CHAPTER-VI
CONCLUSION

Multi-ethnicity is a socio-political phenomenon in most civic societies and in the present century, inter-ethnic cleavages, competition and conflict have acquired a marked intensity. In the process, ethnic mobilization has posed varied challenges to many ‘developed’ and ‘developing’ states. The pattern of ethnic group mobilization has been complex and demands variegated: ‘affirmative discrimination’, autonomy to secession. However, nationalities divided by state borders frequently bring into existence several ethnic entities, when”

(a) state borders do not consider with ethnic borders,

(b) people belonging to different historical and social backgrounds live together and

(c) there are big immigrant groups, relations between the natives and outsiders are complicated often leading to disputes and tensions.

Such ethnic tension have manifested in a wide variety of forms-ethno-national, ethno-territorial, ethno cultural and ethno-religious forms. The Central Asian Republics present a classic case in point. The ethnic conflict in Central Asia is mostly related to the assertion by majority titular nationalities of their linguistic, economic, social territorial and other historic-cultural and racial privileges as opposed to the rights of minorities particularly Russians, Germans, Koreans, Jews, Ukrainians etc. This makes the study of ethnic relations particularly significant in the Central Asian Republics.
The reassertion of ‘ethno-national identity’ is one of the pertinent problems these newly independent Republics are facing since the disintegration of Central Asia. In fact, this factor is hindering the growth of a pluralistic society and also acting as an obstacle to the process of nation-building and state-building in the newly formed Central Asian Republics.

During the Soviet era large scale migration took place from the Slavic parts of the Soviet Union to these Central Asian Republics. Along with them came the professional skills of these groups which helped in modernizing these Central Asian Republics. This can be evident from the level of industrialization and the improvement in scientific education and health care system still found in Central Asia today.

Apart from the Slavic population one can see a substantial presence of other ethnic minorities like the Germans and Koreans in this region. However, through our study it can be inferred that, while the concentration of Russians, Germans and Koreans are more in Kazakhstan, their presence in this republic can be attributed to the long-standing historic-cultural and territorial interface of Kazakhstan with Russia, Germany and Korea. To put it more succinctly in the words of President Nazarbaev, Kazakhstan is a “Common Eurasian Home.”

In the post-Soviet phase our findings show that, with the reassertion of “titular nationality”, the Russians, Germans and other minority groups find themselves in a vulnerable position in all these Republics. In the Soviet times, the minorities especially the Russians in Central Asia enjoyed many privileges like they occupied important positions in government jobs and production sectors, due to their technical skills. However, after the disintegration of the former USSR, the Russians and other minorities lost their privileges they had previously enjoyed in political, economic and
social spheres. Direct threat to their personal security and the prospects of loss of property, and reassertion of ethnic identity of native population also compelled many Russians and Germans to migrate to their respective countries. Baring Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan in all the other republics the percentage of Russians have come to the single digits, if this trend goes on in a few years. The Russians and other Slavic minorities will be completely be negligible. The second edition of the Kazakh Constitution of 1995 made some efforts to appease the interests of the minorities, but one can see that there is no substantial effort on the part of the Kazakh government to implement the provisions of the constitution in true spirit. The discrimination at work place, the rewriting of history, marginalization in the political field and economic hardship of the ethnic minorities in Central Asia is clearly seen in all the republics.

Apart of the reassertion of ethno-national identity, one can see the emergence of radical Islam as a major force in all these Central Asian Republics except Turkmenistan. Despite the government’s policy of co-opting Islam and giving patronage to it, there is a rise of radical Islamic parties like the *Hizb-ut-Tahrir al Islamic*, the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan and the Islamic Renaissance Party in these Republics. This has created a fear psychosis among the Russians and other ethnic minorities. This study found that this factor is also responsible for the migration of Russians and other minorities from Central Asian. This is also hindering the process of nation-building.

6.1 Tools For Inter-Ethnic Accord

After the demise of the former USSR, citizenship and basic rights have assumed significance. As a result, millions of people born in the
territories of new states have found themselves with a diminished status, or even as stateless persons. New state ideologies, symbols, and constitution and legal provisions reflect the dominant group’s perceptions.

To provide basic cohesion in a multi-ethnic state, steps need to be taken through legal provisions, mass media and academic projects to enforce the criterion that no nation can be equated with a primordial ‘ethnos’ claiming descent from a common ancestor. Such cultural constructed myths and biologically based beliefs are a breeding ground for conflicts. State institutions should abolish their practice of officially registering the ethnic affiliations of their citizens, especially through the passport system. The Central Asian Republics can evolve into viable nations only on the basis of doctrines and values that give priority to common civic and human rights, that actively discourage ethnic particularism and exclusivity, and respect cultural diversity and pluralism. ¹

The present study after analyzing the above problems offers some constructive suggestions to tackle the discord among the various ethnic minorities. Some provisions of the Indian Constitution, if incorporated in the provisions of Central Asian Constitutions, can help in mitigating the inter-ethnic discord.

6.1.1 Power Sharing Through Federalism

Federalism is a political contrivance to ensure that the institutions and services of the state will be able to address the needs and interests of culturally diverse groups living in one state. This could be done by decentralizing state power through ethno-territorial federalism, as we find in Uzbekistan and Tajikistan. This specific state structure means, ‘an application of federalism to accommodate ethnic groups in a political system to improve their position in the polity, via their autonomy and participation in power-sharing through a Constitution which allocates power to different bodies with territorial jurisdiction in the framework of an established rule of law.’

6.1.2 Maintain Cultural Identities

After providing equal rights for all citizens of ethnic-based autonomies, the titular groups could go on to establish their language and cultural institutions as referent cultures, together with a large state referent culture. In Kazakhstan we would find the Kazakh language and culture, along with the Russian and German language and culture. Long term effort may be needed, including further development of local languages, to introduce them into administration, management, and education on a major scale. Even in the case of Kazakhstan, the Russian language may well remain a preferential choice for majority of non-Russians, and learning local languages for ethnic Russians may remain a question of adequate incentive.

In the Central Asian Republics the desire of ethnic groups to retain exclusive official status for their language is very strong. But the non-recognition of Russian as a state language and the demands by some Kazakhs for the Russians to leave Kazakhstan has fuelled antagonisms between the two groups. Similarly, in Kyrgyzstan there is a large Russian presence, constituting 13% of the population, and the majority resides in the industrialized areas which are in the north of the country. These ethnic groups should be given official status for their languages.

6.1.3 Making Multi-Ethnic Centers

The Central Asian Republics should create culturally plural centers, where the ethnic minorities are allowed to participate in the governing structures of the state and to bring their structure, language and other values into the national culture of the Republics. As most of the Central Asian Republics are making remarkable moves towards democratic governance, free elections and representative institutions have become the basis of these new democracies. President Nazarbayev endeavoured to guarantee support for his policies by helping to set up the Union of People’s Unity of Kazakhstan, a political party which gained 33 of the 177 seats available. The election returned 105 Kazakh deputies, 49 Russian deputies, 10 Ukrainians and a small proportion of deputies representing other minorities. This meant that the Kazakh, who make up 53% of the population, possessed
approximately 60% of the seats whilst Russians who constitute 30% only obtained 28%.3

The process of political liberalization and of replacing the old Soviet system has created a real competition for the access to power positions and privileges. The leaders of the Central Asian Republics have effectively used local ethno-nationalism to capture majority in representative institutions and administrative positions. In such a situation, it is even more important to develop and introduce special measures and programmes like affirmative action including quotas, to increase minority representation in the power structures, the economic and cultural institutions of the state. Prestigious services, managerial positions, educational institutions, mass media and the many state bodies will all need to reflect and represent the ethnic mosaic of society, if they are to provide the desired ‘Unity in Diversity’.

6.1.4 Reducing Ethnic Disparities

The most profound issue of peaceful inter-ethnic relations is the question of reducing inequality and ethno-social disparity. Disparities occur due to historical, territorial, demographic and cultural factors, which influence the opportunities and position of individuals and social groups and ethnic minorities. Most ethnic inequalities originate either from urban-rural

and regional economic differences or from forceful actions of the state towards certain groups and their cultural practices. Other ethnic communities may suffer losses by coming into contact with more powerful cultural systems, or by simply being a minority amongst more numerous groups.

Contemporary inter-ethnic divisions are most apparent in Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan. The situation in Kazakhstan is dominated by the fact that till recently Russians were almost equal in number to the Kazakhs, mostly settled in the north of the country so that the Kazakhs are a minority in many of the northern oblasts. The widespread replacement of Russian personnel in the higher echelons of power especially in industry, administration, and government in Kazakhstan, the non-recognition of Russians as a state language and the demand by some Kazakhs asking the Russians to leave Kazakhstan have fuelled antagonisms between the two groups. Some of the Russian movements have demanded the creation of northern areas which possess a large degree of autonomy from the Kazakh state. This has been rejected by the President of Kazakhstan. In fact, the capital has been shifted to distant Astana in the north, primarily to offset any Russian movements there. In Kyrgyzstan there is a large Russian presence, constituting 13% of the population, and the majority again resides in the industrials areas which are in the north of the country. The tension between the Russians and the Kirghiz do not appear to be as great as that between the Russians and Kazakhs but tensions have been exacerbated by the ousting of Russians from the influential jobs. 4

Steps should be taken to correct striking inequalities and making this issue a major priority so as to reduce ethnic conflict and avoid inter-ethnic unrest. First, this should involve economy and resource management, especially in the situation of privatization and the emerging market economy. Transformation in property ownership and market reforms need to be accompanied by appropriate measures that can prevent the development of mass marginalization and sharp contrasts between rich and poor, and inhibit obvious discrepancies in the relative status of regions, territorial and ethnic groups, and communities.

6.1.5 Encouraging Local-Self Government

A key step would be to encourage local self-government and community activities in governing grass-roots interests based on cultural distinctiveness. During the Soviet period, community as a basic institution of social control and regulations in civic societies was drastically curtailed. When conflict acquires the form of open violence, it is often not the federal or republican authorities, but the local ones, including traditional social institutions and grass-root organizations, that are able to play a pacifying role. In recent years when conflicts have erupted in Tadzhikistan, it was the local force-such as the Committees for Self-Defense in Dushanbe which intervened and stopped the violence.

Local governments should be provided with the authority and financial resources to implement their own initiatives and policies with respect to ethnic issues. They must have the right to make decisions on their own educational systems, including questions of language of instructing and
teaching, local broadcasting networks and press, local official festivities, cultural symbols etc. An important issue for local politics is to institute proper respect for the local tradition and values through small groups and individuals of different ethnic origin and religious beliefs to enable them realize their own identities.\textsuperscript{5}

\textbf{6.1.6 No Large Scale Population Shift}

People may react explosively when rapid changes are caused in the population of a region by resettlement policies, spontaneous migrations, influxes of refugees, etc. Population movements, especially when they are mass and unorganized, can bring about serious social and economic problems like job competition, housing shortages, cultural clash and criminal activities. This violates the accustomed order and way of life in the region. Local groups and authorities start to express fear and anxiety-blaming the new comers, usually ethnic aliens, for both new and old problems. Such attempts like the settling of Kazakh émigrés from China, Mongolia etc. among Russians in North Kazakhstan would seriously aggravate the existing status quo in the ethnic situation. Migration policy must make it a priority to limit migration and to assist ‘new minorities’ in their integration into the recently changed political environment.\textsuperscript{6}

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\textsuperscript{5} Valery, Tishkov; op. cit. n. 2. p. 281.
\textsuperscript{6} Ibid; pp. 283-284.
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6.1.7 Coping with Xenophobia and Intolerance

After the disintegration of the Soviet Union, an opposite version of history and culture has now been introduced in the public discourse of the new political nations of Central Asia. While introducing enriching interpretations of history and culture, this new version still embodies ethnocentric myths and stereotypes sowing new intolerance and hatred. But the Central Asian leaders call it a cultural renaissance within the region and a reassertion of their pre-Soviet cultural roots. Following their independence, the leaders of these Republics reaffirmed their common historical ties by renaming the region Central Asian (Tsentralnaya Azia) thereby refusing to recognize the Soviet imposed separation of Kazakhstan from the other four state which were grouped together and known collectively as Middle Asia (Srednyaya Asia). Primacy was given to the national language in Central Asian Republics and re-interpretation of the ‘black spots’ of Central Asian history so that key figures of the Alash and Jadid movements could be rehabilitated. In 1996 Uzbekistan celebrated the 660th anniversary of Timurlane, and has built a State Museum of the Amir Timuir collecting all significant artifacts of the period. Likewise, in 1995, the Kyrghyz celebrated the millennial anniversary of their epic, Manas and in a similar fashion Turkmenistan has promoted the celebration of its renouned national poet Makhtumkuli. The national languages are given the status of ‘official language of state communication’ . Russian street and place names have been replaced by national ones and historic figures have been elevated to the
Schools in Central Asia need educational approaches and curricula which can generate knowledge and understanding of the culture and history of other nations and ethnic groups. Academics and educators should learn how to identify signs of intolerance in their early stages and how to discourage them. Students need to learn the history and geography of genocide, social segregation, religious persecutions, and ethnic conflicts, as well as mutual cultural interaction and enrichment. Rigid and close interpretations of one's own nation or ethnic group should not be promoted.

6.1.8 Protection through Constitutional Mechanism

Although the heads of governments of the Central Asian Republics claim to be following secular and democratic policies, but none of the Constitutions guarantee any equal status to the ethnic minorities. Here, it is noteworthy to draw a parallel between India and Central Asian Republics. India is a multi-ethnic society with a number of minority communities living in the territory like Muslims 14%, Christians 2%, and Sikhs 2%, Parsis 0.5% according to the 2001 census. These minorities are given constitutional guarantee in the Constitution of India itself. Article 14 of the Indian Constitution guarantees to every citizen of India 'Equality before Law'.

7. John, Glenn; op. cit. n. 4. p. 103.
Under no circumstance there can be any disparity of any citizen of India with regard to caste, creed, colour, religion or sex. Article 25 guarantees freedom of conscience and free profession, practice and propagation of religion. Article 29 protects the interests of minorities. Any citizen residing in the territory of India, having a distinct language, script or culture of its own shall have the right to conserve the same. This article further guarantees, admission of minorities into any minority educational institution maintained by the state or receiving aid out of State funds on grounds only of religion, race, caste, language or any of them. Article 30 gives to the minorities to establish and administer educational institutions. Under Article 350A the constitution directs every state to provide adequate facilities for instruction in the mother-tongue at the primary level of education to children belonging to linguistic minority groups and empowers the President of India to issue proper direction to any state in this behalf. Further under the same Article 350B a special officer for linguistic minorities shall be appointed by the President to investigate all matters relating to the safeguards provided for linguistic minorities under the Constitution and report to the President. 8

Apart from this, Parliament has enacted the National Commission for Minorities Act, 1992 for monitoring the working of the safeguards provided in the Constitution and in Union and State Laws, for minorities.

A cursory glance at the Indian Constitution shows that there are enough provisions in the constitution to give legal protection to the

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minorities of the country. If any citizen of India is discriminated on any ground, he can go to the High Courts and Supreme Court to get legal redress. If one looks at the Constitution of five Central Asian Republics, one cannot find any provisions which give any kind of protection to ethnic minorities as are provided in the Indian Constitution. So there should be provisions in the Constitutions of the Central Asian Republics for protecting the ethnic minorities of the region. The legal system should be made strong and rule of law must be strictly followed. In this aspect, the Central Asian Republics must take examples of the Indian Constitution and incorporate some provisions which would give legal protection to ethnic minorities in their countries.

6.1.9 International Pressure For Ethnic Accord

The Central Asian Republics have come under increasing international pressure, especially from the United States, Germany and European Union, to democratize their political system. The United State promise of aid and the establishment of good relations have invariably been linked to democratic reforms. For example, shortly after Nazarbayev's dissolution of the Kazakh Parliament in March 1995, following the Constitutional Court's ruling that the 1994 elections were invalid, it was made clear by the US Secretary of State at the time that normal relations were dependent upon new elections. It is also apparent that agencies such as the United States Agency for International Development have been more
responsive to the needs of the more democratic states, Kazakhstan and Kirghizstan, than to any of the other three states.\textsuperscript{9}

For the development of the Central Asian Republics, all kinds of international contacts and exchange of information is necessary, especially regarding governance of complex societies and ethnic conflict management. Qualified legal help, all forms of expertise for conflict prone areas and war-torn societies, educational programmes, rehabilitation measures, humanitarian aid for victims of conflict- are necessary and would be welcomed. Since 1991, in the Central Asian Republics, a number of NGOs like the OSCE, the UN High Commission for Refugees, the International Organization of Migration, the International Committee of the Red Cross, Physicians Without Borders, and the World Council of Churches are doing tremendous work to look after the displaced ethnic minorities of the region and trying to rehabilitate them. The leaders of these Republics should give them all kind of support and help who are doing a commendable job in solving ethnic problems.

If ethnic conflicts in Central Asia are to be managed, and tolerance and accord promoted in the region, it will require tolerance with respect to Central Asia itself and, above all, an understanding of the complexity of the internal situation and the sentiments of the people. The read to the creation of a new society and to the stability in this area is difficult. To a great extent it largely depends on the policies of the leaders of each of the states and the

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\textsuperscript{9.} \textit{John, Glenn}; op. cit. n. 4 . p. 145.
type of reforms they implement. Whether these state leaders will move further towards an authoritarian ‘iron fist’ form of rule while endeavoring to mitigate the economic hardships felt since the dissolution of the Soviet Union, or whether they will risk slowly implementing a ‘velvet revolution’ of further democratization as is evident in Kirghizstan and Kazakhstan, will have to be seen.\textsuperscript{10} The state leaders are very much aware of the problems that they face, it is therefore possible that they will further implement policies which will diminish the possibility of inter-ethnic antagonisms.

\textsuperscript{10} Ibid; p. 150.