CONCLUSION
Conclusion

Human beings are rational beings and by virtue of their being human, possess certain basic and inalienable rights, which are commonly known as Human Rights. However, human rights being a generic term embrace civil rights, civil liberties, social, economic and cultural rights. As such, the rights that all people have by virtue of human existence are human rights. Since these rights belonged to them because of their very existence, they become operative with their birth. Human rights being the birth right are therefore, inherent in all individuals, irrespective of their caste, creed, religion, sex, and nationality. These rights are essential for all the individuals as they are consonant with their freedom and dignity and are conducive to physical, moral, social and spiritual welfare. Because of their immense significance to human beings; Human rights are also sometimes referred to fundamental rights, basic rights, inherent rights, natural rights and birth rights. Human rights are foreign to no culture and native to all nations, they are universal, one can not pick and choose among human rights, whether, civil, cultural, economic, political or social; Human rights are indivisible and interdependent. The concept of human rights, though central to international law is poorly understood. There is no agreement in its meaning, nature, and content. It is a concept very much contested not only between East (representing former Socialist states) and West (representing liberal-democratic states) but also between developed and developing countries. Each group of nations has a different perception of human
rights. The Communist bloc gave priority to economic, social and cultural rights while the latter asserted the primacy of civil and political rights. Likewise, the concept of human rights is enshrined in all the great religions of the world, both before and after the Christ. The world's all major religions have a humanist perspective that supports human rights, despite the difference in the contents. Human rights in Islam means, the rights, which have been granted by Allah not by a king or any legislative assembly. The history of human rights, in fact is witness to the fact that Islam as a divine and universal religion contributed a lot to the development of the concept of human rights and fundamental freedom. Holy Qur'an and Sunnah made frequent references to rights of different sections of people of society without any discrimination of caste, colour, sex and religion. These rights are not for the Muslims alone but extended to the entire humanity as well.

Notwithstanding the differences in the perception of human rights, under the Islamic, Western and Communist conceptions, the motive in its totality is welfare of an individual as a human being. However, one conceives it in religious terms and others in liberal and socialistic terms.

Nevertheless, it is a serious concern that the proper application of these rights is hampered by violation of democratic and Islamic norms by some despotic regimes of the Muslim countries and on the other hand by the monopoly of UN at the hands of big powers. The worst example of such catastrophe is prevailing in almost, in all
Central Asian states in general and Uzbekistan in particular. In the words of Robert Cutler, a Central Asian Specialist, "There is hardly a family in Uzbekistan, in which a member has not been detained, questioned, arbitrarily imprisoned or beaten by Internal Security forces". ¹

Uzbekistan is situated in the middle of Central Asian region, thus occupies a special place in the region and is the key to Central Asian stability. It has the regions strong military and largest devote Muslim population that is nearly 90 percent of the total population. Economically, the country has little to show for over a one and a half decade of independence; foreign direct investment is low, corruption is high, the real wages are by most accounts stagnant, with nearly one-third of its population unemployed. ² On the top of it, democratization and political participation have made no major inroads in Uzbekistan as the government led by former Communist Party Boss and now President Islam Karimov, has not lived up to its promises of reforms, and in order to maintain his despotic rule, press freedom is almost non-existent. Torture is widespread. Freedom of religion is severely circumscribed. In spite of Uzbekistan being a nation of great promise and resources the government has taken only a few small steps forward towards respect for human rights.

Historically speaking, Uzbekistan has a rich and long history, and Uzbeks lived in the Central Asian region for many hundred of years. The history of Uzbekistan covers more than 2.5 millennia. During this period, various ancient states rose and fell in Central Asia such as, Bactria, Khorezm, Sogdiana and Parthia. However, the regions fortunes changed for being the located at the vicinity of great silk route. During the transition Zoroastrianism, Buddhism, and Christianity were the dominant religions of the region, till 7th Century CE. Islam however, became wide spread in the territory of modern Uzbekistan in the 8th century, and since then it has been the dominant religion of both nomadic and settled peoples of Central Asia. In the seventh century CE., Arabs conquered Central Asia under the leadership of Qutaybah ibn Muslim (d.715), and then conquered region became the part of the great Islamic Caliphate. Since then, the Uzbekistan became a leading centre of scientific and intellectual developments.

Scientific advances of Muslim scholars of Uzbekistan, however did not last long given the annexation of Central Asia to Russia in 18th Century. During the Czarist rule, Muslims in Central Asia underwent unprecedented persecution; mosques were destroyed and turned into warehouses and official stores. Scores of Mullaiks were liquidated and imprisoned. Muslims were subjected to all sorts of discrimination. Islam was considered a mortal enemy because of strong resistance involving several rebellions inspired and led by Muslim religious leaders. After the October 1917 revolution, Stalin, the Secretary
General of the Soviet Union from 1924 to 1953, strictly controlled Islam and regulated Islamic practice through state laws and regulations which included invalidating Muslim law, abolishing Shariah courts, confiscating waqfs and closing maktab and Madrashs (schools). Many Mosques were closed and the Islamic clergy persecuted. Soviet officials confiscated religious property and either placed mullahs under strict government control or forced them out of their religious positions. After early concessions to the Muslims to win support for the Soviet Union, the Soviet government viewed Islam as a political and ideological threat and set out to destroy it; Mullah's as Islamic teachers were considered a primary threat to the Russian and the Soviet State. Given the harsh treatment meted out to the Muslim population of the region, human rights violations became the order of the day. Muslims were subjected to all sorts of harassments and religious subjugation. However, in 1985, when Gorbachev came to power he set out to transform Soviet society through his policies of perestroika (radical economic restructuring and reform), and glasnost (openness). Though intend to remedy socio-economic and political ills in the country, Gorbachev's glasnost became an official vehicle for the expression of ethnic, linguistic, cultural environmental and religious grievances that had not been addressed openly in the recent decades, as a result, independent Islamic observance emerged, and the question of religious freedom in Uzbekistan was boldly flagged.
With the disintegration of the Soviet Union, Uzbekistan announced its independence from USSR in 1991. After the collapse of the USSR, the Central Asian States for the first time in their history faced a challenge and possibility of determining their own independent national policies. The collapse of communism left many segments of society without any particular direction. This created an opportunity for the old nomenclature system of the communist trained and conformist minded people to remain in power. The understanding of the ruling elite that the implementation of a new system would require new methods of government, made them realize that if such new system would come to exist, the need for their presence in power will disappear. Therefore, the personified regime of President, Islam Karimov and others were quick to link the future of their people and their newly independent states with their personalities. As such, the mythical hopes of free elections and if difficult, but at least a future without repression, soon vanished under the exercise of state repression by the regime of President Karimov. Although all the Central Asian republics including Uzbekistan have their own Constitution, which outlines a parliamentary system with guarantees for basic human rights and political and economic freedom, the respective governments maintained strict control over the country's institutions and population. The governments have continued to justify their crackdown on any opposition as an effort to ensure stability and progress. Because the Central Asian states that emerged from the break-up of the USSR have been ruled in a definitely authoritarian manner from the very beginning. Their leaders
reinforced their positions by eliminating political opposition. Beatings, harassment, jailing, torture and persecution have virtually eliminated public protests in Central Asia in general and Uzbekistan in particular.

Despite the end of communist era the Uzbek government has made little progress in moving away from the Soviet style repression of human rights, especially religious freedom, despite largest and most devote Muslim population in the region. Independent Uzbekistan’s President Islam Karimov, upholds Islam as an ideological and political threat and warns that, “Islamic activist or fundamentalists are trying to destabilize his régime”. Therefore, applying appellation of fundamentalism has become a convenient way to stigmatize all those who have some sort of connection with Islam and who challenge the status quo. President Karimov asserts that strong power is necessary for maintaining stability. For which he is ready to pay any price, no matter how high.

In the backdrop of this, Karimov ordered a crackdown against un-official, independent Islamic worship and imposed state sponsored, or official Islamic observance. This suppression and subjugation of independent Islamic adherence to the state violates the Uzbek Constitution and international human rights standards, vis-à-vis Islamic norms of protecting religious freedom, including the right to practice one's religion, the right to religious education, and right to teach and lead religious worship without unauthorized state interference or involvement. The Islamic leaders are often harassed by
the police. Other violations of right to freedom of religion include the restriction on the distribution of Islamic religious materials, controlling the training, appointing, and electing of religious leaders, forcing the religious leaders to pass a political test as a pre-requisition for employment. The Uzbek government has increased its official restrictions against independent Islamic worship since 1996, and enacted laws, amendments and decrees of particular relevance. Under these provisions, the government began closing all mosques and Islamic primary and secondary schools, not registered. Thus failed to provide any legal justification, for imposing this burden-some and arbitrary restrictions. The regime has also enforced its repressive restrictions on the representatives of different Christian parishes. Their leaders and members have suffered harassment and punishment for their religious activity. In the words of Shireen Hunter a renowned Central Asian scholar, "Secularism in Uzbekistan means subordination of religion to the state, rather than separation." In preview of violation of the freedom of religion, gave birth to other human rights violations as well. Therefore, Uzbek Government had almost failed to protect human rights of its citizens. The government's poor human rights record worsened, particularly, after the events of September, 11th 2001, and when Uzbekistan became strategic partner of the United States in the region, the government continued to commit numerous serious human rights abuses. In spite of Constitutional guarantees, the leadership in these states, particularly, in Uzbekistan has curbed freedom of information, expression and

association. States exercise rigid control on the mass media. No debate over government policies is allowed. Political opposition is suppressed. No independent party is registered. A possible exception might develop in Tajikistan, where the state allowed the registration of a splinter group from the opposition democratic party in July 1995. The experience of this republic up to this point, however, does not warrant the exclusion of Tajikistan from the category of post-Soviet authoritarian. Since, Central Asian societies do not have a history of democratic popular participation in politics. Authoritarianism is a common thread that runs through the pre-Soviet, Soviet and post-Soviet periods of Central Asia. The leadership in Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan etc. has retained its distrust of popular sovereignty, it is why, the collapse of the Communist party and the subsequent dissolution of the USSR came as an unpleasant shock to Central Asian leaders.

After the events of September, 11th 2001 the international community was fast to talk about reintegrating Central Asia to the world of democracy and economical prosperity. The regimes of Karimov, who was before classified by the United States of America and her allies as totalitarian, today, became actual strategic partner of the US in the region. Ironically, the "bigger" threat of terrorism to humanity which the United States of America is advertising, so quickly today seems to blind the eyes of the world on the equivalent threat that comes from state repression. It seems that the world today forgets the basic physical law, that any action causes a reaction.
Therefore, in order, to avoid future instability, Central Asian States need to re-examine their policies and step back from reliance on repression. Keeping in view, the policies of Shah of Iran, whose harsh rule at home eventually proved the 1979 Islamic Revolution in Iran is ample proof to Uzbek regime, whose, harsh political environment does not, however, exist in vacuum. The government has been challenged by radical Islamic groups like Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan and Hizb-t-tahir, both of them want restoration of Caliphate in the Central Asian republics and overthrow of present authoritarian secular regimes; therefore the state backed political repression must be seen as both a consequence and a cause of this confrontation.