are found in rural India.

There are Inter regional variations and in the distribution of family types. Currently the family is changing in rural India with changes

in the social and economic situation. The family as a unit of production has changed more into a unit of consumption. Rules of marriage vary between South and North India.

### **Decentralization & Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs)**

It is more than seven years since the Constitution 73rd Amendment Act 1992 came into force. Most of the Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) constituted under the new Acts are completing their first five-year tenure. Therefore, it is an appropriate time for appraising the functioning of PRIs in different States so as to reflect on emerging trends and to identify the impediments that have emerged in the process of democratic decentralisation.

The status of PRIs can be reviewed in terms of following parameters:

- (i) Conduct of Panchayat elections;**
- (ii) Devolution of Financial Powers;**
- (iii) Devolution of Functions and Functionaries;**
- (iv) Constitution of District Planning Committees (DPCs);**
- (v) Status of Gram Sabha;**
- (vi) Act 40 of 1996;**
- (vii) Checks and Balances over PRIs and Accountability**

3. Further, there are other issues which are central to the effectiveness of PRIs as conduits for delivery of economic and social services. These include participation, transparency and sustainability and the interface of PRIs with other parallel organisations operating at the local level.

## Contemporary issues in Indian Society

### 1. REGIONALISM

Regionalism is defined as a feeling of loyalty to a particular part of a country and a wish for it to be more politically independent. It is not just a territorial unit but a culmination of socio-economic and political factors. Regionalism can be defined in connotations both **positive and negative**.



**Positive regionalism** means love towards one's culture, region, language etc whereas negative regionalism is an excessive attachment to one's regions in preference to the country of the state. Positive regionalism helps to build Brotherhood and commonness based on the common language, religion or historical background and it helps a particular regional group to maintain their independent identity. It gives self-determination to people and empowers them to feel happy. **Negative regionalism** may pose a threat to the unity and integrity of the country. In the Indian context generally, the term regionalism has been used in the negative sense.

**Regionalism** can ride both within and outside the nation. within a nation the rise of sub-state actors becoming more powerful is evident. Transnational cooperation between different countries, like forming off the Southeast Asian organisation or the European Union which have come together for pursuing a common goal, is termed as regionalism outside a nation. In India regionalism evolved through various forms during the pre-Independence era, the British had promoted the regionalism so that they can maintain their hold over India during the 'national movement'

After Independence, the Congress had tried to promote nationalism through the concept of 1 single Nation and also by giving single citizenship apart from a unified Judiciary, all India services, and a strong central government. Despite the efforts of the Congress to stop regionalism, the vastness and the diversity of the cultures within our country prevented it.

### **Different forms of regionalism**

In India broadly regionalism can be defined in two forms one the demand for state autonomy and to secessions from the Union.

**Demand for state autonomy:** This is a demand by the states for Greater autonomy from the centre this may be because of an increasing interference by the centre in the affairs of the state that led to the regional feelings. The demand for the state's autonomy has also been raised by the regions within some states of the Indian Federation Secession from the union. This is the dangerous form of regionalism. It emerges when States demand separation

from the centre and try to establish an independent identity of their own.

### **Why does regionalism evolve and what are the causes for it?**

Regionalism evolved when the national government tries to impose a particular ideology, may be language or culture pattern, over a particular state. This is evident from the Anti- Hindi movement in the South Indian states as well as the Anti-foreigner Movement in Assam both were launched to protect their own culture.

The continuous neglect of an area or Region by the ruling party and concentration of Administration and political party has also given rise to the demand for decentralisation of authority and bifurcation of unilingual States.

The low rate of economic growth investment infrastructure and social expenditure by the state on health education and sanitation can also be a reason for the development of regionalism

The sons of the soil doctrine which after 1950 in competition between local youth and migrants for employment has led to the development of regionalism not only in rural areas but also in cities.

The Desire of the various units of the Indian federal system to maintain the subcultural regions and a greater degree of self-government has promoted regionalism and giving rise to the demand for Greater autonomy

The ambition of regional elites to capture power, for example, the DMK, AIADMK Telugu Desam have encouraged regionalism to capture power. The dispute between the states over the sharing of river water primacy given by the states to the language of the majority and the people of their state in a job opportunity with growing awareness among the people of backward areas that

they are being discriminated against has also promoted the feeling of regionalism. What can be done to correct regional imbalances

The dispute between the states over the sharing of river water primacy given by the states to the language of the majority and the people of their state in a job opportunity with growing awareness among the people of backward areas that they are being discriminated against has also promoted the feeling of regionalism. What can be done to correct regional imbalances  
What can be done to correct regional imbalances?

Regionalism is an important aspect of Indian politics and sometimes it has posed threats to the unity and integrity of the country. Therefore it is necessary to take steps to reduce such tendencies.

## **Regionalism in India**

Regionalism is a kind of feeling or loyalty towards the interest of their region and it is an ideology among a section of people residing in the same particular geographical area. This regionalism is also more of a mindset that one develops over time, even nationalism is no different.

This kind of 'isms' just restrict one's horizon; it gives one a limited armoury to choose from. It originates in many ways, for example, this is being united by unique language, culture, language traditions etc. Regionalism can also rise with development wherein



religion and the cultural attitude of people are brought together and Unity and Diversity are created and so there arise many cultures, linguistic diversity and in the particular region of a developing area. In a negative sense, they were creating a particular kind of division in a way of separate religion, language, customs, traditions, etc. But positively, they are coming together and celebrating these differences in a way of uniting themselves through literature, writing newspapers, across the country and also through writings of the poems etc.

**Origin:** Regionalism comes in people in many ways, for example, its origin is traced in the following ways

- 1) When people ask for a state of their own within a union of a state or example within the Union of and India.**
- 2) When states or regions with a particular cultural identity ask for the power equally with that of the centre.**
- 3) The people who ask for the separate state would be based on linguistic, cultural identity in a city or regional development basis.**
- 4) The fourth one which is the most dangerous for the integrity and Unity of a nation is secession where a particular geographical union wants to segregate from the Union of India or any other country with an autonomous self-power.**

## **Terrorism**



### **Definition of Terrorism**

The term terrorism is very broad and there is no one definition of the term. Different people and organisations have come up with their own definition of what constitutes terrorism.

Generally, the term terrorism indicates a criminal and violent activity performed by an individual or group of individuals or an organisation in order to strike terror among the general public and send messages to the public and governments, to fulfil a goal. Although the victims of the terror act maybe a few people (depending upon the event), the intended target is usually larger than the number of victims alone.

The terrorists' purpose is to send a strong message to the larger public and the government. They generally claim responsibility after conducting a violent act so as to let people know of their power and capabilities and thus, inflict terror upon the people. Some commonly-used definitions of terrorism are listed below:

**UN Definition:** As per the definition by the United Nations , any criminal acts intended or calculated to provoke a state of terror in the general public, a group of persons or particular persons for a

particular purpose are in any circumstance unjustifiable, whatever the considerations of a political, philosophical, ideological, racial, ethnic, religious or any other nature that may be invoked to justify them.

**US Department of State Definition:** Terrorism means premeditated, politically motivated violence perpetrated against noncombatant targets by subnational groups or clandestine agents.

A definition according to the lapsed Terrorist and Disruptive Activities (Prevention) Act is very inclusive and exhaustive:

**“Whoever with intent to overawe the Government as by law established or to strike terror in the people or any section of the people or to alienate any section of the people or to adversely affect the harmony amongst different sections of the people does any act or thing by using bombs, dynamite or other explosive substances or inflammable substances or lethal weapons or poisons or noxious gases or other chemicals or by any other substances (whether biological or otherwise) of a hazardous nature in such a manner as to cause, or as is likely to cause, death of, or injuries to, any person or persons or loss of, or damage to, or destruction of, property or disruption of any supplies or services essential to the life of the community, or detains any person and threatens to kill or injure such person in order to compel the Government or any other person to do or abstain from doing any act, commits a terrorist act.”**

In 2002, the European Union described terrorism as having the “aim of destabilising

or destroying the fundamental political, constitutional, economic or social structures of a country”.

## **Terrorist Activities**

Terrorists indulge in a variety of activities for primarily three things:

- Generate fear among people.
- Create publicity for their goals/causes.
- Try to convince people that the government is powerless against them.

Terrorists and/or terror groups engage in random killings/assassinations, bomb blasts in public places, suicide attacks, kidnappings, extortion, destroy public property/infrastructure, hijacking, cyber-attacks, etc. They also indulge in chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear warfare. Many terror groups also engage in an armed insurgency against governments.

The aim of political terror groups varies from toppling the established government of a country to having better representation for a group of people, to seceding from a country and forming another country, to acquiring a share in the government, etc. Many other groups of terror exist solely for making illicit money and expanding their own illegal criminal empires. Many groups of organised crime are also labelled terrorist groups.

## **Terrorism: Origin of the term**

The term 'terrorism' has been derived from the French 'terrorisme', which is in turn, taken from the Latin word, 'terreo' meaning 'I frighten'.

The word was first used in the context of the French Revolution in France, especially in reference to the 'Reign of Terror'.

Many cite the Irish Republican Brotherhood (1858 – 1924) as the first organisation to use modern terrorist techniques.

### **Types of Terrorism**

Although there are several types of terrorism, we can classify terrorism into the following broad types:

**Dissent Terrorism:** Groups that rebel against the government of a country. For example, the LTTE in Sri Lanka.

**Left-wing/right-wing terrorism:** Terror groups that adhere to ideological leanings on the extreme end of the left-right political spectrum. Read more on left-wing extremism in India.

**Religious terrorism:** Terror groups based on religious ideologies. For example, ISIS.

**Criminal terrorism:** Terror groups engaged in terror acts for criminal profit.

Terrorism can also be classified on the basis of the mode of operation such as cyber-terrorism, bioterrorism, etc.

### **Cross-border Terrorism**

Cross-border terrorism is when the soil of one country is used to create terror or engage in terrorism against its neighbouring countries across the border. India is a victim of cross-border terrorism, whose source is Pakistan.

## Factors favouring cross-border terrorism

**Porous borders:** These indicate borders which are not highly protected. India's borders with most of her neighbours cannot be physically sealed or wired due to difficult terrain, and other factors. Terror groups take advantage of such porous borders and infiltrate into another country.

**Support from non-state actors:** India's troubled relationship with Pakistan fuels the latter's support for secessionist groups, which are provided financial support, weapons and training by the establishment in Pakistan.

**Internal support:** Many times, terrorists find support from the local population due to varying reasons like ideological or ethnic affinity, fear, monetary lure, etc.

**Corrupt officials:** Unfortunately, many officials in the establishment of a country can abet terrorists and allow their illegal entry for terrorist activities purely for financial benefits.

## Terrorism in India



The current law in India enacted to tackle terrorism of all kinds is the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Amendment Act. Click on the



linked article for a detailed description and also watch a video lecture on the same.

- India faces terrorism from secessionists in Kashmir, the north-east and to an extent in Punjab, from left-wing extremist groups in central, east-central and south-central India.
- India is one of the countries most affected by terrorism in the world. According to the Institute for Economics and Peace, India was the seventh-most affected country in 2018.
- It reported that from 2001 till 2018, more than 8000 people have died in terror attacks in India.
- Jammu & Kashmir is the region most affected by terrorist activities in the country.
- The Global Terrorism Index 2019 also places India on the 7th rank in terms of the most-affected country by terrorism.
- It was after the 26/11 attacks on Mumbai by terrorist groups that the government formed the National Investigation Agency (NIA).
- India is trying to push a global intergovernmental convention called the Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism (CCIT) to counter-terrorism since the late 90s.
- India is also a member of the FATF (Financial Action Task Force), an organisation that works towards establishing global standards for combating money laundering and terrorist financing.
- India has a network of intelligence agencies such as the Research and Analysis Wing (RAW), the Intelligence Bureau (IB), etc. which are involved in fighting terrorism emanating both inside and outside the country.

- There is also a National Intelligence Grid (NATGRID) that is an integrated intelligence framework connecting the databases of security agencies of the Indian Government to gather inclusive patterns of intelligence that can be accessed by intelligence agencies of India.
- The National Security Guard (NSG) is a paramilitary force that is primarily responsible for counterterrorism and anti-hijacking operations.

## **THE NATURE OF CASTE-INEQUALITIES IN INDIA**

- Caste is the most contentious issue that has fascinated and divided scholars who have wished to study this system of stratified social-hierarchy in India. There is an enormous body of academic writing and political polemic on the issue.
- These are basically the part of debate on the transformation of Indian society under the impact of colonialism and its administrative mechanisms. Some argue for the continuities of pre-colonial social-structures including caste.
- Others stress the basic qualitative changes introduced by the colonial rulers.
- **Louis Dumont**, the French scholar and writer of a famous book on caste, *Homo-Hierarchicus*, constructed a textually-informed image of caste. In this image, two opposing conceptual categories of purity and pollution are the core elements of caste-structure.
- These unique core principles of caste-hierarchy, according to Dumont, are observed in scriptural formulation as

- as well as the every-day life of all Hindus. In other words, these values separate Indians culturally from the Western civilisation, making India a land of static, unchangeable, 'oriental' Brahmanical values. This notion of caste has been challenged by Nicholas Dirks and others.
- **Dumont's** notion was criticised as it failed to explain the social change, dynamism and individualistic strivings even within the traditional Indian society.
- **Gerald Berreman** pointed out that the principle of Brahmanical hierarchy was not uniformly followed by all Hindus. He also criticised the Dumontian notion that power and economic factors are distinct and epiphenomenal to caste. It has been pointed out by others that caste hierarchy is not a fixed hierarchy; rather it is context-specific and fluid and contains seeds of contestation among various castes.
- Nicholas Dirks cites ethnographic and textual evidence to demonstrate that Brahmins and their texts were not so central to the social fabric of Indian life.
- According to this view, power relations and command over men and resources were more important. Brahmins were merely ritual specialists, often subordinate to powerful ruling families.
- The caste-based scriptural or Brahmanical model of traditional India was an invention of the British Orientalists and ethnographers, according to this view.
- However, caste played a very critical role in the Indian social-reformers' and nationalists' perception of caste. It was certainly not a mere product of British imagination.

## GENDER INEQUALITY IN INDIA



**Gender inequality** has been a crucial social issue in India for centuries. Census 2011 shows the child sex ratio among children of 0–6 years to be 918 girls for every 1000 boys in India. This statistic speaks for itself and demands urgent and efficient solutions to address the cause of gender inequality.

The discrimination starts from even before the girl child is born. In many instances, she is prevented from being born.

**The girl child is considered a burden.**

She is often deprived of the basic rights and equal opportunities to lead a wholesome childhood and adult life.

According to the Census 2011, from the total child population in India, girls account for 48%, many of whom are engaged in child labour, child trafficking and child marriage. The future of innumerable girls looks grim, as shown by the following statistics:

- 12.15 million children are married in India – 8.9 million are girls; married girls are three times the boys. (Census 2011)
- 51% of all trafficking victims were children, of which more than 80% were girls. (NCRB 2018)
- There are 223 million child brides in India; 102 million were married before turning 15. (UNICEF)

Patriarchal norms hold back many girls from striving for their dreams by receiving a quality education, medical facilities and overall awareness for their well-being.

**CRY**, have been working towards bridging the gap and ensuring that young girls across India receive essential resources that help improve their mental, physical, and emotional development. Discrimination issues in India are deep-rooted and practiced for generations, and that is why it requires long-term intervention, which we have been providing to underserved communities across India.

**CRY** aims to create a world where the girl child is celebrated and has access to equal opportunities to study, to grow, and to prosper as her male counterpart.

CRY's efforts to bring about a change in this situation include:

- Education that helps create attitudinal shifts towards gender bias, and activities to spread awareness.
- Continuous efforts toward breaking myths and stereotypes around gender.
- Ensuring accountability of the State to implement various schemes, policies, laws, constitutional guarantees, and international commitments.
- Institutionalising gender-sensitive processes within various systems such as law and programs.

- Encouraging community ownership in preventing violations based on gender discrimination.

## **CASTE BASED VIOLENCE IN CONTEMPORARY INDIA**



Dalits constitute about 170 million people, 17 percent of the Indian population. Over three-quarters of them live in rural areas of India. The data collected by the India Human Development Survey conducted by the

National Council of Applied Economic Research in 2015 says

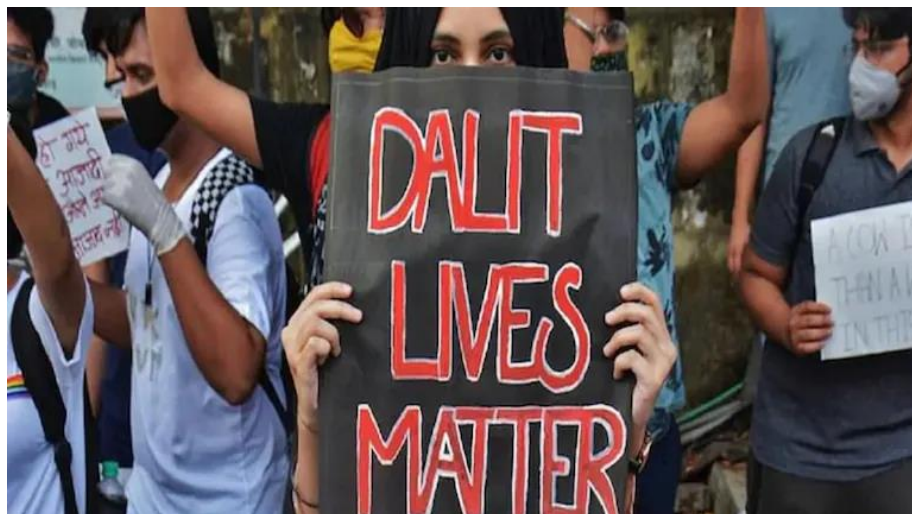
- o About 27 percent of the Indian households still practise untouchability
- o Since, Brahmins come on the top of the caste chart, 52 percent of them still practise untouchability
- o Only 5.34 percent of Indian marriages are inter-caste
- o About 15 percent of Scheduled Caste and 22 percent of Scheduled Tribe respondents admitted to the practice
- o It is most widespread in Madhya Pradesh with 53 percent practising untouchability. **Madhya Pradesh is followed by Himachal Pradesh with 50 per cent. Chhattisgarh comes on the 3rd position with 48 percent, Rajasthan and Bihar with 47 percent,**



### **Uttar Pradesh with 43 percent, and Uttarakhand with 40 percent**

- The survey also shows that almost every third Hindu practises untouchability (33–35%)
- More than 160 million people in India are considered 'Untouchable' Statistics compiled by India's National Crime Records Bureau indicate that in the year 2000, about 25,455 crimes were committed against Dalits
- o Every hour two Dalits are assaulted; every day two Dalits are murdered, and two Dalit homes are torched.
- Investigations by Shah and his team show that untouchability is extensive and practised mostly in the interpersonal and cultural-religious spheres
- Dalit women report that non-Dalit women, as against non-Dalit men, are more rigid in practising untouchability. Ironically, pollution due to contact is not an issue at all when Dalit women are exploited for the sexual needs of the upper caste.
- Instances of brutal acts of inhumanity (walking them naked in the street, forcing them to eat excreta, raping their women, gouging out the eyes and lynching) are regularly reported from different parts of the country.
- Dalit children are discriminated against when it comes to mid-day meals and getting access to clean toilets. The UGC guideline of prevention of discrimination in higher educational institutions came into light after University of Hyderabad student Rohit Vemula's suicide.
- Bhima Koregaon incident where stones were pelted against Dalits who were there to celebrate the 200th anniversary of the Battle of Bhima Koregaon.

## **Dalit assertion**



- Dalit self-assertion and unity is expressed in their formation into groups and organisations.
- These are found all over the country at state, district and village levels, to foster the interests of their women, men and youth.
- Formation of political parties and their active participation in electoral politics have been influential in improving their living conditions.
- Dalit movements today competently challenge the power of the
- dominant castes at the local level, and have conscientized and politicised people to fight for their rights and dignity.
- But, as Gorringer points out, Dalit movements are often reduced to voicing grievances rather than campaigning proactively for social change.
- They struggle for human dignity, social inclusion and equality of access to social spheres that are enshrined in the Constitution.
- But the positive measures in the Constitution, such as the reservation system, are more impressive than in its substance.

- Alienated from resources including land, the skills of Dalits are culturally demeaned. Land reforms have not brought them succour as a majority of them do not own any land but depend on others for employment.
- Their struggles, as in the case of Dalit movements in general, are therefore caught in the double bind of poverty, which is both an
- inspiration for and a hindrance to active political participation.
- Poverty perpetuates subordination and shuffles their collective efforts.
- Movements lack adequate resources to carry on with their agenda

## **ETHNIC CONFLICTS IN INDIA**



- After achieving independence from colonial rule, India embarked on a massive project of nation building which had to be carried amidst ethnic diversities.
- Apart from caste, religious and tribal groups, the diversities in India ranged in terms of culture, languages and regional development. With different levels of development and histories, the wide

- The variety of ethnic groups present could pose a challenge to nation building.
- In order to govern and achieve overall development of its heterogeneous and diverse society, the founding fathers adopted two-fold strategy,
- (i) they adopted a Constitution which provided
- for a democratic and federal set up based on the principles of secularism, liberty and equality,
- (ii) they recognise diversities as central to the nation. This approach to national identity which came to be called 'composite nationalism' emphasised on '**unity in diversity**' allowing each group to maintain its distinct identity without merging into a homogenous culture.
- In the last seven decades, the stability of post-independence India has depended largely on the balance between the need to build a unified nation-state (unity) and the demands of ethnic groups (diversity). The demands of the ethnic groups have not only challenged
- the forces of unity but also strained the relations between one and the other groups of diversity.
- Before we proceed to analyse the manifestation of ethnic conflicts, it would be useful to keep in mind that ethnicity and ethnic conflicts in India are characterised by dispersed ethnic systems and ethnic fluidity. There are a plethora of ethnic identities specific to a location or region of the country.
- As a result of this, ethnic unrest remains localised, that is, confined to a region or State. For instance, the ethnic conflict in the Northeast remains confined to the region and Sikh and Hindu conflict is largely confined to Punjab.
- Similarly, caste and language conflicts are confined within a locality, though sometimes, concessions given to one ethnic

group have led to demand for similar concessions from other groups.

- Thus, the demand of the Sikh groups for a separate state triggered counter demands by the Hindu population of Punjab resulting in the creation of the state of Haryana, carved out of Punjab in 1966. Similarly, the creation of Nagaland in 1963 triggered demands for political autonomy from other groups, and led to the division of Assam into several new states in 1972.
- The significance of ethnic dispersal is that while democracy may be suspended in one area, the rest of the country continues to function under normal democratic processes without causing systemic breakdown.
- Closely related to the above feature is the fluidity of ethnic identity, i.e., the absence of a strong and permanent attachment to a single identity. Unlike people of most other societies, in India, people tend to shift their preoccupations, readily and often from one identity to another and then another in response to changing circumstances.
- James Manor, who has highlighted this character of ethnicity, illustrates this with an example from Andhra Pradesh. In the Telangana region of Andhra Pradesh, a strong sub-regional movement had taken shape against the alleged unjust treatment by the state government. It succeeded in securing ten parliamentary seats in the 1970 elections.
- But bargains were struck with the leaders of the movement, and the Congress party, a national party, won all the seats in Telangana region in the parliamentary elections of 1977.
- In 1983, the people of Telangana region shifted their preoccupations again and backed a regional (as opposed to a subregional) party, the **Telugu Desam**, protesting about affronts to the dignity of the Teluguspeaking people of the state. In the

early years of the 21 century, sub-regional identities once again asserted. Though the fortunes of the Telangana movement for separation from Andhra Pradesh waxed and waned, it was eventually granted statehood in 2014.

- Thus, in a span of three decades, people have passionately shifted their preoccupations from sub-regional, to national, and then to regional and again to sub-regional identities. There
- are a number of other examples of this kind of shifting of identities. People in Punjab, for instance, have shifted their preoccupation with linguistic identity (demand for autonomy based on language in 1960s) to regional (conflict with the Center in the 1970s),
- religious (demand for separate state of Khalistan in the 1980s) and national identities in a span of two or three decades. It is therefore important to note that social tensions in India do not result in prolonged and intractable conflicts that might tear democratic institutions apart

### **Manifestation of Ethnic Conflicts**

The challenge posed by ethnic groups in India have taken the form of

- (i) autonomy movements,**
- (ii) secessionist movements,**
- (iii) insurgency and**
- (iv) violent conflict**

on the basis of identity markers such as language, religion, tribe, caste, etc.

## **Communalism**





From a religious point of view, Indian culture is pluralistic. Here, we have the adherents of all the great systems of religion. Hindus are the majority of the population and all areas of the country are populated by them. The largest religious group consists of Muslims. But at times, the adjustment between the Hindus and Muslims was a disaster, resulting in violent communal disturbances.

Millions of people were left homeless during community protests during the time of independence and millions of others perished. Communalism was in charge of splitting India and Pakistan. The partition was expected to solve the riddle, but it was unsuccessful. The living pattern between Hindus and Muslims still needs to be established.

**Communalism is blind allegiance to one's own religious community in our culture. It is defined as a tool for or against mobilising people by appealing for communal services.**

**Communalism is related to dogmatism and religious fundamentalism.**

**Causes of Communalism**

There are a variety of factors which are responsible for communalism's prevalence. Some of main causes of communalism are discussed below:

- **Tendency of Minorities:**

The Muslims are not mixed into the mainstream of the country. Most of them are not interested in secular nationalistic politics and insist that the elite of Muslims do not establish the required national ethos.

- **The Leaders' Design:**

Communalism has flourished in India because the communalist leaders of both Hindu and Muslim communities desire to flourish it in the interest of their communities.

The practical manifestations of this line of thought were the demand for separate voters and the organisation of the Muslim league.

Separate voters on the basis of religion, the British rule that produced the divide and rule policy, strengthened the basis of communalism in India. Ultimately, the division of the country into India and Pakistan provided a further antagonistic feeling towards each other.

- **Obscurantism and Orthodoxy:**

Minority orthodox members believe they have a separate body with their own cultural pattern, personal laws and thinking.

Among Muslims, there are strong elements of conservatism and

fundamentalism. They have been discouraged from embracing the notion of secularism and religious freedom by such feelings.

- **Economic Backwardness:**

In India, the majority of Muslims were failing to study science and technology. They have not been properly represented in public service, manufacturing, trade and so on, because of their educational backwardness. This triggers the sense of relativity and the seeds of communalism are in these feelings.

- **Geographical Factors:**

There are several variations between the mode of life, social norms and the belief system in the territorial settlement of various religious groups, in particular Hindus Muslims and Christians. Most of these models are contradictory and may cause conflicts between cultures.

- **Historical Factors:**

The Muslims in the subcontinent are converted from Hinduism, because of the caste-hate ties and the restrictions of Muslim rulers. The issues of social segregation, analphabetism and poverty that characterised the low-caste citizens remain unsolved, as the international rubbing class never shared influence with them.

Their work finished with the Indians' conversion and the converts started with a master's imitation of thought, speech and clothing. It triggered their estrangement. In the Muslim community, elements of communalism progressively penetrated. From the beginning of the National Revival the separatist elements in the Muslim community prevented others from associating with their

community. This contributed to the creation of a Muslim League that forced the country to be divided.

- **Social Factors:**

Cultural similarity is an important factor in cultivating good relations between two separate social classes. But Hindus and Muslims' social institutions, traditions and practices are so different that they feel that they are two separate groups.

- **Psychological Factors:**

In the growth of communalism, psychological factors play an important role. The Hindus believe Muslims are extremist and fanatical. They think Muslims are also unpatriotic. On the contrary, the Muslims feel that they are viewed in India as second-rate people and are less religious. These emotions contribute to group misfortune.

- **Provocation of Enemy Countries:**

Some foreign countries try to destabilise our country, by using their agents to set one group against the other. Pakistan has been instrumental in fostering the common sentiment among our country's Muslims. By instigating the extremist sectors of the Indian Muslim community, Pakistan has facilitated and promoted communal riots. Youth in Kashmir are being trained to destabilise the internal security of India by spreading group poison by Pakistan.

- **Role of Media**

The messages relating to communal tension or riot in any part of the country spread through the mass media, as well as social

media, in every part of the world. This leads to more conflict and riots between two rivals.

### **Cases of Communal Violence in India**

- ❖ The partition of India witnessed mass bloodshed and violence that continued up to 1949.
- ❖ No major communal disturbances took place until 1961 when the Jabalpur riots shook the country due to economic competition between a Hindu and a Muslim bidi manufacturer than any electoral competition.
- ❖ In the 1960s – A series of riots broke out particularly in the eastern part of India – Rourkela, Jamshedpur and Ranchi – in 1964, 1965 and 1967, in places where Hindu refugees from the then East Pakistan were being settled.
- ❖ In September 1969, riots in Ahmedabad shook the conscience of the nation. The apparent cause was the Jan Sangh passing a resolution on Indianisation of Muslims to show its intense opposition to Indira Gandhi's leftward thrust.
- ❖ In April, 1974, violence occurred in the chawl or tenement, in the Worli neighborhood of Mumbai after the police attempted to disperse a rally of the Dalit Panthers that had turned violent, angered by clashes with the Shiv Sena.
- ❖ In February, 1983, the violence took place in Nellie as fallout of the decision to hold the controversial state elections in 1983 in the midst of the Assam Agitation, after Indira Gandhi's decision to give 4 million immigrants from Bangladesh the right to vote. It has been described as one of the worst pogroms since World War II.

- ❖ In October, 1984, the anti-Sikh riots broke out after the assassination of Indira Gandhi, where more than 4000 Sikhs were killed in Delhi, Uttar Pradesh and other parts of India.
- ❖ Meanwhile, the Bombay-Bhiwandi riots were instigated by the Shiv Sena when it jumped on the Hindutva bandwagon to revive the political fortunes of the Shiv Sena which had lost its appeal.
- ❖ The Shah Bano controversy in 1985 and the Babri Masjid-Ram Janmabhoomi controversy became powerful tools for intensifying communalism in the Eighties.
- ❖ The communal violence touched its apogee in December 1992 when the Babri Masjid was demolished by right wing parties.

## **Measures for the Eradication of Communalism**

### **Abolishment of Communal Parties:**

The government should ban or dissolve all political parties that rely on religious loyalties. In order to stop preaching communalism even non-political cultural organisations should be actively monitored.

### **Past heritage transmission:**

Feelings of nationalism should be inculcated into people's minds by reminding the public of Hindus and Muslims and Sikhs' glorious historical moments in order to protect their country's interest.

### **Opinion of the general public:**

Efforts to shift people's attitude to other cultures should be made through the mass media. The evils of communalism must be understood in citizens.

### **Inter-religious Marriage:**

Youth groups and other associations in every state should be formed to provide people from different communities with opportunities to come together and to get to know each other. This will encourage them to practise inter-religious marriages that reduce the social divide between members of religious groups. The Government and people should make efforts for eradication of communal tension and conflict.

### **Corruption in India**



**Corruption** in Indian society has prevailed from time immemorial in one form or the other. The basic inception of corruption started with our opportunistic leaders who have already done greater damage to our nation. People who work on the right principles are unrecognised and considered to be foolish in modern society. Corruption in India is a result of the connection between bureaucrats, politicians and criminals. Earlier, bribes were paid for getting wrong things done, but now bribes are paid for getting the right things done at the right time.



Further, corruption has become something respectable in India, because respectable people are involved in it. Social corruption like less weighing of products, adulteration in edible items, and bribery of various kinds have incessantly prevailed in the society.

**In today's scenario,** if a person wants a government job he has to pay lakhs of rupees to the higher officials irrespective of satisfying all the eligibility criteria. In every office one has either to give money to the employee concerned or arrange for some sources to get work done. There is adulteration and duplicate weighing of products in the food and civil supplies department by unscrupulous workers who cheat the consumers by playing with the health and lives of the people. In the assessment of property tax the officers charge money even if the house is built properly according to the Government rules and regulations.

**Political corruption is the worst in India.** The major cause of concern is that corruption is weakening the political body and damaging the supreme importance of the law governing the society. Nowadays politics is only for criminals and criminals are meant to be in politics. Elections in many parts of the country have become associated with a host of criminal activities. Threatening voters to vote for a particular candidate or physically prevent voters from going into the polling booth – especially weaker sections of the society like tribals, dalits and rural women occurs frequently in several parts of the country. Recently, the Government increased the salary of the M.P. 's from Rs.16, 000 to Rs.50, 000, that is 300% increase to the existing salary. But many of them are unhappy with the rise and want the Government to increase the salary to a much greater extent. This clearly shows how the politicians are in constant thirst for monetary benefits and not caring about the welfare of the people. Tax evasion is one of the most popular

forms of corruption. It is mostly practised by Government officials and politicians who lead to the accumulation of black money which in turn spoils the morale of the people.

### **Major Factors Responsible For Corruption**

- The most important factor is the nature of the human being. People in general, have a great thirst for luxuries and comforts and as a result of which they get themselves involved in all unscrupulous activities that result in monetary or material benefits.
- Moral and spiritual values are not given utmost importance in the educational system, which is highly responsible for the deterioration of the society.
- The salary paid to employees is very less and as a result of which they are forced to earn money by illegal ways.
- The punishments imposed on the criminals are inadequate.
- The political leaders have spoiled the society completely. They lead a luxurious life and do not even care about the society.
- People of India are not awakened and enlightened. They fear to raise their voice against anti-social elements prevailing in the society.

### **Measures towards control / eradication of corruption in india**

There are some specific measures to control increasing corruption.

- The Right to Information Act (RTI) gives one all the required information about the Government, such as what the Government is doing with our tax payments. Under this act, one has the right to ask the Government on any problem which one faces. There is a Public Information Officer (PIO) appointed in every Government department, who is responsible for collecting information wanted by the citizens and providing them with the relevant information on payment of a nominal fee to the PIO. If the

PIO refuses to accept the application or if the applicant does not receive the required information on time then the applicant can make a complaint to the respective information commission, which has the power to impose a penalty up to Rs.25, 000 on the errant PIO.

- Another potent check on corruption is the Central Vigilance Commission (CVC). It was set up by the Government to advise and guide Central Government agencies in the areas of vigilance. If there are any cases of corruption or any complaints thereof, then that can be reported to the CVC. CVC also shoulders the responsibility of creating more awareness among people regarding the consequences of giving and taking bribes and corruption.
- Establishment of special courts for speedy justice can be a huge positive aspect. Much time should not elapse between the registration of a case and the delivery of judgement.
- Strong and stringent laws need to be enacted which gives no room for the guilty to escape.
- In many cases, the employees opt for corrupt means out of compulsion and not by choice. Some people are of the opinion that the wages paid are insufficient to feed their families. If they are paid better, they would not be forced to accept bribes.

The one thing that needs to be ensured is proper, impartial, and unbiased use of various anti-social regulations to take strong, deterrent, and timely legal action against the offenders, irrespective of their political influences or money power.

Firm and strong steps are needed to curb the menace and an atmosphere has to be created where the good, patriotic, intellectuals come forward to serve the country with pride, virtue, and honesty for the welfare of the people of India.

## **Cyber crimes**



**Cybercrime** is a broad term that is used to define criminal activity in which computers or computer networks are a tool, a target, or a place of criminal activity and include everything from electronic wracking to denial of service attacks.

It is a general term that covers crimes like phishing, Credit card frauds, bank robbery, illegal downloading, industrial espionage, child pornography, kidnapping children via chat rooms, scams, cyber terrorism, creation and or distribution of viruses, spam and so on.

It also covers traditional crimes in which computers or networks are used to enable illicit activity. Cyber crime is increasing day by day, nowadays it has become a new fashion to earn money by fraud calls or to take revenge through hacking other accounts.

### **Types Of Cybercrimes:**

Cybercrime ranges from a variety of activities. Cyber crime can be basically divided into three major categories:

Cyber crimes against persons like harassment occur in cyberspace or through the use of cyberspace. Harassment can be sexual, racial, religious, or other.

Cyber crimes against property like computer wreckage (destruction of others' property), transmission of harmful programs, unauthorised trespassing, unauthorised possession of computer information.  
Cyber crimes against government like Cyber terrorism

## **A. Crimes against persons are:**

### **Cyber-Stalking:**

It means to create a physical threat that creates fear using computer technology such as the internet, e-mail, phones, text messages, webcam, websites or videos.

### **Dissemination of Obscene Material:**

It includes Indecent exposure/ Pornography (basically child pornography), hosting of web site containing these prohibited materials. These obscene matters may cause harm to the mind of the adolescent and tend to deprave or corrupt their mind.

### **Defamation:**

It is an act of imputing any person to lower down the dignity of the person by hacking his mail account and sending some mails using vulgar language to unknown persons mail account.

### **Hacking:**

It means unauthorised control/access over a computer system and an act of hacking completely destroys the whole data as well as computer programmes. Hackers usually hack telecommunication and mobile networks.

### **Cracking:**

It is one of the serious cyber crimes known till date. Cracking means that a stranger has broken into your computer systems without your



knowledge and consent and has tampered with precious confidential data and information.

**E-Mail Spoofing:**

A spoofed email may be said to be one, which misrepresents its origin. It shows its origin to be different from which actually it originates.

**SMS Spoofing:**

Spoofing is a blocking through spam which means the unwanted uninvited messages. Wrongdoer steals mobile phone number of any person and sends SMS via internet and receiver gets the SMS from the mobile phone number of the victim. It is a very serious cyber crime against any individual.

**Carding:**

It means false ATM cards i.e. Debit and Credit cards used by criminals for their monetary benefits through withdrawing money from the victim's bank account mala-fidely. There is always unauthorised use of ATM cards in this type of cyber crime.

**Cheating & Fraud:**

It means the person who is doing the act of cyber crime i.e. stealing password and data storage has done it with a guilty mind which leads to fraud and cheating.

**Child Pornography:**

It involves the use of computer networks to create, distribute, or access materials that sexually exploit underage children.

**Assault by Threat:**



refers to threatening a person with fear for their lives or lives of their families through the use of a computer network i.e. E-mail, videos or phones.

## **B. Crimes against Property:**

As there is rapid growth in international trade where businesses and consumers are increasingly using computers to create, transmit and to store information in the electronic form instead of traditional paper documents.

There are certain offences which affects persons properties which are as follows:

### **Intellectual Property Crimes:**

Intellectual property consists of a bundle of rights. Any unlawful act by which the owner is deprived completely or partially of his rights is an offence. The common form of IPR violation may be said to be software piracy, infringement of copyright, trademark, patents, designs and service mark violation, theft of computer source code, etc.

### **Cyber Squatting:**

It means where two persons claim for the same Domain Name either by claiming that they had registered the name first on by right of using it before the other or using something similar to that previously. For example two similar names i.e. www.yahoo.com and www.yahoo.com.

### **Cyber Vandalism:**

Vandalism means deliberately destroying or damaging property of another. Thus cyber vandalism means destroying or damaging the data when a network service is stopped or disrupted. It may include within its purview any kind of physical harm done to the computer of



any person. These acts may take the form of the theft of a computer, some part of a computer or a peripheral attached to the computer.

### **Hacking Computer System:**

Hactivism attacks included Famous Twitter, a blogging platform by unauthorised access/control over the computer. Due to the hacking activity there will be loss of data as well as computers. Also research especially indicates that those attacks were not mainly intended for financial gain too and to diminish the reputation of a particular person or company.

### **Transmitting Virus:**

Viruses are programs that attach themselves to a computer or a file and then circulate themselves to other files and to other computers on a network. They usually affect the data on a computer, either by altering or deleting it. Worm attacks play a major role in affecting the computerised system of the individuals.

### **Cyber Trespass:**

It means to access someone's computer without the right authorization of the owner and does not disturb, alter, misuse, or damage data or system by using wireless internet connection.

### **Internet Time Thefts:**

Basically, Internet time theft comes under hacking. It is the use by an unauthorised person of the Internet hours paid for by another person. The person who gets access to someone else's ISP user ID and password, either by hacking or by gaining access to it by illegal means, uses it to access the Internet without the other person's knowledge. You can identify time theft if your Internet time has to be recharged often, despite infrequent usage.

### **C. Cyber Crimes against Government**

There are certain offences done by a group of persons intending to threaten the international governments by using internet facilities. It includes:

#### **Cyber Terrorism:**

Cyber terrorism is a major burning issue in the domestic as well as global concern. The common form of these terrorist attacks on the Internet is by distributed denial of service attacks, hate websites and hate e-mails, attacks on sensitive computer networks etc. Cyber terrorism activities endanger the sovereignty and integrity of the nation.

#### **Cyber Warfare:**

It refers to politically motivated hacking to damage and spying. It is a form of information warfare sometimes seen as analogous to conventional warfare although this analogy is controversial for both its accuracy and its political motivation.

#### **Distribution of pirated software:**

It means distributing pirated software from one computer to another intending to destroy the data and official records of the government.

#### **Possession of Unauthorised Information:**

It is very easy to access any information by the terrorists with the aid of internet and to possess that information for political, religious, social, ideological objectives.

#### **Analysis Of Cyber Crimes In India:**

India is the second largest online market in the world with over 560 million internet users, Ranked only behind China. And it is estimated that by 2023, there would be over 650 million internet users in the country. According to the latest national crime records bureau NCRB data, a total of 27, 248 cases of cybercrime were registered in India in 2018.

In Telangana, 1205 cyber crime cases were registered in the same year. According to FBIs report, India stands third among top 20 cybercrime victims. The national cyber crime reporting portal (cybercrime.gov.in) which was started last year by the central government received 33,152 complaints till now resulting in lodging of 790 FIRs. In fact, according to a 2017 report, Indian consumers had lost over 18 billion US dollars due to cyber crimes. In 2018, there were over 27,000 cases of cyber crimes recorded in the country, marking an increase of over 121% compared to the number of the cases as of two years back.

Number of cyber crimes	
2018	27,248
2017	21,796
2016	12,317
2015	11,592
2014	9,622
2013	5,693
2012	3,377

**Total number of cyber crimes reported in India from 2012–2018**

## **Violence against women and children**



**Violence against women and children** is a grave public health concern, with costs at multiple levels of society. Although violence is a threat to everyone, women and children are particularly susceptible to victimisation because their rights are often overlooked and they often lack appropriate means of protection.

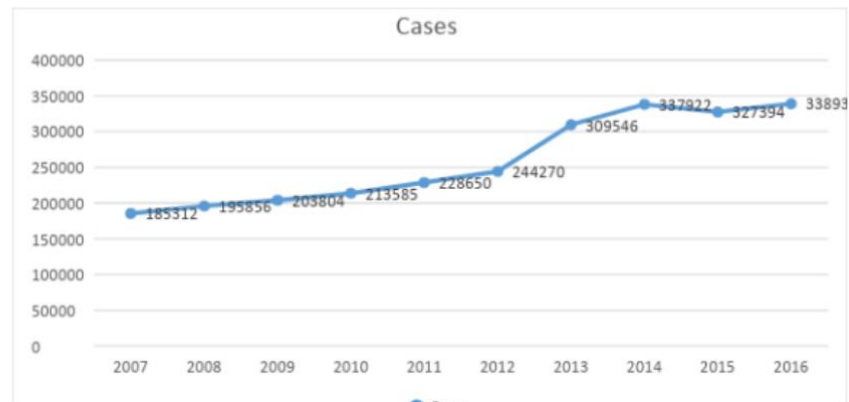
In some societies, certain types of violence are considered socially or legally acceptable, thereby further contributing to the risk to women and children. Violence against women and children has tremendous costs to communities, nations and societies – for public well being, health and safety, and for school achievement, productivity, law enforcement, and public programmes and budgets.

This kind of violence is an extreme manifestation of gender inequality and systematic gender based discrimination.

The effects of violence can remain with women and children for a lifetime, and can pass from one generation to another. Studies show that children who have witnessed, or been subjected to, violence are more likely to become victims or abusers themselves.

In the past decade, research has documented the growing magnitude of such violence, but gaps in the data still remain. Victims of violence have fear of stigmatisation or societal condemnation and thus often hesitate to report crimes.

**Crime Against Women**

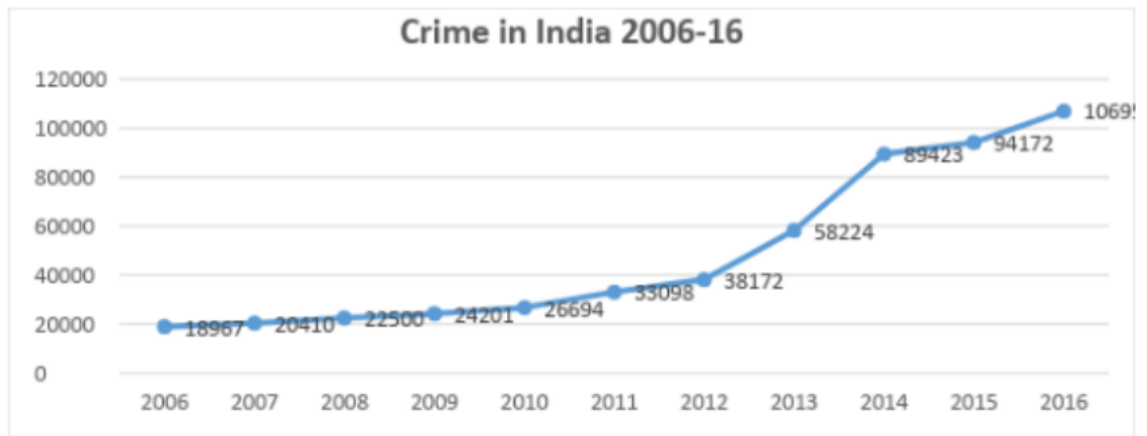


Crimes against women increased by more than 180% over a period of the past one decade from (1,85,312 in 2007 to 3,38,934 in 2016).

39 crimes against women were reported every hour in India, up from 21 in 2007, according to the 'Crime in India 2016' report by NCRB. Majority of cases under crimes against women were reported under 'Cruelty by Husband or His Relatives' (32.6%) followed by 'Assault on Women with Intent to Outrage her Modesty' (25.0%), 'Kidnaping & Abduction of Women' (19.0%) and 'Rape' (11.5%).

Uttar Pradesh reported 14.5% (49,262 out of 3,38,954 cases) of total cases of crimes against women followed by West Bengal (9.6%) (32,513 cases) during 2016. Delhi UT reported the highest crime rate (160.4) compared to the national average rate of 55.2.

### Crime Against Children



Crime against children increased more than 500% over a period of the past one decade (1,06,958 in 2016 over 18,967 in 2006).

The total number of crimes against children were recorded 1,06,958 in 2016 among them 84.4% crimes were recorded under two heads, kidnapping & abduction (51.1%) and cases under the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act, 2012 (33.6%) including child rape.

More than 42% of crimes against children have been recorded in just three states, namely Uttar Pradesh, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh. While Uttar Pradesh tops the list with 16% of recorded crimes against children, Maharashtra and Madhya Pradesh closely follow with 14% and 11% respectively.

### **Huge pendency & relatively low conviction rate in crime against women and children**

The conviction rate of the crimes against women was 18.9% in 2016 and is the lowest of the decade. The conviction rate in the cases registered under POCSO was much less than the overall conviction rate in case of all IPC crimes. In 2016, the conviction rate in cases registered



under POCSO was 29.6% against 46.8% for all IPC crimes. The low conviction rate is coupled with a high pendency of cases.

### **Preventing violence against women and children**

The right of women and children to live free of violence depends on the protection of their human rights and a strong chain of justice. When it comes to preventing violence, we must address the root causes of gender inequality and discrimination. Evidence shows that the gender gap is greater in the status of women's health, participation in the economy, education levels, and representation in politics.

This required a long-term systematic and comprehensive approach that recognizes and protects women's and children's full and equal human rights. We must promote a culture of equality between men and women through institutional and legal reform, education, awareness – raising and the full engagement of men and boys.

Protection of women and children in our country cannot be ensured with just having legislation and guidelines. We as a country need to commit to cultivate a culture of zero tolerance for violence against women and children.

We should be vigilant and cognizant of the fact that women and children are at risk with gaps in infrastructure, processes and systems as well as people. It is non-negotiable for the state and other duty bearers to equip themselves in recognizing these risks and put robust systems and processes to assess and eliminate the same.



## **Domestic violence in india**



Domestic violence can be described as the power misused by one adult in a relationship to control another. It is the establishment of control and fear in a relationship through violence and other forms of abuse. This violence can take the form of physical assault, psychological abuse, social abuse, financial abuse, or sexual assault. The frequency of the violence can be on and off, occasional or chronic.

**“Domestic violence is not simply an argument. It is a pattern of coercive control that one person exercises over another. Abusers use physical and sexual violence, threats, emotional insults and economic deprivation as a way to dominate their victims and get their way”.**

The Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, 2005 says that any act, conduct, omission or commission that harms or injures or has the potential to harm or injure will be considered domestic violence by the law..

- Domestic violence is perpetrated by, and on, both men and women. However, most commonly, the victims are women, especially in our country.

- Even in the United States, it has been reported that 85% of all violent crimes experienced by women are cases of intimate partner violence, compared to 3% of violent crimes experienced by men.
- Thus, domestic violence in Indian context mostly refers to domestic violence against women.

Domestic violence is the most common form of violence against women. It affects women across the life span from sex selective abortion of female fetuses to forced suicide and abuse, and is evident, to some degree, in every society in the world.

The World Health Organization reports that the proportion of women who had ever experienced physical or sexual violence or both by an intimate partner ranged from 15% to 71%, with the majority between 29% and 62%.(2)

**India's National Family Health Survey-III**, carried out in 29 states during 2005-06, has found that a substantial proportion of married women have been physically or sexually abused by their husbands at some time in their lives.

The survey indicated that, nationwide, 37.2% of women “experienced violence” after marriage. Bihar was found to be the most violent, with **the abuse rate against married women being as high as 59%.**

Strangely, 63% of these incidents were reported from urban families rather than the state's most backward villages.

**It was followed by Madhya Pradesh (45.8%), Rajasthan (46.3%), Manipur (43.9%), Uttar Pradesh (42.4%), Tamil Nadu (41.9%) and West Bengal (40.3%)**

The trend of violence against women was recently highlighted by the India's National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) which stated that while in 2000, an average of 125 women faced domestic violence every day, the figure stood at 160 in 2005.(7)

A recent United Nation Population Fund report also revealed that around two-thirds of married women in India were victims of domestic violence. Violence in India kills and disables as many women between the ages of 15 and 44 years as cancer and its toll on women's health surpasses that of traffic accidents and malaria combined.(8)

Even these alarming figures are likely to be significantly underestimated given that violence within families continues to be a taboo subject in both industrialised and industrialising countries.

### **Causes of Domestic Violence**

- ❖ Domestic violence against women is an age old phenomenon. Women were always considered weak, vulnerable and in a position to be exploited. Violence has long been accepted as something that happens to women.
- ❖ Cultural mores, religious practices, economic and political conditions may set the precedence for initiating and perpetuating domestic violence, but ultimately committing an act of violence is a choice that the individual makes out of a range of options.
- ❖ Although one cannot underestimate the importance of macro system-level forces (such as cultural and social norms) in the aetiology of gender-based violence within any country, including India, individual-level variables also play important roles in the development of such violence. The gender imbalance in

domestic violence is partly related to differences in physical strength and size.

- ❖ Moreover, women are socialised into their gender roles in different societies throughout the world. In societies with a patriarchal power structure and with rigid gender roles, women are often poorly equipped to protect themselves if their partners become violent.
- ❖ However, much of the disparity relates to how men-dependence and fearfulness amount to a cultural disarmament. Husbands who batter wives typically feel that they are exercising a right, maintaining good order in the family and punishing their wives' delinquency – especially the wives' failure to keep their proper place.

### **Domestic Violence and its Health Implications**

Violence not only causes physical injury, it also undermines the social, economic, psychological, spiritual and emotional well being of the victim, the perpetrator and the society as a whole. Domestic violence is a major contributor to the ill health of women.

It has serious consequences on women's mental and physical health, including their reproductive and sexual health. These include injuries, gynecological problems, temporary or permanent disabilities, depression and suicide, amongst others.

These physical and mental health outcomes have social and emotional sequelae for the individual, the family, the community and the society at large.

Over both the short term and long term, women's physical injuries and mental trouble either interrupts, or ends, their educational and career paths leading to poverty and economic dependence.

Family life gets disrupted which has a significant effect on children, including poverty (if divorce or separation occurs) and a loss of faith and trust in the institution of the family. These sequelae not only affect the quality of life of individuals and communities, but also have long-term effects on social order and cohesion.(9)

In India, one incident of violence translates into women losing seven working days. In the United States, total loss adds up to 12.6 billion dollars annually and Australia loses 6.3 billion dollars per year.

The physical health consequences of domestic violence are often obscure, indirect and emerge over the long term. For example, women who were subject to violent attacks during childhood are bothered by menstrual problems and irritable bowel syndrome in later life.(9)

### **Domestic Violence and Reproductive Health**

There is enough evidence to support that higher reproductive morbidity is seen among women experiencing domestic violence. Studies conducted in North India have shown elevated odd's ratio of gynecological symptoms, while comparing women with husbands reporting no domestic violence and women who experienced physical and sexual violence.

It may be attributed to the fact that abusive men were more likely to engage in extra marital sex and acquire STDs, there by placing their wives at risk of acquiring STDs. There was also lesser condom use reported among such men.

These make women more susceptible to HIV infection, and the fear of violent male reactions, physical and psychological, prevents many

women from trying to find out more about it, discourages them from getting tested and stops them from getting treatment.

### **Psychological and Emotional Violence**

Psychological and emotional violence covers “repeated verbal abuse, harassment, confinement and deprivation of physical, financial and personal resources”.

Quantifying psychological abuse is extremely difficult, and very few studies have been conducted to establish prevalence rates of this type of violence.

Violence against women has a far deeper impact than the immediate harm caused. It has devastating consequences for the women who experience it and a traumatic effect on those who witness it, particularly children.

### **Impact of Domestic Violence on Children**

Children who witness domestic violence may develop serious emotional, behavioural, developmental or academic problems.

As they develop, children and teens who grow up with domestic violence in the household are:

- more likely to use violence at school or community in response to perceived threats
- more likely to attempt suicide
- more likely to use drugs
- more likely to commit crimes, especially sexual assault
- more likely to use violence to enhance their reputation and self esteem
- more likely to become abusers in later life

### **Why Do Women Stay?**

Economic dependence has been found to be the central reason.

Without the ability to sustain themselves economically, women are forced to stay in abusive relationships and are not able to be free from violence. Due to deep-rooted values and culture, women do not prefer to adopt the option of separation or divorce. They also fear the consequences of reporting violence and declare an unwillingness to subject themselves to the shame of being identified as battered women. Lack of information about alternatives also forces women to suffer silently within the four walls of their homes.

Violence against women is a violation of basic human rights. It is shameful for the states that fail to prevent it and societies that tolerate and in fact perpetuate it. It must be eliminated through political will, and by legal and civil action in all sectors of society.

### **Addressing Domestic Violence**

An effective response to violence must be multi-sectoral; addressing the immediate practical needs of women experiencing abuse; providing long-term follow up and assistance; and focusing on changing those cultural norms, attitudes and legal provisions that promote the acceptance of and even encourage violence against women, and undermine women's enjoyment of their full human rights and freedoms.

The health sector has unique potential to deal with violence against women, particularly through reproductive health services, which most women will access at some point in their lives. However, this potential is far from being realised. Few doctors, nurses or other health personnel have the awareness and the training to identify violence as the underlying cause of women's health problems.



The health sector can play a vital role in preventing violence against women, helping to identify abuse early, providing victims with the necessary treatment and referring women to appropriate care. Health services must be places where women feel safe, are treated with respect, are not stigmatised, and where they can receive quality, informed support. A comprehensive health sector response to the problem is needed, in particular addressing the reluctance of abused women to seek help.

## **DOWRY SYSTEM IN INDIA**



**Dowry is a social evil in society** that has caused unimaginable tortures and crimes towards women and polluted the Indian marital system. Dowry is payment made in cash or kind to a bride's in-laws at the time of her marriage.

Today the government has come up with many laws (The Dowry Prohibition Act 1961) and reforms, not only to eradicate the dowry



system, but also to uplift the status of the girl child by bringing in many schemes.

However, owing to the social nature of this problem, the legislation has failed to produce the desired results in our society.

In order to get rid of this problem, appealing to the social and moral consciousness of the people, providing education and economic independence for women, and effective enforcement of legislation against the dowry system, can help.

## **Impact of Dowry System**

**Gender Discrimination:** Due to the dowry system, many a times it has been seen that women are seen as a liability and are often subjected to subjugation and are given second hand treatment may it be in education or other amenities.

**Affecting Career of Women:** The larger context for the practice of dowry is the poor presence of women in the workforce, and their consequent lack of financial independence.

The Poorer sections of society who send their daughters out to work and earn some money, to help them save up for her dowry.

The regular middle and upper class backgrounds do send their daughters to school, but don't emphasise career options.

**Many Women End Up Being Unmarried:** An uncountable number of girls in the country, despite being educated and professionally competent, remain endlessly unmarried because their parents cannot fulfil the demand for pre-marriage dowry.

**Objectification of Women:** Contemporary dowry is more like an investment by the bride's family for plugging into powerful connections and money making opportunities.

This renders women as merely articles of commerce.

**Crime Against Women:** In some cases, the dowry system leads to crime against women, ranging from emotional abuse and injury to even deaths.

## **MEASURES FORWARD**

**Recognizing Limitations of Political Solution to Social Problem:** No law can be enforced without the wholehearted cooperation of the people. Enacting a law no doubt sets a pattern of behaviour, activates social conscience and renders some assistance towards the efforts of social reformers in getting it abolished.

However, social evil like dowry cannot eradicate itself unless the people carry the philosophy behind the law much further.

**Educating Girls:** Education and independence is one powerful and valuable gift that parents can give to their daughter.

This will in turn help her to be financially sound and be a contributing member of the family, giving her respect and right status in the family. So providing the daughters with a solid education, and encouraging her to pursue a career of her choice is the best dowry any parent can ever give their daughter.

**Creating Social Stigma Around Dowry:** Accepting dowry should be made a social stigma, and all generations should be addressed. For this, social consciousness about the ill effects of the dowry system needs to be aroused. In this context The Union and State governments must take effective steps for stepping up 'anti-dowry literacy' among people through Lok Adalats, radio broadcasts, television and newspapers on a 'continuing' basis.

Youths are the only ray of hope to effectively combat the menace of the dowry system. They must be given moral value based education to broaden their minds and widen their outlook.

**Multi Stakeholder Approach:**

Dowry is not a standalone problem, thus society should take every step to bring gender parity. In this context, States should look at gender-disaggregated data across the life cycle – birth, early childhood, education, nutrition, livelihood, access to healthcare, etc – to address gender inequality.

There is a need to expand childcare and safe public transport, reduce discrimination in hiring, and create affirming workplace environments. At home, men should share domestic work and care responsibilities.

## **Divorces in india**



India is known as a society with **low rates of divorce or separation**.

- This also reflects that the marriages are still highly constrained by patriarchal socio-cultural norms and tends to be determined by families rather than the individuals who enter into the marriage.

### **What are the features of the Indian Marriage System?**

- **Caste endogamy** still dominates in choice of partner.
- Women only very rarely have any autonomy in spouse selection.

- There is still very little social and cultural acceptance of divorce, particularly when initiated by women.
- There are even numerous instances of women being encouraged to stay with an abusive and violent partner, even by their own natal families, rather than exiting the marriage.
- **Separation or divorce**, when it occurs, is more frequently initiated by men, also because the low work participation rates of women and inheritance patterns that are still gender-unequal provide very little options for women who choose to leave even an unhappy or abusive relationship.
- As a result, most marriages end because one of the partners dies.

### **What does the Census Data say?**

The Census data for women's marital status by age in 2011 shows that widowhood is much more likely for adult women than being separated or divorced.

The rates of marriage dissolution are relatively low compared to other societies.

**But they are large in absolute numbers i.e more than 4.2 million women (4,225,940) were either separated or divorced in 2011.**

**The highest rates of marriage dissolution among women are found in middle age, peaking in the age group 35–39 years.**

### **causes of marriage dissolution**

Separation, not divorce, is the dominant form of marriage dissolution for most women in India. Separation accounts for 63% of all separated and divorced women. This is significant because most separations are informal arrangements that do not provide any kind of legal recourse or status or rights to the affected women.

Most cases of separation tend to be of abandonment by the male spouse, which typically imply that the spouse has also abandoned all material responsibility towards the upkeep of the woman and her children.

- ❖ Religion obviously plays an important role in determining the socio-cultural norms of marriage and the ending of marriage.
- ❖ In India it also governs the legal framework within which much marriage dissolution takes place.
- ❖ Buddhist, Christian and "Other" women show the highest incidence of divorce and separation.
- ❖ However, Muslim women also show a higher rate of marital dissolution than Hindu women, while Sikh women show the lowest rate.
- ❖ Separation is slightly less evident among Muslim women, probably because of the greater ease of divorce in this community.
- ❖ There is hardly any difference across rural and urban areas in terms of rates of marital dissolution for women.
- ❖ The rates of separation and divorce still tend to be strongly influenced by son-preference.
- ❖ Women who are mothers of only daughters have a higher probability of marriage dissolution than those with even one son.
- ❖ This tendency is similar across different castes and religious communities, and across rural and urban locations.

- ❖ It is also surprising to find that such a tendency persists regardless of other factors that should reduce it, such as the level of education of the woman and her husband.
- ❖ Son preference is only one indicator of extreme patriarchy, but its impact even in affecting something like the viability of marriages is yet another indicator of the continuing low status of women in Indian society.

### **Adultery**

Either Party may file a petition under Section 13(1)(i) of Indian Marriage Act, 1955 on the ground of adultery. Section 10 of the Indian Marriage Act defines adultery, and it is a ground of Divorce under Section 13(1) of the Act. Earlier, the provision of adultery was penalising provisions under Indian Penal Code, 1860 (IPC), but now it is not. As per the judgement in Joseph Shine v. Union of India (UOI), now section 497 IPC is declared unconstitutional, and thus it is not punishable. However, this serves to be a ground for Divorce in India. The divorce petition shall fulfil the essentials, which are:

Sexual intercourse outside the marriage.

Intercourse voluntary in nature.

### **Cruelty**

Either of the spouses can file a divorce petition under Section 13(1)(ia) on the ground of cruelty. The concept of cruelty was earlier in Section 10(1)(b) of the old Hindu Marriage Act, 1955. This also finds a place in Section 498A of Indian Penal Code, 1860. Cruelty is also covered under the Domestic Violence Act. Quarrels or any other annoyance caused by either partner generally is not cruelty. Cruelty can be of two types:



### **Physical**

Physical cruelty means subjecting the spouse to violence which may inflict any bodily injury. And, the bodily injury is of such that it is dangerous to the life of the spouse, grievous, or inflicts pain. Any member from the family of the husband can also be convicted for the same.

### **Mental**

Harassment for dowry or any type of coercion which leads to disturbance in the mental health of the woman.

Other than Mental and Physical, any act which makes it difficult for either partner to live with the other partner is cruelty.

### **Desertion**

Section 13(1)(ib) of the Hindu Marriage Act, 1955 defines desertion as a ground for divorce. When the spouse leaves the other spouse after marriage and stays separated, it is desertion. However, the ground of desertion is valid for filing the divorce petition if:

separation period is not less than two years;  
there is no consummation for two years;  
desertion is with the intent to abandon; and  
desertion is continuous and without consent.

### **Conversion**

Under Section 13(1)(ii), if either spouse adopts another religion after solemnization of marriage (Hindu Marriage), the other spouse can file a divorce petition on the ground. In other words, if

either of the spouses adopts another religion, it is grounds for divorce. Mere participation in some other religion is not conversion. However, if there is a relinquishment of the Hindu religion entirely.

### **Unsoundness of mind**

Divorce can be filed, if either spouse suffers from insanity and is thereby unfit to live together. Such ground is under Section 13(1)(iii) of the Act. The Ground of unsoundness of mind can only be taken when a sound spouse reasonably cannot reside with the unsound spouse.

### **Schizophrenia**

Schizophrenia is a condition when a person suffers from a split personality, and this can also be a ground for divorce. In this condition, the petition is filed under Section 13(1)(iii) of the Act which covers such mental illness. If a person suffers from continuous or intermittent stages of such mental illness then, divorce can be taken.

### **Virulent and incurable leprosy**

In the case where either of the spouses suffers from leprosy which is incurable and harmful, this serves as a ground for divorce. The ground for such divorce petition is under Section 13(1)(iv) of the Act.

### **Venereal disease in a communicable form**

When either spouse suffers from a venereal disease which is in a communicable form, it is a legal reason for divorce. Venereal diseases are diseases which can be sexually transmitted. It is a ground for divorce under Section 13(1)(v) of the Act.

### **Entering new religious order**

One of the partners renounces the world by entering into religious order and provides a legal reason for divorce. This is a ground of divorce only if the renouncement is absolute. This means that the renouncement is of the rights and liabilities related to any property.

### **Presumption of death**

There can be a presumption of death by the court while granting ex parte decree. According to Section 13(1)(vii), if the person is not heard to be alive by the person who in a usual course would have heard about his existence, then the court presumes the person to be dead. This serves to be a ground for divorce.

## **CHILD ABUSE**



Child abuse is not just physical violence directed at a child. It is any form of maltreatment by an adult, which is violent or threatening for the child. This includes neglect.

When child abuse occurs in the home and the abuser is, for example, the child's parent or care-giver, this is a form of domestic violence .

But children are sometimes abused by other adults on whom they are dependent, such as day nursery workers, teachers and sports coaches.

Sometimes abuse is intentional, but not always. If parents or caregivers are no longer able to cope with caring for the child, this can result in dysfunctional behaviour and abuse.

### **Scope of child abuse**

In 2010 Leiden University and TNO (Netherlands Organisation for Applied Scientific Research) carried out a study into the scope and nature of child abuse. Every year an estimated 119,000 children experience some type of abuse.

### **Types of child abuse**

There are five general types of child abuse:

#### **Physical abuse: all forms of physical violence;**

Emotional or psychological abuse: an adult regularly berates the child, acts in a dismissive and hostile manner towards the child or intentionally scares the child.

#### **Physical neglect: the child does not receive the care and nurturing that it needs.**

**Emotional or psychological neglect:** continuous lack of positive attention for the child. Ignoring the child's need for love, warmth

and security. This category also covers cases in which children are witnesses to violence between their parents or caregivers. Sexual abuse: sexual contact which an adult forces upon a child.

### **Physical Abuse**

- Two out of every three children were physically abused.
- Out of 69% children physically abused, 54.68% were boys.
- Over 50% of children were being subjected to one or the other form of physical abuse.
- Out of those children physically abused in family situations, 88.6% were physically abused by parents.
- The State of Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Bihar and Delhi have almost consistently reported higher rates of abuse in all forms as compared to other states.
- 50.2% of children worked seven days a week.

### **Sexual Abuse**

- 53.22% children reported having faced one or more forms of sexual abuse.
- Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Bihar and Delhi reported the highest percentage of sexual abuse among both boys and girls.
- 21.90% child respondents reported facing severe forms of sexual abuse and 50.76% other forms of sexual abuse.
- Children in Assam, Andhra Pradesh, Bihar and Delhi reported the highest incidence of sexual assault.
- 50% abuses are persons known to the child or in a position of trust and responsibility.

### **Emotional Abuse and Girl Child Neglect**

- Every second child reported facing emotional abuse.
- Equal percentage of both girls and boys reported facing emotional abuse.

- In 83% of the cases parents were the abusers.
- 48.4% of girls wished they were boys.



According to the Trafficking in Persons report 2021, released by the US State Department, the Covid-19 pandemic has resulted in an increase in vulnerability to human trafficking and interrupted existing anti-traffic efforts.

**Human trafficking**, also called trafficking in persons, form of modern-day slavery involving the illegal transport of individuals by force or deception for the purpose of labour, sexual exploitation, or activities in which others benefit financially.

While India did not meet the minimum standards to eliminate trafficking, the government was making significant efforts, although these were inadequate, especially when it came to bonded labour.

The Chinese government engaged in widespread forced labour, including through the continued mass arbitrary detention of more than one million Uyghurs, ethnic Kazakhs, ethnic Kyrgyz, and other Muslims.

**Reasons for Increased Trafficking:**

The concurrence of the increased number of individuals at risk, traffickers' ability to capitalise on competing crises, and the diversion of resources to pandemic response efforts has resulted in an ideal environment for human trafficking to flourish and evolve.

### **Categorisation of Countries:**

The categorisation is based not on the magnitude of a country's trafficking problem but on efforts to meet minimum standards for the elimination of human trafficking.

### **The countries are designated on the three-tier system:**

- Tier 1 countries are those countries whose governments fully comply with the Trafficking Victims Protection Act (TVPA – US's law on human trafficking) minimum standards.
- USA, UK, Australia, Bahrain and South Korea are some of the countries in tier 1.
- Tier 2 countries are those countries whose governments do not fully comply with TVPA's minimum standards but are making significant efforts to bring themselves into compliance with those standards.
- Tier 2 watchlist countries are those where the absolute number of victims of severe forms of trafficking is significant or is significantly increasing.
- India is placed in Tier 2 category.
- Tier 3 countries whose governments do not fully comply with the minimum standards and are not making significant efforts to do so.
- Afghanistan, Burma, China, Cuba, Eritrea, North Korea, Iran, Russia, South Sudan, Syria and Turkmenistan are under this tier.
- There are also a few "Special Cases" such as Yemen, where the civil conflict and humanitarian crisis make gaining information difficult.



## **Relevant Laws in India:**

### **Article 23 and 24 of the Constitution of India.**

Article 23 prohibits human trafficking and begar (forced labour without payment).

Article 24 forbids employment of children below the age of 14 years in dangerous jobs like factories and mines.

### **Indian Penal Code (IPC) Section:**

Section 370 and 370A of IPC provide for comprehensive measures to counter the menace of human trafficking including trafficking of children for exploitation in any form including physical exploitation or any form of sexual exploitation, slavery, servitude, or the forced removal of organs.

Sections 372 and 373 dealing with selling and buying of girls for the purpose of prostitution.

### **Other Legislations:**

The Immoral Traffic (Prevention) Act, 1956 (ITPA) is the premier legislation for prevention of trafficking for commercial sexual exploitation.

There are other specific legislations enacted relating to trafficking in women and children – Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006, Bonded Labour System (Abolition) Act, 1976, Child Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Act, 1986,

Transplantation of Human Organs Act, 1994,

Protection of Children from Sexual offences (POCSO) Act, 2012, is a special law to protect children from sexual abuse and exploitation.

State Governments have also enacted specific legislations to deal with the issue (e.g. The Punjab Prevention of Human Smuggling Act, 2012).

Other Steps Taken by India

**Anti-Trafficking Nodal Cell** was set up in the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) in 2006 to act as a focal point for communicating various decisions and follow up on action taken by the State Governments to combat the crime of Human Trafficking.

**Anti Human Trafficking Unit (AHTU):** The Ministry of Home Affairs under a Comprehensive Scheme 'Strengthening Law Enforcement Response in India against Trafficking in Persons' (2010) has released fund for establishment of AHTU for many districts of the country.

The primary role of an Anti Human Trafficking Unit (AHTU) is law enforcement and liaising with other concerned agencies for care & rehabilitation of victims.

**UN Convention:** India has ratified (in 2011) United Nations Convention on Transnational Organised Crime (UNTOC) which among others has a Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, especially Women and Children.

**SAARC Convention:** India has ratified the SAARC Convention on Preventing and Combating Trafficking in Women and Children for Prostitution.

**Bilateral Mechanism:** A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between India and Bangladesh for Prevention of Human Trafficking in Women and Children, Rescue, Recovery, Repatriation and Re-integration of Victims of Trafficking was signed in June, 2015.

**Judicial Colloquium:** These are held at the High court level.

The aim is to sensitize the judicial officers about the various issues concerning human trafficking and to ensure speedy court process.

**Capacity Building:** Various Training of Trainers (TOT) workshops on 'Combating Trafficking in Human Beings' for Police officers and for Prosecutors at Regional level, State level and District level have been organised by the government throughout the country.

There is a need to step up technical assistance and strengthen cooperation, to support all countries to protect victims and bring criminals to justice.

The capacity building of the Police along with that of the NGOs is necessary to tackle the menace of human trafficking.

There is a need to ensure proper data sharing, internally in an administration or between agencies like the police or the NGOs, or between the different countries as well.

**The Justice Verma Committee**, 2012 had recommended a census of the missing children.

Government needs to take some preventive steps, such as Educating children on the crime of trafficking by including the same in their school curriculum.

Making people aware as a society i.e. if an individual comes across any suspicious activity, s/he should report the same to the concerned authorities.

