



**Iqbal A.  
Ansari**

## READINGS ON

## MINORITIES PERSPECTIVE AND DOCUMENTS (Vol. I & II)

The Institute of Objective Studies (New Delhi) has planned to periodically bring out volumes on specific themes under the series "Readings on Minorities" with a view to promoting research and making discussion on minorities more informed

### Readings On Minorities Perspective and Documents, Vol. I

In the present Volume I entitled 'Perspectives and Documents' effort has been made to bring together material dealing with (a) basic theoretical analysis of minority situations and possible coexistence with majorities and (b) the major international documents on minorities beginning with the Polish Treaty of 1919, through the UN Instruments from 1948 to 1992 to the Vienna Declaration of 1993 and the 'Framework Convention for The Protection of National Minorities' of the Council of Europe, 1994.

Minorities are defined in terms of numbers, power and distinct identity. They are numerically inferior, non-dominant groups with stable features of identity different from the rest of the people within a larger territorial state. Because of their inadequate share in power, minorities are likely to suffer varying degrees of deprivation, discrimination and marginalisation. In extreme cases minorities face threat of assimilation or extermination.

Concern for protection of minorities, which found expression in the Peace Treaties under the League of Nations, was again uppermost in the minds of those who founded the United Nations to save the succeeding generations from the scourge of war. Though its Charter committed the UN to promote and encourage respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms for all without distinction as to race, sex, language or religion, a Declaration on Minorities could be adopted only on 18 Dec, 1992. The Declaration requires the Members-State not only to protect the existence and identity of minorities but to encourage conditions for the promotion of that identity (Article 1), and to take special measures so that minorities may exercise fully and effectively all their human rights (Article 4), assuring that such special measures "shall not prima facie be considered contrary to the principle of equality ....." Article 5 requires that national policies and programmes shall be planned and implemented with due regard for the legitimate interests of minorities. Significantly the preamble to the Declaration notes that promotion and protection of rights of minorities contribute to the political and social stability of States in which they live.

This volume is presented to the students and scholars of minority rights but more significantly to those involved worldwide in developing models of peaceful coexistence of dominant and non-dominant groups in nation-states in accordance with the standards set by the Declaration of 1992, so that recourse is not taken necessarily to secessionism by minorities in response

to majoritarian modes of dominance in the realms of polity, economy and culture.

### Readings On Minorities Perspective and Documents, Vol. II

This volume is the Second in the Series on Minorities planned by the Institute of Objective Studies. Like its companion volume I, it comprises conceptual-theoretical articles and documents. In Part I scholars have analysed the Indian and South Asian situation vis-a-vis minorities. Part II of the book chronologically presents selected significant national documents on minorities from 1920s to 1945, including the Nehru Report (1928), the scheme presented by Gandhiji before the Round Table Conference (1931), resolutions of the Indian National Congress, and the Constitutional Proposals of the Sapru Committee (1945). Part III deals with the minority rights in the Constituent Assembly in three stages i.e. August 1947, May 1949 and October 1949. The subsequent Part is devoted to the compendium of articles dealing with minorities including scheduled castes and tribes, women and children. The text of the Indo-Pak Agreement on Minorities (1950) constitutes Part V of the Book. In Part VI have been collected the Report of the first National Integration Committee (1961), the Prime Minister's Fifteen Point Programme on Minorities (1983), the National Commission for Minorities Act (1922) and the Protection of Human Rights Act (1933).

The book also gives a useful bibliography on the subject and appendix on community wise figures on population (1931) and an appendix on community wise figures on population (1991).

**The Editor:** Iqbal A. Ansari (b. 1935) joined the Aligarh Muslim University in 1962 and retired from there as Professor of English in 1995. His publications include *Uses of English* (1978), a book on applied linguistics, and thirty papers on varied topics in the area of literature, community relations, human rights and Constitutional law. He edited *The Muslim Situation in India* (1989), being papers of the seminar organised by the IOS. His forthcoming book deals with inter-group violence and the role of law enforcement agencies in India.

Since 1977 Prof. Ansari has been actively associated with the human rights movement. In 1990 he founded with Justice (Retired) V.M. Tarkunde the Coordination Committee on Kashmir to monitor human rights situation and to promote dialogue on Kashmir. He is also the founder Secretary-General of the Minorities Council of India, which seeks to secure justice for minorities and their peaceful coexistence with the majority.

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