PREFACE

Globally, in the post-cold war era there is a significant shift in the nature of conflicts from inter-state level to intra-state one. These intra-state conflicts are mostly ethnicity oriented, which have major bearing on the human rights as well. It has been witnessed in Central Asian states, Bosnia, Chechnya, Kosovo, Dagestan, East Timor, etc., in the resent times. So a careful study is quintessential to understand the nature of such conflicts, the causes behind them, the dynamics and the consequential effects. In any ethnic conflict ultimately either the individuals' basic rights or groups' minority rights are affected. So the question of human rights with special emphasis on minority rights come to focus. There is a major inter-link between ethnic conflicts and human rights implication. Further the role of State in ethnic relations is pertinent in order to understand how it provides the political space for all ethnic groups, share in economic resources and in protection of human rights encompassing cultural, linguistic and social rights.

Ethnicity refers to a sense of belonging and identification with a particular cultural heritage which include features shared by group members, such as similar geographical origin, language, religion, food, tradition, folklore and residential patterns. The causes of ethnic conflicts could range from the failure of a State in fulfilling the basic aspirations, denying of basic rights of the various ethnic groups to inter-group conflicts. There are various theories (perspectives) on ethnicity, which give us certain insights on understanding ethnicity oriented problems such as: Primordial theories, Instrumental theories and Constructionist theories with the framework of a] Assimilation theory, b] Stratification theory, c] Ethnic resource/enclaves theory, et al. These theories throw light on the kinds of ethnic relations.
In the post-Soviet Central Asia, there are major transformations taking place in all political, social and economic realms. The case of Uzbekistan is taken for the study because it has interesting case of semblances with other Central Asian countries in social and economic contexts. Particularly, the ethnic and religious situation has many parallels. It is obvious that that all the Central Asian republics were part of the Soviet system and had similar influences in their present polity, economy and society.

While the specific issues facing each country vary, the countries of Central Asia face common development problems: transitional nature of political system, poor records of implementing human rights obligations, concern over Islamic radicalisation, and the proliferation of weapon of mass destruction, demographic pressures straining the capacity of social services, lagging implementation of market-oriented economic reforms, poor business and investment climates, widening income disparities and poverty are problems experienced throughout Central Asia. Shared challenges - including combating trans-national crime, improving border management, achieving economic diversification, increasing intra-regional trade, accessing world markets, and making more sustainable use of natural resources – present opportunities and challenges for Uzbekistan in particular and Central Asia in general.

They all are facing similar challenges while under going transformations and the ruptures in the following arenas:

1) Between State and civil society;
2) In relationship between various majority titular group and minorities;
3) Secular versus sacred;
4) And democracy versus authoritarianism.
Taking Uzbekistan, for this study, here attempt is made to understand the relationship between various ethnic groups vis-à-vis State in multi-ethnic society. The focus is on ethnic dynamics, nature of civil society and response of state to these elements. In ethnicity study usually the focus is made on the ethnic structure, the ethnic composition, the nature of institutions and their role in distribution of economic resources, level of political participation, scope of identity preservation, etc. The consequence of ethnic problems/conflicts has a major bearing on the basic human rights of the people of Uzbekistan.

Civil Society is seen as protector of rights of minorities, smooth functionary of democracy, guardian of freedom, justice and liberty. Well it is essential to arrive at a clarity and understanding of what is Civil Society? There are various definitions and interpretations on the concept called civil society. It is described as ‘all those features of a society, which are not part of the State’. It “operates principally in the sphere of economy, communications, politics, religion, education, science and culture”. Civil society welcomes diversity and acts as a check on those who are exercising power. It is founded on the notion that social order is dependant upon the presence of autonomous and moral individuals of society. Its main concern of social welfare and common good. Well, Civil Society in the history of political thought belongs to the output of Hobbes, Locke, Ferguson, Paine, Hegel, Tocqueville, Marx and Gramsci – each of whom worked with very different philosophical perspectives and theoretical settings. Its characteristic features are said to be individualism, market and pluralism.

State and Civil Society can mutually supplement each other in the case of ideal-type constellation. In this case of our study when the State fails in delivering
goods to its citizens the role of Civil Society becomes essential to mediate the relations between State and citizens.

The Human Rights as a concept or ideology emerged popular only in the recent times, but its importance has been as old as *Hammurabi code of law* (about 2130 to 2088 B.C). It was properly institutionalised in the International level from the San Francisco charter of 1945 onwards. In 1947-48, the International Bill of Rights consisting of a Declaration, a Covenant, and Measures of Implementation came up. In 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights was passed in the U.N.General Assembly. In 1969 two Covenants: *Civil and Political rights and Economic, Social, and Cultural rights* were adopted. Further there are several Declarations, which deal with specific rights.

This study of State, Ethnicity and Human rights is applied in the context of Uzbekistan, because:

a] It is a multi-ethnic society,

b] It is also multi-lingual/ cultural society,

c] It is nascent state, which is in the process of state / nation-building and,

d] It has geo-political/ geo-strategic significance because of its geographical location and abundant natural resources.

Apart from this, Uzbekistan was part of former Soviet Union, which gives scope for tracing Soviet nationalities’ policies on ethnic groups, cultural, linguistic issues, religion, etc., which has a major bearing even in the post-independence period. In the present context too Uzbekistan is dynamically moving towards search for solutions to ethnic, religious, linguistic and cultural issues. Nevertheless, it provides enormous scope for research to understand the issues related to role of state and civil society in ethnic relations and human rights.
To link ethnicity and human rights is to trace group/individual rights vis-à-vis culture, religion, values, norms, customs etc. In ethnicity oriented conflicts it is the individuals who are ultimately victims of discriminations. So in ethnicity dynamics, on one hand ethnic groups fight for their rights, identity preservation and political-economic shares due to them and on other they themselves overtly or covertly violate the very basic/fundamental rights of others. So it is a paradoxical coexistence of search for identity, quest for political space and competition for economic resource vis-à-vis other ethnic groups.

In this study the scope is to trace the stability and security of Uzbekistan in ethnic perspective and thereby identify the prospects of political stability, economic development and social order. The rights of the people and the level of its preservation and protection are imminent and quintessential to state/nation-building, evolution of the institutions and structures and the future economic and trade prospects. The focus is on ethnicity dynamics vis-à-vis the state or majority/dominant group.

Main Hypotheses of the Study

➢ In a plural society like Uzbekistan the balance between all ethnic groups in terms of sharing of social, economic and political spaces are imminent.

➢ The genesis of ethnic problems in Uzbekistan are mainly related to unequal sharing of socio-economic resources between ethnic groups.

➢ The role of the State and Civil Society is crucial in equitable distributing of its resources and build a democratic society.

➢ There is gap between existing constitutional laws and its implementations in practice in the arena human rights issues.
Protection of minority rights is quintessential for promotion of democracy in multi ethnic society like Uzbekistan.

In this study both explanatory and analytical approaches are adopted while understanding and analysing the role of state, space for civil society and adherence to human rights. This study focuses on policies during the Soviet period and its effect on ethnic relations and human rights situation, while identifying changes in Soviet period of Uzbekistan.