CHAPTER – I

INTRODUCTION

In the recent years terms like ethnicity, ethnic conflict and nationalism have engaged the minds of the scholars in a big way. The precise nature of concepts such as ethnicity and nationalism still remains elusive, as these have been used by the experts for variety of things. Ethnicity as an aspect of social relationship refers to the mindset of the people who consider themselves as culturally distinct from others. It can thus be defined as a social identity characterized by metaphoric or fictive kinship. When cultural differences regularly make a difference in interaction between members of groups, the social relationship has an ethnic element (Erikson, 2002: 12).

Greek term, “ethnos” and French term “ethnie” are almost synonym terms, which mean the idea of living together and being alike in culture. It involves a sense of tribal belonging through common family ties, rather than any sense of genetic and looked ties (Smith, 1986: 24). Benjamin Akzin termed it the “similarity-dissimilarity” pattern, where members of an ethnie are similar and alike in those cultural traits in which they are dissimilar from non-members. The most commonly shared and distinct traits are those of language and religion, but customs, institutions, laws, folklore, architecture, dress, food, music and arts, even colour and physique, may augment the differences or oneness. For example, unity among the Black population in the US is taken as based, not upon language or even religion, but upon pigmentation and the sufferings and prejudice, which it has come to express and symbolize. In this case, ‘passing’ becomes difficult, and even though the ‘Blacks’ lost much of their African ethnic heritages and have become culturally almost Americanized (ibid; 26). Ethnicity, therefore, is a sense of ethnic identity, which has been defined by De Vos as consisting of the ‘subjective, symbolic or emblematic use’ by a group of people... of any aspect of culture, or in order to differentiate themselves from other groups (Brass, 1991: 19). These processes of identity formation may also contain identity change. In addition to subjective self-consciousness, it also involves a claim to status and recognition, either as a superior group or as a group
at least equal to ethnic category. Ethnic groups use ethnicity to make demands in the political area for alteration in their status, in their economic well being, in their civil rights, or in their educational opportunities and thus are often seen engaged in interest group politics (ibid; 63).

The shared ancestry myths, histories and cultures, having an association with a specific territory and a sense of solidarity may be the basis of ethnic formations (Smith, 1986: 32). Religion, language and governmental policies also play a pivotal role in formation of ethnic communities. The ethnic communities are created and transformed more visibly by elites in modernizing and post-industrial societies, undergoing dramatic social change. This process invariably involves competition and conflict for political power, economic benefits, and social status between competing elite classes, and leadership groups, both within and among different ethnic categories. It has been noted that modernization and industrialization in large, multi-ethnic societies tend to proceed unevenly and often benefit some ethnic groups or some regions of a country more than others (Brass, 1991: 25).

In a situation where an ethnic group succeeds in its efforts for achieving and maintaining group rights through political action and political mobilization, it goes beyond ethnicity to establish itself as nationality (ibid; 23). This way ethnicity transforms into a sense of nationalism. Nations may be created by the transformation of an ethnic group in a multi-ethnic state into a self-conscious political entity or by the amalgamation of diverse groups and the formation of an inter-ethnic composite or homogenous national culture through the agency of the modern state. Small minorities can very readily escalate the level of inter ethnic violence, especially when their thinking takes place in a self perceived context of national liberation (Jordan, 1987: 318).

Ernest Gellner defines nationalism primarily as a political principle, which holds that political and the national unit should be congruent. Nationalism as a sentiment or as a movement can best be defined in terms of this principle. Nationalist sentiment may thus be feeling of anger aroused by violation of the principle, or the feeling of satisfaction aroused by its fulfilment. A nationalist movement is one actuated by sentiment of this kind. Gellner refers to a peculiar link between ethnicity and the state while recognizing
nationalism as an ethnic ideology, which holds that their group should dominate a state (Erickson, 2002: 98). Moreover, where there is no single dominant group, ethnic conflict is even more likely because there will be competition between different groups (Brass, 1991: 42). Such a movement can survive only when groups are able to compete effectively against alterative political groups and must be strong enough to withstand government efforts to suppress it or to undercut its political support (ibid; 48). Ethnic nationalism and state-centred nationalism may be seen, therefore, as subtypes of a more general process of identity formation, defined as the process of intensifying the subjective meanings of a multiplicity of symbols and of striving to achieve multi-symbol congruence among a group of people defined initially by one or more central symbols, whether those symbols are ethnic attributes or loyalty to a particular state.

Till recently, the problem of ethno-nationalism did not attract much attention from international theorists and strategic analysts because ethnic crisis was not considered serious threat to international security and world peace. An ethnic crisis was generally considered to be an internal affair of a country and the international community or international organizations were generally not involved in the resolution of such a crisis, until it became a bilateral or multilateral problem of two or more states, seeking assistance of the international community. However of late, such issues have engaged a lot of academic attention. The urgency for such an analysis can be seen from the fact that in the post cold war period, the maximum human casualties have been caused by ethnic wars (Mehrotra, 1998: 830-31).

Ethno-nationalism in the Central Asian countries has become the centre of attraction for the international community. The Central Asian countries Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, Turkmenistan and Tajikistan gained their independence in December 1991 after the disintegration of the USSR. All the Central Asian states are multi-ethnic and multi-religious with diversity in geography as well. But in each one of them live considerable number of diverse ethnic groups. In Kazakhstan, at the time of gaining independence, the titular nationals did not form a majority. Kazakhstan is mainly bi-ethnic state with Kazakhs and Russians. Kazakhs constituted 40% population of the country. Russians were equal in numbers with Kazakh and Russian language is still
dominant in the country. In Kyrgyzstan the Kyrgyz constitute 54% of the population. In other two republics also the non-titular communities comprise around 28% of the population in addition to the local but non-titular Central Asians. There are a large number of Russians and other European minorities in these republics. However, the Russians have neither learnt the local language nor have they adopted local customs and traditions (Din, 1999: 192).

In Uzbekistan there are more than 129 ethnic groups and 15 confessions out of which 6 major ethnic groups cover almost 98% population of the republic. These ethnic groups are Uzbeks (80%), Russians (5.5%), Tajiks (5%), Kazakhs (3%), Karakalpaks (2.5%), and Tatars (1.5%) (Kumar, 2005: 332). Uzbeks have the privilege to be a dominant community in Central Asia, being the largest ethnic group of the region. The Turks and the Mongols constituted a part of the Tatar nomadic tribes of the Central Asia. In the first half of the thirteenth century they shook the foundations of every kingdom from China to Adriatic Sea (Mehta, 1998: 8). They are the descendents of Chingiz Khan, great conqueror of the thirteenth century. The Uzbeks were said to be predominantly ‘nomads’ in their cultural expression and orientation (Haider, 2002: 55).

The Russians started their penetration into Central Asia in the first quarter of the eighteenth century during the reign of its Tsar Peter the great; by 1867 the major part of Turkistan had been overrun by them. The Khanate of Khokand, which at that time included the Ferghana valley, was conquered by them in 1876 and a separate province of Russian Turkistan under the name ‘Ferghana’, the original valley of Ferghana being part of it, was created (Mehta, 1998: 3). The Bolshevik version of state construction and nation – building, the 1924-25 “National delimitation”, divided the Turkstan into several ethnically based new units (Carlisle, 1994: 109). But, this amalgamation process did not automatically erase the tribal, historical, economic and regional cleavages that divided native communities, nor did it eradicate religious loyalties that reached across the new boundaries. Thus, the Moscow’s manipulation of political cleavages and regional differences provided a major key to the divisive game, played during twenties and thirties (ibid; 115).
After the gaining of independence the Uzbekistan was in a state of deep turmoil. The diverse composition of population led many communities to migrate because the leaders of the new republic embarked on a project of national ideologies to legitimize the rule of the new dispensation. The notion of ‘Uzbekistan for Uzbeks’, led to the greatest international migration of the twentieth century. Between 1991 and 2000 an estimated nine millions left the country to move to other countries (Rendnitz, 2006: 653). This mass migration influenced the political, economic and social development of the countries involved. The Uzbekistan suffered immensely as the intellectual brain of Uzbekistan that is the Russians who were playing pivotal role in every sphere of the governance of the country, shifted from there in large scale.

Uzbekistan embarked upon the most ambitious programme of propagating new national myths, changing the alphabet to Latin, replacing Soviet era names of places with Uzbek ones and changing the status of languages. The present Uzbek state is a largely artificial creation in the sense of containing large numbers of ethnic minorities, and with ill-defined borders in many regions. Invoking nationalism, the authoritarian rule of the President Islam Karimov changed the whole vision of the country. The government is highly centralized and personalized around President Karimov. Policies are developed largely in an informal circle of close allies of the President, rather than through the formal government and parliamentary structures. The regime is extremely authoritarian and suppresses all forms of dissent and opposition. There is widespread evidence of human rights abuses by the security forces against political opponents of the regime. There are plenty of cases of innocent people being arrested and sentenced for alleged involvement in violent activity against the state and they are beaten and abused in police custody. There have been mass arrests of men believed to be part of Independent Islamic Movement, which reached at its peak in 1998 and again in 1999 after the Tashkent bombings. There is no sign of government repression lessening especially following the September 2001 terrorist attacks in the US. The government seems to be least concerned with criticism by international community. Many members of Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan and Hizb-ul-Tahrir have been radicalized by the repressive actions of the government. The sentences given to prisoners, accused of acting against the regime, tend to be long and arduous. The living conditions for such elements are said to be cruel,
inhuman and degrading. There is very little opportunity for dissent to be voiced. The media is strictly controlled by prepublication censorship. Most political disputes are conducted away from the public eye. Elections are not free and fair. There are virtually no legal channels for any protest against the government. Further, the two main opposition parties, Erk and Birlik are banned and their leaders remain in exile. There are few Birlik members still active, and they are mainly engaged in collecting information regarding human rights abuses. They are members of the human rights society of Uzbekistan. Even traditional community leaderships, such as the Mahalla community chairmen, have been increasingly taken under the control of the state, and are appointed rather than elected by local people (Lewis, 2003: 191-92).

Islam has revived significantly since its independence in 1991. The foreign Islamic groups funded the rebuilding of Mosques, provided Islamic education, and funded education for young people in Islamic schools. Since 1992, the government has led a campaign against independent Islamic and Islamic groups, while providing support for loyal Islamic structures. The government strictly controls the Muslim Board, which represents the official Muslim hierarchy, and has disbanded all other Islamic groups. Such all embracing authoritarianism has provoked a number of Islamist movements. The two major groups the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU) and Hizb-ul-Tahrir have turned out to be the main opponents of the regime in power. IMU, the origins of which lie in the Ferghana Valley particularly in the Namangan region, with the support of foreign religious emissaries from countries like Saudi Arabia and elsewhere and backed by the Taliban and Osama bin Laden has been very active (Martin, 2001: 113). Another Islamic outfit Hizb-ul-Tahrir has been equally active in the country that aims to establish an Islamic Caliphate in the region. It advocates the re-creation of the Islamic Caliphate throughout the region. The extent of the support for the movement is unknown, through some sources has suggested that its membership in the region may have reached 12,000 – 15,000. Its own leaders have claimed that it has up to 80,000 supporters. In July, 2001 several hundred activists were arrested after staging demonstrations in Tashkent against the arrests of Hizb-ul-Tahrir members (Lewis, 2003: 194).
The emergence of radical elements provided Karimov regime the justification for taking bold steps to get rid of this critical situation and establishing a strong nation-state. He adopted several tactics to bring sense of nationalism in country. But, under umbrella of nationalism he snatched many political rights. His stiff measures for nagging are well known and radical Islamists have negative perceptions of such authoritarianism. He even resorted to the Andizan massacre on 13 May 2005, when thousands of people come out to the streets against the iron-fisted rule of Karimov. They were mostly young West-ward looking leaders, who were ambitious to stop the menace of poverty, sham democracy and corruption. But Karimov’s troops mercilessly fired on the protestors. In this clash between soldiers and protestors 745 people were reportedly killed (Times of India, 19 May: 2005) and 2000 wounded (Times of India, 16 May: 2005). The government contents that uprising began when armed crowds stormed the local prison and freed some 2,000 prisoners, including 23 popular local businessmen accused of religious extremism, notwithstanding, this got worldwide condemnations.

Article 12 of the Constitution of the Republic of Uzbekistan states that public life of the country will be conducted recognising the diversity of political ideologies and opinions. No ideology shall be granted the status of state ideology” (Constitution of Republic of Uzbekistan, 1992). This Article of constitution promises that in independent Uzbekistan, no single state ideology or belief system will dominate. However, this is not practiced at the ground level. Though there are Animists, Buddhists, Manicheans, Nestorian, Christians, and Zoroastrians in the country, it projects itself as a Muslim country. The Uzbek press and media depicts Karimov as real prophet of Uzbek Nationalism and uses phrases like “our prophet” (Meaning Muhammad) for Karimov which clearly indicates the full control of Karimov on media. Furthermore, in spite of having a number of sacred texts associated with Uzbek Nationalism, the most prominent ones are the works of President Karimov himself. His work Uzbekistan Towards the 21st Century is accorded the same status as that of Bible or the Quran. They have a revered status, they are kept in an elevated place in all government offices and public buildings and everyone is expected to read and quote from them.
The government also passed strict laws to protect and promote its own language, neglecting the rest of them. Government ordered the burning of literature available in other languages. They made Uzbek language as an official language of the country and neglected the other languages (Roy, 2000: 169). The Uzbek Government has been working for the revival of ancient Uzbek culture and giving central place to Uzbek language. The Uzbek Government has changed the names of the streets and squares from Russian names to Uzbek. They have found new national hero of the Uzbekistan in the Amir Timur, who is now considered as father of the nation. The old heroes of the Uzbekistan lost their identities as Uzbek leaders altered its negative assessments of certain historical figures, such as Amir Timur and Babur. The aim is to save and obliterate the Turkestani identity in favour of an Uzbek ethnic identity. Even the celebrated Uzbek Jadid poet Hamza has disappeared from the new hagiography. The homage were paid to Rashidov and Amir Timur, the two familiar figures during Soviet times but the Jadids and the Shyabanids were neglected. After all, the Shyabanids founded the first truly Uzbek dynasty in 1500 within the present geographical confines of Uzbekistan (ibid; 165). Uzbek leaders preferred Uzbekise Tamerlane and Babur - the two famous conquerors, who ruled over all or part of Central Asia from the 14th to 16th centuries. Amir Timur was one of the greatest and the cruellest conqueror of history. His Turkish and Mongol army is said to have killed 17 million men, women and children in his 14th century campaign. History says he massacred as many as 100,600 civilians a day, bombard ships with human heads shot from cannons and left pyramids of skulls to mark his victory over the cities he destroyed (Rather, 1998: 45). Now, he is referred as a great Turkic statesman, protector of science and art. For Babur, the founder of huge Mughal Empire in India, a national park has been erected at Andizan, as monument (ibid; 44).

The ruling elites of Uzbekistan want academia to toe nationalistic designs of the government. They grant them to draw parallel between Timur and Karimov. In Uzbekistan, academia are not free thinkers, rather they have been browbeaten into working of the state. This led to conflict situation as the middle-aged men and women who completed their higher education in the 1970s from the cohort, and were trained at the height of the Brezhnev era, came to the apex of their career in the era of perestroika and independence. Thus, the inspiration of nationalistic writings inevitably went to their
subconscious mind (Adams, 2005: 116-17). Karimov’s terrain of Nationalism is very akin to dictatorship. He is forcefully imposing his version of nationalism on Uzbek people. The citizens of Uzbekistan are being constantly reminded that love of the motherland is of utmost importance and that their fortune is with bright motherland. President Karimov is time again credited with the idea to be borne by the people. Another major aspect of the government’s strategy has been to channel the religious devotion of the population, away from those like the IMU, who are promoting a fundamental form of Islam. The government has followed several strategies in order to achieve this goal. It formed a new political party, with a focus on young people, the Fidokorlar National Democratic Party and a new ‘youth’ TV channel was formed. The ‘Vatan’ (patriotic) songs, with titles such as ‘I have a country’, ‘My Heaven’, ‘Fatherland’, ‘My Uzbekistan’ and ‘I won’t give you up to anyone Uzbekistan’ have been sought to be popularized. This last one is accompanied by video footage of Muslim fundamentalists engaged in Jihad, being depicted as ones good life in Uzbekistan (Martin, 2001: 118).

In Uzbekistan 86% of the members of the Oliy Majlis (the Parliament of the Republic of Uzbekistan) elected in December 1994 were ethnic Uzbeks compared with 77% in 1990. This is higher than the percentage of Uzbeks in the population as a whole (75%). This clearly indicates that Uzbeks dominance was increasing day by day which now have reached at the apex. There are 8,000-8,800 Afghan people residing in Uzbekistan, who comprise all major ethnic Afghan ethnic groups, such as the Pashtuns, Tajiks, Uzbeks, and Hazara. Most of them live in the capital city Tashkent. There is not even a single Afghan currently employed under government organizations, institutes, or enterprises, though in the past some of them worked within the public sector, such as at the Uzbek radio foreign services or hospitals (Khan, 2005: 143-45). Likewise President has been ignoring the region of Karakalpakstan, where Karakalpaks live, which represent a separate ethnic entity, that is considered a Kazakh sub-group, as they have a separate cultural identity and are underdeveloped, vis-à-vis eastern Uzbekistan (Hanks, 2000: 943). Karakalpaks, at present, may not be seeking a separate space; the political geography of the region is likely to remain mutable and fragile, in view of feeling of separateness (ibid; 951).
Russians residing in the Uzbekistan are also facing the same problem. Most of them have already migrated from there but those who remained behind are being sandwiched. Their neglect is well-known and very little work is available for them. Furthermore, the pensioners are not getting their pensions at right time and the amount of pension is too meagre. One survey conducted in March 2003, in Tashkent, based on interview with different demographics consisting of Russians, Armenians, Jews, Kazakhs, Koreans, Tajiks, Tatars and Ukrainians brought out that these communities felt neglected by government in all spheres of life, economic, cultural, educational, social, everywhere. Many mentioned that most of the times they faced the harsh arguments of their neighbours, who told them to return to their parent country (Renditz, 2006: 661). There were reports of native Uzbeks having launched bloody programmes against small ethnic groups like, the Meshketian Turks, who had been deported by Stalin to their republic during the Second World War from 1939 to 1944 (Williams, 2002: 323).

All these incidents indicate the severe problems faced by non-Uzbek minorities in the Uzbekistan. Even though, the Uzbekistan has considerable constitutional law which complied with all fundamental principles of good governance, yet the Uzbek Government has failed to act according to its constitution. According to Article 15 of the constitution of the Republic of Uzbekistan. The constitution and the laws of Uzbekistan shall have absolute supremacy in the Republic of Uzbekistan. The state, its bodies, officials, public associations and citizens are under obligations to act in accordance with the constitution and the laws (Constitution of the Republic of Uzbekistan, 1992). But, the Uzbek Government does not adhere to such provisions. Similarly, part two of the Uzbek Constitution guarantees equal basic human and civil rights to all its citizens, irrespective of their race, nationality, language, religion and social origin. But, again the wicked actions and malpractices of the government infringed the above provisions and ignored the ultimate source of the state power which has been constitutionally conferred on the people of Uzbekistan.
Review of Literature

There is not much literature available on the subject of the politics of ethno-nationalism and the process of nation-building in the country. However, the following studies having references to the subject are worth mentioning:

Smith (1986) provides comprehensive information about the origins and nature of the modern form of the state. He has examined the steps undertaken by the states for grappling with the problems of nation-formation, both in the West and in the Third World. The author analyses the origins and genealogy of nations, in particular their ethnic roots. He has also focused on the elements of ‘nationhood’ in the modern world and trends that govern their form. The variations among nations are equally important; both in themselves and for their political consequences. Thus, this book unveils many myths and reveals memories, symbols and values which so often come while defining and differentiation of nations.

Brass (1991) has examined the origins of ethnicity and nationalism. He argues that ethnicity mainly develops when certain category of people think themselves different from others in certain spheres, the conversion of cultural differences into bases for political differentiation arise only-under specific circumstances e.g. with elite competition, critical role of relationships established between the elites and the state, political mobilization of traditional rural communities, especially through traditional networks of religions, communities and language modernization and industrialization in large multiethnic states tend to proceed unevenly and benefit some ethnic groups more than others, which is the cause of consciousness and communal mobilization of groups. He specifies language, religion and politics as critical factors which are used to build political identities, and identity formation takes place through three sets of struggle; firstly within an ethnic group, secondly within ethnic groups and thirdly between state and groups. He also mentions that no regime, even the most authoritarian, can avoid confronting the issues of power sharing and pluralism in modernizing multiethnic societies.
Mehrotra (1998) has explained that ethno nationalism in not a new phenomenon. He refers that nationalism has been a catchword with many different meanings in modern times. It can work in multiplicity of forms. It can be exploited for cultural integration, political ends, and democratic ideals and may even lead towards authoritarianism. Nationalism as an ideology can be dangerous as it may lead to the formation of an authoritarian government that may also follow the policy of expansionism. The extreme form of ethnic nationalism is the primary cause for ethnic cleansing which Adolf Hitler adopted in the inter-war period. Finally, according to author nationality maybe defined in one of two ways- by ethnic or civic criteria. While ethnic nationality is based on the consciousness of an identity, culture, belief in common ancestors and history, civic nationality is encompassed within a geographically defined territory. In fact, ethnic nationalism has had an advantage over territorial or civic nationalism because the former appears as natural continuation of a pre-existing ethnicity.

Haider (2002) mainly deals with Uzbek Shaibanids during the sixteenth century. His study has unveiled many unique facts about Central Asian region which were earlier unknown to the world; she did a good use of the primary sources. She describes that the Uzbeks, like their predecessors (Mongols) were misrepresented not only by their contemporary compatriots like Babur, even by Russian explorers and writers alike due to obvious reasons of intentional prejudicial assessments. They were referred as ‘they way through civilization, nomadic’ or far from heights of culture. She tries to depict this warrior group with all their mundane aspirations and medieval imperialist attainments while highlighting the softer side of their nature- the love of fine arts. She endeavours to give an over all picture of the sixteenth century royal scenario in its objective perspective. She has also examined the cultural ties of Central Asia with the India.

Mehta (1998) in his work on the study of the history of medieval India; has described Mughal empire’s establishment in India. He has given comprehensive information about the Mughal rulers in India. More importantly, author provides vital information about the origination of the great Central Asian tribes and also ascribes the relationships among them. He reveals the common inheritance and culture of many important rulers of Central Asia like Chingiz khan, Tamer lane and Babur.
Carlisle (1994) in his work describes that the use of concepts like “nation” and “state” requires that their meanings be clarified and separated. He makes a crucial and elusive distinction between them. He attempts to comprehend historical as well as contemporary Republic of Uzbekistan. He provides the information about- Islam and Islamic Movements in Uzbekistan and also mentions about the real heroes of the Uzbekistan who substantially played a leading role in the independence of the Republic of Uzbekistan.

Ilkhamov (2005) has developed centre versus periphery, model for examining Uzbek political system in the post Soviet era. The author provides insights into several aspects of the country’s political and economic development, including rationale for the creation of the post of Vice President and its abolition shortly after word, as also, why the new political party Fidokorlar was established, which group interests it was intended to serve. The work has also analysed Uzbekistan’s December 1999 Parliamentary elections as well as the 2002 parliamentary reforms, and Uzbek President Islam Karimov’s periodic purges of regional cadre. He describes that Karimov regime had consolidated its power and created a strong central state which strongly suppressed the resistance from regional elites for increasing autonomy.

Randnitz (2006) investigates the micro-level considerations leading to migration within the former Soviet Union. Based on survey of minorities in Tashkent, the study examines political, national and economic factors in migration. He ascribes the nation building and nationalism influenced migration decisions only insofar as they affected people’s material well being by creating language learners and facilitating the preferential treatment of locals over minorities in receiving employment. He mentions that the most decisive factor was the perfection of overall economic decline that decreased people’s standards of living and diminished their prospects for employment and opportunities for their children. He tries to explain the factors responsible for the migration of a large number of people in the world. He has also given details about the migrated people of different republics.

Lewis (2003) in his work shows how the Uzbek regime promoted political stability above political or economic reforms. Paradoxically, its repressive policies and its
failing economy have produced a situation in which internal conflict is now a serious threat. The official policy of a strong political centre and gradual economic reforms has stagnated into a repressive regime in which security forces play a powerful role and the economy is governed by a small corrupt clique of vested interests. He describes that the present Uzbek state is a largely artificial creation and he defines the actions of the Karimov regime against the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan, *Hizb-ul Tahrir* and others who are responsible for the human rights abuses in Uzbekistan. He also mentions the role of the international agencies like the UN, OSCE, EU and SCO in Uzbekistan.

Martin (2001) examines the complex phenomenon of Uzbek nationalism and argues that modern nationalism in Uzbekistan seeks to appeal to the long-standing religious sentiments of the Uzbeks. He indicates that there are lot of policies and norms framed for the betterment of the Uzbek society as a whole but there is no proper implementation of those policies. He outlines the authoritarian vision of Uzbek President Islam Karimov. He has explained the biased working of the government e.g. mass media, news channels and radio are busy in beating the drum for Karimov’s nationalistic policy.

Roy (2000) provides comprehensive information about the evolution of Central Asian states. Historical background and identity of the natives of the Central Asia has been described. He has given the details about the Soviet and post Soviet era. He has also examined the Islamic movements and their fanaticism in Central Asia.

Rather (1998) explains the situation of post Soviet Uzbekistan and details the problems faced by the Uzbek elites at the time of Uzbekistan’s independence. He ascribes that the Uzbek elites were not prepared to secede from the Soviet system, but once the breakdown of the centralized Soviet system became inevitable, they were forced by the circumstances to accept independence as the fate and future of Uzbekistan. In order to protect their turf, they were forced to adapt to the new conditions. The Soviet trained Uzbek elite became ardent defenders of Uzbek nationalism. They drew on all the skill of statecraft which they learned during the era of Soviet politics for legitimizing their rule.

Khan (2005) has dealt with the Afghan communities in Uzbekistan. He reviews the relationship between Afghanistan and Soviet and post Soviet Uzbekistan. Secondly,
he considers Uzbek policy relating to refugees and the United Nations High Commission on Refugees (UNHCR) activities as the two main factors affecting the situation of Afghans in Uzbekistan. And thirdly, he discusses some findings based on in-depth interviews conducted with the members of the Afghan communities in Tashkent. Author has also given the very interesting facts about the Afghan people in the Uzbekistan which reveal the absence of refugee registration in Uzbekistan, together with the strict regulations on foreign and stateless citizens’ legal status, resulted in almost no legal protection and difficult living conditions for Afghan refugees in a republic with a struggling transitional economy. Author elaborates briefly on the connections between Uzbeks residing in Uzbekistan and those in the northern part of Afghanistan; it is worth noting that the vast majority of Uzbeks in Northern Afghanistan settled there in the late 1950s and early 1930s following the suppression of Central Asia’s National Liberation Movement and Soviet collectivization.

Sanchez (2007) in his study mentions about security concerns of the Central Asian countries especially of the Uzbekistan from the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU) whose ultimate goal is to create a Central Asian Caliphate. He suggests that mere military solution to this problem appears to be the likely choice. Furthermore, he recommends that the regional cooperation can play a pivotal role in defeating the Islamic militancy, and the regional powers like the Russia and China have already initiated the joint militancy programmes. It will promote greater integration among these countries and eliminate violent organizations, which could become a destabilizing factor.

Research Questions

The review of the literature given above leads one to conclude that the peculiarities of the problems of state-building, nation-building and ethno-nationalism in Central Asian countries, particularly in Uzbekistan is of a complex nature. Not much work has been done on the topic. This unexplored region has attracted the attention of scholars and analysts. It emerged as a vast laboratory for the social scientists, because, there are some basic questions which need to be addressed if the process of ethno-
nationalism and nation-building is to be understood. As it comes out from the review of
literature, an important consideration emphasizes the complexity of the conceptualization
of ethno-nationalism in the Republic of Uzbekistan. With these objectives in mind the
present study has been conducted to answer the following research questions:

1. What are the factors responsible for the ethnic unrest between different ethnic
   communities of Uzbekistan?

2. Whether the historical or past rivalries are solely responsible for the cleavages, which
   have emerged in recent times?

3. Why the radical Islamic movements in Uzbekistan are so much active than other
   Central Asian Republics?

4. Whether the Karimov Government itself is responsible for the fundamentalist
   approach of the IMU and *Hizb-Ul-Tahrir*?

5. Whether the authoritarian rule of the President Islam Karimov is getting success in
   maintaining peace and prosperity in Uzbekistan or is it enhancing the rift between
   different ethnic minorities and the state?

**Scheme of Chapterisation**

In the study an effort has been made to seek answers to the above mentioned and
related research problems. The gap in the existing literature as reviewed is sought to be
filled in the following chapters:

1. **INTRODUCTION**

   This chapter gives a broad outline of the topic of research. It explains the concept of
   ethno-nationalism and its relevance to the post Soviet Central Asia. It mainly deals with
   socio-political conditions of post Soviet Uzbekistan.
2. ETHNICITY AND NATIONALISM IN UZBEKISTAN

This chapter explains the evolution of ethno-nationalism in Central Asia with focus on Uzbekistan. An attempt is made to investigate and analyse the factors responsible for ethnicity and nationalism in Uzbekistan.

3. ROLE OF RADICAL ISLAMIC MOVEMENTS

This chapter deals with the origin and role of the Muslim radical movements and their agenda of unification of segregated communities of Uzbekistan and implication of sharia law in the country.

4. KARIMOV'S NATIONAL AGENDA AND UZBEKISTAN

This chapter explains the nationality policies of the Uzbek government. It also mentions about the impacts of the democratic wave of the Uzbek President Islam Karimov.

5. CONCLUSION

In this chapter findings about the agenda of politics of ethno-nationalism in case of post Soviet Uzbekistan are summed up.

Any study is bound to have its importance and its share of limitations. The main focus of this study is the politics of ethnicity and nationalism in Uzbekistan. Ethno-nationalism in the Central Asian countries has become the centre of attraction for the international community. All the Central Asian countries Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, Turkmenistan and Tajikistan gained their independence in December 1991 after the disintegration of the USSR. All these Central Asian states are multi-ethnic and multi-religious with diversity in geography as well. But in all of them, there reside a considerable number of diverse ethnic groups. At present a number of foreign powers i.e.,
Russia, Europe, US and China have shown specific interests with regard to various developments in this region. Moreover, the basic issue in Uzbekistan is to deal with the problems of different ethnic communities in Uzbekistan.

The study is based primarily on secondary documentary sources i.e., books and articles published in India and abroad particularly on Central Asian region. In addition, efforts have been made to make use of publications by the Government of Republic of Uzbekistan and specific official and authentic internet websites available.
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