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## UNIT 10 TRIBAL AND ETHNIC MOVEMENTS\*

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### 10.0 OBJECTIVES

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After studying this unit, you will be able to:

- define the two main forms of social movements – tribal and ethnic movements in India;
- explain the nature and causes of tribal and ethnic movements;
- discuss the emergence of tribal and ethnic movements;
- describe the phases and salient features of tribal movements; and
- discuss the typology of ethnic movements.

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### 10.1 INTRODUCTION

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In this unit, we will discuss two forms of social movements, that is, tribal and ethnic movements. The unit is composed of two sections. The first section informs

about the tribal movements in India. This section offers an insight into the nature of tribal movements and what lead to the tribal uprising through tracing the causal factors. This section also deals with various phases of tribal movements and derives salient features of tribal movements. The second section deals with ethnic movements in India. This section of the unit enlightens about the issues that lead to the emergence of ethnic movements in India. It also identifies the factors responsible for ethnic movements. Three major forms of ethnic movements based on social structure of ethnic groups are elucidated in the second section. This unit will enable the students to clearly make a distinction between these two forms of social movements.

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## 10.2 TRIBAL MOVEMENTS

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For the last two or three decades, human rights violations of the tribal communities (commonly called adivasis) has been on the rise. Article 342 of the Constitution of India has termed tribes as scheduled tribes and article 366(25) has defined scheduled tribes as: '*such tribes or tribal communities or parts or groups within such tribes or tribal communities as are deemed under article 342 to be Scheduled Tribes for the purpose of this constitution*'. Two categories of scheduled tribes can be pointed out here. These are frontier tribes and non-frontier tribes. Frontier tribes dwell in the northeast frontier states of India such as Arunachal Pradesh, Manipur, Assam, Mizoram, Meghalaya, Tripura and Nagaland. Tribes inhabiting these states constitute 11 per cent of the country's total tribal population. At the same time, there are non-frontier tribes who are geographically spread across the country however their concentration is high in states such as Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Gujarat, Orissa, Bihar, Lakshadweep Islands, Dadra and Nagar Haveli constituting 89 per cent of the total population of tribes in India.

Both these categories of tribes are ecologically cut-off from the mainstream society to a certain extent and demographically inhabited at proximate environs, relying more on land and forest resources (Paul, 1985). Inhabiting the borders of the larger society, tribal communities represent the lower sections of population. Despite their acquaintance with non-tribals, they retain their own identity through distinct patterns of living such as dialects, cultural heritage, life-styles, forms of religion, rituals, self-identity, values and so on (See: Paul, 1985).

Prior to the arrival of British, tribal communities dwelled in and around forest because of their traditional rights over the forest produce comprising essential commodities based on daily needs such as food, cattle rearing and grazing, construction of houses from timber wood, cultivation and so on. However, the policies of the British perturbed the long established traditional patterns of land ownership systems of tribals through creating a class of zamindars i.e., landlords, which though were regarded by tribals as outsiders. The newly created British landlord system reduced tribals to mere tenants thus transforming the traditional land ownership system into tenancy. This further created trader's class and marked the evolution of market economy. High rentals were extracted from tribals; they were stabbed physically for any defiance in the trade and even forced into selling out not only their property but their spouses and children as well against the debt.

In addition to these disturbances, the price on basic commodities left them in agonising conditions. There was no listening to the plight of tribal communities.

Subsequently, in response to exploitation caused by the British policies, tribal communities started revolts and this marked the beginning of tribal movements in India, which were guided by respective chiefs of tribal communities. These movements can be categorised into different phases which will be discussed in the following sections.

### Activity 1

What is the word for 'tribe' in your language? Do you know of any tribal leader who gained political fame in India. Read about him/her and write an essay of about one page on her or him.

## 10.3 NATURE OF TRIBAL MOVEMENTS

Tribal movements be it peasant, forest and land, identity or any other socially or political oriented, can be comprehended through two paths – violent movement and non-violent movement. Non-violent movements are a kind of resistance movements involving strategic bargain and negotiation with the oppressors without resorting to any form of violence. On the other hand, violent movement is a form of resistance wherein the suppressed erupt through revolts and other forms of violent resistance practices. Examples of non-violent and violent tribal movements include Tana Bhagat Movement and Mauriya Movement respectively. Tana Bhagat movement, which is a non-violent movement, points toward the struggle towards structural transformation of the communities. A common example of this structural transformation can be what M.N. Srinivas calls 'Sanakritization'. On the other hand, Mauriya Movement, a form of violent resistance, was directed towards reshaping and reforming the tribal patterns of livelihood involving forest and land.

## 10.4 CAUSES OF TRIBAL MOVEMENTS

Tribal movements involve different issues that affected their livelihood and structure. These movements erupted because of the denial of their rights by the British. This suggests that tribal movements started against the tyrannies brought about by the British through their policies which denied the tribals of their rights on various fronts such as damaged their status, enhanced rent, evicted tribals from their own land, customary rights on forests, harassment, physical sufferings and enactment and imposition of new legal system which gave access to outsiders to enter into the tribal regions. Alongside, economy holds significance in the eruption of various tribal movements. Among all these causes, few are of much importance. For example forests, which was the major source of tribal livelihood, was cut down following the enactment of certain laws which legalized the cutting down of forest wood by timber merchants and contractors (Shah, 1990). This type of regulation not only deprived tribals of their rights over the produce but also lead to their harassment at the hands of officials. In this backdrop, following causes of tribal movements can be derived:

- a) In an attempt to increase agricultural produce by non-tribals, they discarded the traditional multiparty land-ownership among tribals which further resulted in their socio-economic differentiation.
- b) The tendency of missionaries to refuse to revolt against the government gives an impression that they were an extension of colonialism.

- c) Enacting new forest regulations which shifted the control of tribals over forest land to the government. This also debarred tribals of their erstwhile rights of using forest for timber and grazing purposes. ((You may recall the unit 3 Tribe in Block 2 of this course)
- d) The emergence of Zamindari system reduced the tribals to tenants and allowed the non-tribals to take over the settled agriculture and the tribals lost their agricultural land in this course of action.
- e) Taxes imposed on timber usage, constraints on shifting cultivation due to land grab policy of the government, exploitation of tribals by money-lenders.
- f) Considering tribal land as private estate as a result of which tribals lost their land.

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## 10.5 DIFFERENT PHASES OF TRIBAL MOVEMENTS

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Tribal movements can be categorised into three phases, the first phase (1789-1860), the second phase (1860-1920) and the third phase (1920-1947). Under these three phases, there are various tribal revolts/movements in India as follows:

### 10.5.1 Tamar Revolts (1789-1832)

Led by Bhola Nath Sahay, tribal communities from Tamar revolted from 1789 to 1832 against the British oppression. Not only Tamar tribals, but they were joined by other tribes from Midnapur, Koelpur, Dhadha, Chatshila, Jalda and Silli who jointly revolted against the blemished align system of the British government. The blemished align system indicates the failure of the British government to secure the land rights of the tenants (cultivators) as a result of which they were evicted from their land. This apparently caused unrest among Tamar tribes and others in 1789. During the period from 1789 to 1832, Tamar revolt repeated seven times. The main cause of the revolt was the illegal withdrawal of land rights from the tribal communities. Various tribal communities such as Oraons, Mundas, Hos and Kols also joined the uprising following directions from their leader Ganga Singh. During the revolt, the tribals killed the 'dikus' in each village, torched houses and robbed their belongings. However the Tamar revolt was repressed by British in 1832-1833. The Ho-territory was occupied by the British as their estate and Ho-tribal leader was appointed to administer Ho-territory through rules enacted by the British.

### 10.5.2 The Kherwar Movement (1833)

Kherwar is a name which was attached to Santhals in ancient times. What triggered Kherwar movement was the tribals' desire to retain their independent territory which they enjoyed in the past. Bhagirath Majhi who initiated this movement announced to reinstate the lost independence of tribals provided however that they refrain from committing sins. Assuming the title of Babaji, Bhagirath Majhi promised the tribals of setting them free from the tyranny of oppressors if they worship Ram – the Hindu God.

### 10.5.3 Santhal Revolt (1855)

Santhal revolt started against the forced and unjust land ownership of Santhals by landlords. Not only against the landlords, Santhal movement of 1855 also erupted against money-lenders. This movement started under the leadership of two brothers – Sidho and Kanhu, who announced that the revolt can be called off after they take their land back. The two brothers took a pledge to bring an end to the oppression. The zamindars gathered in the Santhal's land and grabbed their crops. Santhals, armed with traditional weapons, submitted their petition to the Governor in Calcutta but were stopped which ignited violence. In this violence, thousands of Santhals were killed. The revolt lasted for around 60 days. However the movement compelled the government for a change in the existing policy. A huge volume of land was extracted from the possession of British and this land was renamed as 'Santhal Parganas'. Government also appointed chief for recovering the alienated land.

### 10.5.4 Bokta Movement (1858)

Bokta movement, which can be understood through its three phases, erupted in various parts of Chotanagpur. Singh (1983) has pointed out its three phases as the agrarian, revivalist and political phases. The agrarian phase and the revivalist phase saw protests against the landlords. Tribal tenants rebelled against the hike in land rent as well as their harassment by the landlords and the clashes took place relentlessly. On the political front, the tribals desired to form a separate territory having political autonomy.

### 10.5.5 Birsa Revolt (1895-1901)

Birsa revolt was headed by Birsa Munda, cherished as one of the great freedom fighters and saviour of Munda tribes, who revolted against the transformation of Munda agrarian system into a feudal state in Chotanagpur area. This revolt, like the earlier ones, was against the zamindars, traders and the government officers under the British regime. Munda tribe had a traditional system of land called as Khuntkari system according to which tribes enjoyed long established claim over the land. However in 1874, British changed land policies and thus implemented the zamindari system thereby forming two classes of landlords and tenants. The tenants comprising tribals were made to pay rent for their own land and their right over the land was sealed if they failed to pay the rent. In addition, the tenants were exploited in a number of ways such as eviction from land, harassment, land encroachment, increased rent, and so on. This pushed tribals to depend on money-lenders who would add high interest on the loans. As a result of this oppression, the tribals started rejecting the operation of outsiders to establish their own independent territory.

### 10.5.6 Midnapur Movement (1918-1924)

Though it started way back in 1760 against the British, however, the Midnapur peasant movement gained momentum during late 19<sup>th</sup> century following the encroachment of tribal land. Midnapur movement can best be understood through its two phases: one which overlapped with the non-cooperation movement of 1921-22; and two a phase which started following the arrest of Gandhi. Tribals were excluded from the non-cooperation movement up till 1920. During the beginning of 1921, efforts were made to include tribals also in this movement. However the Midnapur Zamindari Company created by Congress started its



oppression against the tribals who were paid low wages. This triggered agitation against the British. However Gandhi terminated the non-cooperation movement for the belief that tribal struggle was not acknowledged by the stakeholders under British (Dasgupta, 1985). Santhals gradually extended their movement against all oppressive operations. In 1922, tribals asserted their right over forest and the movement broke the barriers of Midnapur Zamindari Company and included Indian landlords also.

There were other movements also that can be counted under the three periods mentioned earlier. These are Jitu Santhal Movement in Malda, tribal movement in Orissa and tribal movement in Assam which were against the British introduced Zamindari system; the promulgation of section 144 and the arrest of tribals; and the encroachment of tribal land respectively.

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## 10.6 SALIENT FEATURES OF TRIBAL MOVEMENTS

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The exploitation and oppression against the tribals lead to a series of uprisings and movements. Among the oppressors include various stakeholders of the British Government, which they considered as ‘outsiders’ such as zamindars, thekedars, money-lenders, and other officials. There were regional movements against these stakeholders. Many of these movements were more so the social and religious movements in nature during their initial stages. However almost all the movements later fused with national uprisings. The anti-colonial agitations were ignited by land encroachment, eviction from land ownership, less wage, huge rent, putting an end to the feudal system of land ownership, and so on. All these movements erupted to safeguard the existential right of tribals. There was a chief from each tribal community to guide their respective movements. Tribal movements would often steer towards violence in which tribals were massacred, their houses torched and movements brutally cancelled. As a result of this, the tribals submitted themselves to the policies of British, which though deprived them of their rights and other interests. The normal laws in place at that time were deemed inapplicable to the tribal areas and therefore a new law called as Scheduled District Act (1874) was enacted and passed. The tribal areas thereafter were excluded from the Government of India Act (1935). However despite being excluded from the mainstream, the government continued to creep into tribal territories, which concealed all the exploitations against the tribals (Sonowal, 2008).

### Activity 2

Visit a construction site in your neighbourhood and inquire about the origin of the labourers working on the site. Ask them if they are from a tribal community you may find out about who they are and about their socio-cultural background. Write a note of one page and discuss it with that of other students at your center.

### Check Your Progress 1

- i) What do you understand by tribal movement?

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ii) Tribal communities dwell around lakes and rivers. True (✓) False (×)

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iii) Name the two paths of tribal movements.

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iv) Santhal Revolt took place in which year.

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## 10.7 ETHNIC MOVEMENTS

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The word ‘ethnic’ has a wider usage among scholars across disciplines. Derived from “ethnos”, scholars understand ethnicity in terms of its definition “groups in an exotic primitive culture” (Urmila, 1989: 13). In order for a community to be termed as an ethnic community, it must meet six standard principles. They are community name, common ancestry, shared historical memories, shared culture, definite territory and group cohesiveness (Smith, 1993). Ethnic communities are most often termed as minorities and categorized into three forms. The first is national minorities which include the traditional occupants of the nation. However, they are also believed to have come into existence as a result of the arrival of a new religion or converting to an alien religion to form their unique identity. The second is immigrant ethnicities who left their nation-state in search of livelihood and settled down at a different territory where they established immigrant connections with the inhabitants of same ethnic groups. The third is the refugee groups which though are analogous to the immigrant groups however the difference between the two lies in the former’s occupation of a different territory due to the conditional settlements in their primary inhabiting territory.

Paul Brass (1991) discusses three ways of defining ethnic groups: a) in terms of objective attributes, b) by reference to subjective feelings and c) in relation to behaviour. The first definition implies that there are some distinguishing *objective cultural features* that separate one group from the other—language, territory, religion, dress etc. All these are called *ethnic markers* through which distinctions between one ethnic group and another are emphasized and these are maintained. So, while the ethnic groups may interact with one another for the purpose of, say, economic activity, the objective ethnic markers ensure the continuity of separate group identity. The second aspect, i.e. presence of subjective feelings implies the existence of an *ethnic self-consciousness*. As mentioned earlier, at the base of ethnic affinity lies real or assumed common identity. The important thing to keep in mind is that the fact of common descent is not as important as the belief in it. It is not what is that is critical but *what people perceive*. In other words, ethnicity is a subjective construct, it is how we see ourselves. The third dimension, namely, the behavioural one, points to the existence of concrete, specific ways in which ethnic groups do or do not behave in relation to, or in interaction with other groups. In this sense, the normative behaviour of an ethnic group may include practices related to kinship, marriage, friendship, rituals etc. Thus, an ethnic group is a collectivity which is perceived by others in society as being different in terms of language, religion, race, ancestral home, culture etc., whose members perceive themselves as different from others and who participate in shared activities built around their actual or mythical common origin and culture. On the basis of these variables a group can be ranged from being barely ethnic to fully ethnic. It is a collectivity within a larger society characterised by elements like real or imaginary common ancestry, memories of a shared historical past, and a cultural focus on one or more symbolic elements such as kinship patterns, religious affiliations, language or dialect forms, etc. Also imperative is some consciousness of kind among the group members. Consequently, most definitions of ethnicity and ethnic groups focus on objective and involuntary external markers, as well as, subjective and voluntary internal consciousness as its major elements.

The concept of ethnicity suggests that it is a process through which members of a certain group or community identify themselves and there are no ascribed territorial boundaries of ethnic groups. This may mean that ethnic movements erupt only because of the threat to shared attributes such as language, culture or identity. This sense of ‘oneness’ defines the ethnicity of a group based on collective identity; they have the potential to collectively strive for shared interests.

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## 10.8 THE EMERGENCE OF ETHNIC MOVEMENTS

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Inequality encountered by any individual, group or community which is endorsed by the government may incite them to erupt collectively against it and this marks the beginning of an ethnic movement. Ethnic movements do not just arise due to the failure to meet their economic or political demands, but what also sparked them is the threat to their distinct social identity (Hechter & Okamoto 2001). Policies during the colonial times as well as the modern policies implemented by the government used ethnic elements such as race, language, culture, etc. to



classify ethnic groups for the differential treatment. However this idea of unequal treatment intensified and convinced these groups to establish even broader identities.

Evidently, disparities among various ethnic groups tempted them for a joint action, and political break-ups were the causal factor for their movements. Disruption in the conventional functioning of society due to the shifting of power produces political opportunities. Any crisis in the country produces an environment for the ethnic elites to persuade ethnic groups to take part in uprisings. Except the transitions in power, there are other aspects of political interventions responsible for the rising of ethnic movements in the country. However, the state-politics is not the only cause factor of ethnic movements. There are other causal factors also that contribute equally to this kind of uprising. For example, constructing a hierarchy among various ethnic communities, which is a social construction, may result in the suppression of one by the other. Also there is a competition among various ethnic groups in economic markets as well as other institutions, which amplifies ethnic boundaries and consequently gives rise to a movement (Olzak 1992).

From the above discussions, we can derive several causal factors which led to the emergence of ethnic movements in India such as modernisation, political economy, inter community conflict, competition for resources, relative deprivation, social hierarchy, cultural gap, and so on.

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## **10.9 MAJOR FACTORS RESPONSIBLE FOR ETHNIC MOVEMENTS**

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The rising ethnic tension in India has grabbed the attention of Indian sociologists to highlight the factors responsible for such tensions. Scholars have highlighted diverse factors responsible for ethnic movements in India. For example Rajni Kothari (1988) emphasizes that ethnic tension is the consequence of modernisation. Like him, Gyanendra Pandey (1990) and Harjot Oberoi (1994) consider ethnic conflict as an outcome of modernity and claimed that India in the past was free from the nuances of identity. However Omveldt (1990) opposed the romanticizing aspect of traditional India for the reason that hierarchy has always been a dominating feature of Indian society and the claim that multiculturalism is a feature of Indian society is a myth. The crucial causal factors of ethnic movements in India are:

- 1) The extreme competition for economy, the passion to safeguard age-old culture and the diverse cultural and linguistic groups.
- 2) Unequal economic development which lead to the underdevelopment of certain groups and their marginalisation.
- 3) Politicizing caste and religion, the chief components of identity formation, by political leaders for their political interests.
- 4) There was growing concern among both linguistic and religious ethnic groups about their assimilation into the mainstream, which was seen as a threat to their ethnic identity.

- 5) The defective developmental policies created a feeling of alienation among the ethnic communities which further forced them to dislocate from their traditionally occupied territory thus bringing miseries in their lives.

### Box 10.1

The origin and resurgence of ethnicity lie in intergroup contact, that is, when different groups come into one another's sphere of influence. Of course, the shape it takes depends on the conditions in that society. The second point is that ethnicity is used to meet the present demands of survival for the oppressed groups. When subjugated groups find it difficult to tolerate the dominance of others and make efforts to improve their position, ethnicity is generated.

## 10.10 TYPOLOGY OF ETHNIC MOVEMENTS

As mentioned previously, ethnicity is an ongoing social construction process through which ethnic groups keep sprouting from time to time. This creates a kind of majority-minority duality depending upon the structure of ethnic groups. Such a typology of ethnic groups is a two-dimensional process: one where a distinction is made between majority and minority movements or a distinction among various groups based on class; the second dimension pertains to the ethnocentric movements wherein ethnic minorities with a common identity strive to raise their position through transcending the boundaries. To elucidate further, we will now turn to the types of ethnic movements, which is two-fold.

### 10.10.1 Ethnic Majority Movements

Dominated by ethnic majorities, this form of movement can be classified into four types. The first group-focussed movement, which is an ethnocentric group movement, intends to promote the interests of their group. The second type of this movement involves those majority groups who occupy a lower place within the hierarchical order of the majority groups. The third type of movement, an issue-focussed movement, considers factors which bring in change in the society through promoting certain issues such as peace, social cohesion, etc. The fourth type of movement is a group-focussed collaborative movement intended to uplift the ethnic minorities.

Ethnic majorities, unlike minorities, do not follow a conscious process of developing collective identities. They instead have a national identity or sometimes identified through their religion. The majority movements are blatantly hostile towards others especially the minorities. This hostility in the majority movement considers ethnic minorities as a threat to their socio-political and socio-cultural status. This diminishes the network ties between the majority and minority groups which further creates 'Us-Them' duality within the ethnic structure. As a result, majority groups perceive minorities as their opposites rather than potential collaborators. A common example of this type of movement is the Naga Movement of Manipur led by one of the major ethnic communities.

The Naga revolt started in 1950 and this is one of the oldest ethnic majority movements in India. The revolt has its origin in Manipur which comprises diverse ethnic groups such as Nagas, Meteis, Kukis, and so on. The existence of these various ethnic groups are the main cause of ethnic insurgency however primarily the main cause has been the demand for autonomy and thus Naga movement is

also referred to as secessionist movement. The demand for the formation of a separate state arose due to the internal territorial dispute between Nagas and Kukis after the formation of 7 North-Eastern States. At the same time and following the formation of 7 states, Meitei tribes opposed the formation of separate states. They instead demanded a common territory for all. The dispute among all these tribes has led to communal conflict among them and thus, Nagas and Kukis changed their faith by turning to Christianity while Meiteis followed Hinduism. The protests usually take the form of strike calls and other forms of non-violent agitations. After 1997, both Nagas and Kukis demanded a separate statehood and this has resulted in confusion among various ethnic groups in the Manipur. There is a continuity of this conflict over the formation of separate state even in the present times also.

Bodo movement is yet another example of this type of ethnic movement. Initiated in Assam during the colonial times, Bodo movement strengthened into an extremist assertion during 1980s. The main causes that lead to the rise of Bodo movement include discrimination and biasness faced by the Bodo community from the dominant community. Leaders of this movement demanded a separate statehood because they considered Bodos as ethnically distinct from other inhabitants of Assam. In 1960, the coming of Assam Official Language Bill was seen as a threat to the linguistic identity of Bodos. This led to violent mass movements and it is for this reason also that Bodo Community demanded an autonomous territory. The intention was to divide Assam into two equal halves. In 1993, the failure to fulfil the demands of Bodo community resulted in mass agitation. The situation further worsened due to the atrocities of Bodoland Security Forces. Ethnic cleansing by the armed forces gave the movement a communal turn which resulted in the death of many and many left homeless. Conflict continued until an accord was signed in 2003 between the armed rebels and the state which weakened the intensity of conflict. However, no such progress was witnessed in terms of safeguarding the identity and language of the Bodo community.

### 10.10.2 Ethnic Minority Movements

Dominated by ethnic minorities, this type of movement entails both 'issue' and 'group' oriented movements. The group-oriented movement is channelized toward the developmental aspects of ethnic minorities. Examples of this type of movement include civil rights movement, separatist movement, inter-sectional movement, and so on. Ethnic minorities are a secluded group in terms of economic advantages however there are exceptions to it. Despite some being economically well-off, they are discriminated due to their status.

In addition, their identity is determined on the basis of their class and the place where movement takes place. Such movements comprise people from ethnic minority community and therefore intended for the interests of oppressed groups of people. They have weaker or no network ties within the society as a result of which they are always under the threat of being dominated by the majority. However, primarily the issues which are causal factors for minority movements include social hierarchy, sub-ordination, social exclusion, fewer resources, and so on. Though in India, there have been no such movements on the part of the ethnic minorities such as Muslims except the Muslims in the State of Jammu and Kashmir who demand for an autonomous and liberal state.

### 10.10.3 Mixed Majority-Minority Movements

This kind of ethnic movement involves both ethnic majorities and minorities. In these movements, the minorities participate in large number in the movements of majorities and vice-versa. This kind of movement is also called as solidarity movement since the groups in the binaries organise movements for the interests of other group. To elaborate, the ethnic majorities organise movements in support of minorities while as minorities support and organise movements for majorities. However, there is always a tension in terms of majority-minority divide when both the groups merge to support a movement. The causal factors for such tension include the factors such as hierarchy, culture, power, motives behind organising movements, and so on. However people participating in such movements will have different aims as a result of which such movements are prone to internal clashes the basis of which can primarily be resource allocation and leadership. This type of movement entails struggle for representation and/or leadership of a particular territory inhabited by both ethnic majority and minority.

Other than the three forms of ethnic movements discussed above, there can also be mixed minority and mixed majority movements. Mixed minority movement comprises participants from various minority groups based on the internal hierarchical order. Such mixed minority movement is jointly organised by various minorities over issues where the participating members are similar to each other in terms of being underprivileged and ignored by the ethnic majorities. On the other hand, mixed majority movements involve participants from various ethnic majority groups within the hierarchical structure in the majority group.

#### Check Your Progress 2

i) What are the six standard principles for a group to be called as an ethnic group?

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ii) The causal factor for ethnic movements primarily is

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iii) According to Rajni Kothari, ethnic tension is the consequence of hierarchy.  
True ( )                      False ( )

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iv) Mention two major types of ethnic movements.

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## 10.11 LET US SUM UP

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In this unit, we have dealt with two major movements in India, that is, tribal and ethnic movements. The tribal movements were more oriented towards the protection of their land and forest area as well as culture from the clutches of British. The contemporary status of tribals is the outcome of the rebellious movements that took place since late 18<sup>th</sup> century. Tribal people resisted all forms of suppression and exploitation by zamindari system, politicians, British officers or other representatives of the suppressors. The failure of the government to protect the resources of tribal communities forced them to organise movements against them. This unit offers different phases of tribal movements in India, the nature of these movements and their importance. It also traces the causal factors for the uprising of tribals. At the same time, the unit also presents a clear picture of ethnic conflicts in India. It elucidates how ethnic movements started in India. Ethnicity is considered as a social construct; therefore, identities based on ethnicity cannot be construed as natural. And for this reason, the unit offers the causal factors of ethnic movements in India which includes factors such as economic, political and cultural factors which determine the identity of a particular ethnic group. Ethnic movements were mostly against the hierarchical system existent within the ethnic structure comprising the ethnic majorities and minorities. They were organised to safeguard the cultural and political identities of ethnic groups and do not pose any threat to the nation.

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## 10.13 SPECIMEN ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

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### Check Your Progress 1

- i) Tribal movements are social movements organized against the government practices that affect the livelihood and overall structure of the tribal communities.
- ii) False
- iii) Violent movements and non-violent movements
- iv) 1855

### Check Your Progress 2

- i) 1) Community name,

- 2) Common ancestry,
  - 3) Shared historical memories,
  - 4) Shared culture,
  - 5) Definite territory
  - 6) Group cohesiveness
- ii) Political Break-ups
- iii) False
- iv) 1) Ethnic majority movements  
2) Ethnic minority movements

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