

## Demand for Smaller States in India

K Kamala

### Abstract

The demands for smaller States in India. If we go back to history of Political Science where the Greek Philosopher Plato suggested a State should have a population of 5040, Rousseau enough to make an ideal State 10,000. Significantly, the necessity of new States and their local importance should be analyzed. The historical institutionalism framework also helps to explain why over the time State borders have become less stable and subject to change in some parts of the federation and not in others. Borders, understood as a form of institution, rest on the notion that they are critical element influencing competition among groups. Struggles over the size and shape of the State are part of the 'rules of the game': which interests are legitimate, what resources can be mobilized, the questions that are open for debate, and how these change.

In a complex country like India with a huge diversity, all efforts should be made to integrate the people in the national mainstream. No Indian should think of himself/herself belonging to a particular State or region and should think of being only an Indian. Creating the new States on the basis of the distinct cultures of their people in the region serves only to create and foster artificial barriers among the people. This is undesirable for the future of India in the long run. Secondly, where the demand for new States have been raised on the issue of development, study should be conducted whether creation of the new State would promote faster development or whether the new State would be perennially dependent on the central government can carry out uniform development of all the States in India, there would be no incentive for demanding a new State on the issue of development and the time and energy that is being wasted on the demand for new Statehood will be saved.

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### Introduction

While there may be no routine challenges, these may emerge from time to time and changes in

boundaries and the hegemonic space are deeply contested by other elite groups until finally the Centre decides whether or not to divide the State. In the governments have been more responsive to arguments in favor of unity than division, which has reinforced the 'stickiness' of State boundaries as opposed to fluidity. Finally, it is important to understand the semi-autonomous timetables of how the dynamics of federal restructuring works, moving from the sub-State and State to national politics. The Article 1<sup>st</sup> of the Indian constitution, India has been described as a union of States. Article 2, 3 of the Indian constitution of India provides interalia for formation of new States by altering the boundaries of the existing States. As a consequence, demand for and formation of new States had become a regular phenomenon in our democratic polity.

### Authors Affiliation:

Assistant Professor, Department of Political Science,  
Govt Degree College Serilingampally, BHEL, Hyderabad,  
Telangana 502032, India.

### Corresponding Author:

**K Kamala**

Assistant Professor, Department of Political Science,  
Govt Degree College Serilingampally, BHEL, Hyderabad,  
Telangana 502032, India.

**E-mail:** [kamala.ranu@gmail.com](mailto:kamala.ranu@gmail.com)

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The constitutional provision under Article 3 was incorporated with a noble aim to realize the geographical and economic unification to fulfil the aspirations of people and is an instrument to achieve unity. The situation carves for some constitutional parameters considering the far reaching implications resulting from frequent demands for the creation of new States. Rakesh Hooja Director Indian Institute of Public.

Administration (IIPA) States that a new small State may find itself lacking in infrastructure (administrative and industrial), which requires time, money and effort to build. Some may argue that it is with this very purpose of developing infrastructure that demands for the creation of smaller States are encouraged. But experience shows that it takes about a decade for a new State and its government and administrative institutions to become stable; for various issues of division of assets, funds of the State civil service(s) to get fully resolved; and for links to the new State capital to stabilise. The cost of this transition is not low and the State's performance may suffer during this interim period. So, the rationalisation of some existing State boundaries and reorganising territories may be desirable for reasons of physical connectivity. And even as this and other socio-political factors could be considered by a new State's Reorganisation Commission, a change merely for the sake of having a small State is not desirable. Several new States and union territories have been created out of existing States since 1956 Bombay State was lit into the linguistic States of Gujarat and Maharashtra on May 1, 1960 by the Bombay Reorganization Act. Nagaland was made a State on December 1, 1963.

The Punjab reorganization Act of 1966 divided the Punjab along linguistic and religious lines, creating a new Hindu and Hindi-speaking State of Haryana on 1 November, transferring the northern district of Punjab to Himachal Pradesh, and designating Chandigarh, the shared capital of Punjab and Haryana, a union territory. Statehood was conferred upon Himachal Pradesh on 25 January in the Indian Union as a State on April 26, 1975. In 1987, Arunachal Pradesh and Mizoram became States on February 20; followed by Goa on May 30, while Goa's northern exclaves of Daman and Diu became a separate union territory. In 2000 three new States were created; Chhattisgarh (November 1, 2000) was created out of eastern Madhya Pradesh, Uttaranchal (November 9, 2000), since renamed Uttarakhand, was created out of the Hilly regions of northwest Uttar Pradesh, and Jharkhand (November 15, 2000) was created out of the southern district of Bihar.

The Union Territories of Delhi and Pondicherry (renames to Pondicherry) have been given the right to elect their own legislatures and they are now counted as small States.

Article 3 of the Indian constitution deals with the formation of the new States and alteration of area, boundaries or names of the existing States. According to the constitution of India, for the introduction of the bill regarding the formation of the new States or reorganization of the States and boundaries, previous sanction or reorganized or their boundaries may be altered by the union parliament by simple majority in the ordinary process of legislation. Impelled by the successful agitation for a Telugu speaking State in 1952-53, the government set up the States Reorganization commission (SRC). For a better reflected indigenous characteristic the task of the SRC was to consider dividing the existing States into units.

### **The Formation of New States in India**

The State Reorganization Commission (SRC) stipulated that the precedent States, formed on the basis of administrative convenience, economy, military strategy and security "for the purpose of imperial interests or the exigencies of foreign government", no longer coincided with the actual needs, wishes or affinities of the people (Report 1955: Section 20) with existing demands for boundaries that corresponded with natural characteristic of groups, the government was compelled to commission a group to examine the existing provincial borders of India. It was at this time that the SRC recommended certain "other" considerations will be taken in to account when such demands arise for creating States. Therefore, the commission began to focus on features that would conduct the second phase of State formation, i.e., local as well as administrative factors bearing consideration in their deliberations included (Report 1955: Section 93).

Economic and administrative consideration, the preservation and strengthening of the unity and security of India and successful working on the national plan to maintain linguistic and cultural homogeneity are at the heart of planning new States. The linguistic States were legitimized and the report was acted upon in 1956. During the time of the SRC, it became clear that the constitution says relatively little about State units. The constitution details the federal design specifying how States relate to the center economically, fiscally and administratively. Roughly speaking, the States

are entrusted with the so called nation-building activities of health education and with a continuing responsibility for agricultural development. State plans have to be submitted to Central Government for the approval and State policies revenues raised from State sales taxes, agricultural taxes and grants-in-aid from central government mainly to support programmes. Central government takes responsibility for the country's major industrial and infrastructure projects and for defence and foreign relations. When speaking about States and the central government these are the primary references made in the constitution.

However, little is mentioned regarding the creation of new States. In reference to the change that new States are likely to bring in, it merely says that the federal government can make new States (Indian Constitution, Article 3). Unlike other federations, the States themselves do not have to vote on the creation of new States. A bill with a simple majority ratifying the formation of the new State must be approved by the Parliament of India (both the Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha).

The State Reorganization Commission (SRC) was created in early 1950 to examine and consider the division of the larger States in smaller units. After the recommendations of the SRC were made and implemented, the central government developed four general guidelines, formal and informal, that later Statehood demands were based upon. The following are the four rules explicated by Paul Brass (1974:17-19): Regional demands must fall short of secession. Demand for the division of multilingual States must have some support from different linguistic groups. Regional demands based on language and culture will be accommodated, but that regional demands which are explicitly based on religious differences will not be accepted. Regional demands will not be conceded capriciously. That is, a regional movement must not only have a legitimate case, but it must have broad popular support in the region. So this was taken into constitution when mass support were in the forms of formation of Telangana on June 2, 2014.

### **Formation of States in Northern India**

The formation of Punjab, although Sikh separation was its main motivation, was based on the Punjabi language as the primary reason for its separation. Although the Sikhs' main purpose was to organize a separate State based on their different religious practices, they had to raise the language differences in order to advance their demand.

"The Punjabi-speaking Sikhs are a people objectively distinct in religion, though not in language, from other ethnic groups in the North" (Brass 1974:277). At this time, Urdu and English were the primary medium of linguistic exchange. However after partition, the majority of the Muslim population left for Pakistan and there were then Sikhs and Hindus in Punjab. At this time, the debate began over Hindi and Punjab. Thus throughout, there has been a language debate in the region. An historical account of the Punjab was used to base its defense of a distinct language community that needed to be separated from Himachal Pradesh and Haryana. In the formation of Punjab, language, not religion, was the grounds used to grant its Statehood.

In addition to the distinct Punjab-speaking State being formed in 1966, there were other language provoked States formed. In 1953, Andhra Pradesh was formed to have separate State for Telugu speaking people from Tamil speaking people in Madras province. In 1960 Bombay was divided to accommodate both Gujarati and Marathi speakers in their respective States of Gujarat and Maharashtra. The evidence of Brass's second principle is language, with this principle the States of Assam, Punjab, Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat and Maharashtra were formed.

The cause of decline for various potential Statehood attempts has been made the third principle of the movement that had popular support among its members. The rule developed out of general reluctance of the central leadership to divide the existing provinces rather. (Brass 1994:173). It creates an obstacle for politicians who are out to divide for their own self-interest rather than represent the will of the people. As pointed out by Paul Brass, the primary reason why the Maithili movement failed in 1954 was the failure of the movement was leaders did not successfully persuade the residents of north-eastern Bihar that they were indeed distinct. (Brass 1994:51). Brass States that reason the Maithili movement lost momentum because of the elite leaders who used the Maithili movement to advance their political aspirations. However, these leaders themselves were turn over their loyalty to Maithili and India. Moreover, they are not able to fully socially mobilize the Maithili-speaking people in order to fully advance their plan for to form a separate State. The leaders themselves had failed to fully inform the people of the ethnic values that would be emphasized if a separate State was to be formed. Although the Maithili State demand was primarily language motivated, it ultimately did not

succeed in it because the leaders of the movement never had its own people convinced for the need of a separate State. This then did not persuade the leadership in Delhi to divide Bihar into Bihar and Mithilanchal. Finally, the fourth rule requires that apart from the group seeking operation, other groups see separation as necessary as well. This further prohibits any capricious dividing. Both the Telugu speaking and Tamil-speaking groups sought reorganization aided in the expediency Madras Province's reorganization.

### **The Formation of New States in the central part of India**

The process of the formation of three new States of Chhattisgarh, Uttarakhand (Uttarakhand) and Jharkhand has evoked mixed responses from the people living outside these proposed States. While these fears are certainly exaggerated and even misplaced, the passage of the bills in parliament creating the three States has given a fillip to demand for the creation of many more such States. In fact there are several States which are over the years demanding their strong intention of get separation from their parent States in the name of development, cultural distinctness and administrative convenience.

The history of demands for separate State existed with political considerations and economic discrimination. It may be recalled that in the first round of State's reorganization, the States had been created largely on the linguistic principle, and the last State created on this basis was the resultant State of Punjab as a bifurcation of the bilingual Punjab in November 1966. Most of the other States created thereafter were either created on ethnic basis (such as Meghalaya) or were simply elevated from centrally administered units to full-fledged States (such as Goa, Mizoram, Arunachal Pradesh and Himachal Pradesh). One thing that may be important to note is that the break upon the bigger States into smaller ones, even in the 1950s, 1960s, was not always on linguistic basis. Hence when Assam was broken up to create new provinces (like Nagaland) or the Union Territories (like Mizoram) this was actually done on 'anti-linguistic' lines in the sense that the non-Assamese speaking population living in the undivided land of Assam were excessively worried about their possible 'Assimilation' as a result of the declaration of Assamese as the sole official language of the country.

As the time passes the sentiment for language and culture has given way to the urge for speedier economic development. If in the fifties united Maharashtra, Vishalandhra or the Maha Gujarat demands were aimed at uniting co-linguistic population from neighboring State. About three or four decades of lop-sided economic development, it was the issue of unevenness of development that was looming large on the political horizon. This perception on non-development, development of underdevelopment, or retarded development has transcended the linguistic cohesion which seemed to be a great cementing force in the initial years of post colonial political development.

Demands for separate Statehood share a number of characteristics with the pre-1990 claims. Language, control of resources and preservation of culture and identity are among the characteristics shared with both present and past demands for Statehood. Like past claims, contemporary conflicts over regional control tell us that a local leader with closer ties to a locality is what the people of India request. Larger States such as Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh that are currently attempting to accommodate State separation movements are too big and diverse and end up alienating some, or all, of their constituents. In Modern day India it is being asked to realign federal system into smaller units that encourage local-based politics. Nevertheless, what is different from past claims for separate State is the expected outcome of these contemporary demands. While the Indian government was more reluctant to admit new States into Indian Union, government, but as witnessed in early August 2000 when three new States were approved, seems to be much likely to grant Statehood demands.

In recent times smaller States, namely, Uttarakhand, Jharkhand and Chhattisgarh, have achieved much higher growth rates in their GSDP than the targets set for the Tenth five Year plan, whereas the growth rates achieved by their parent States, namely, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar and Madhya Pradesh fell significantly short of the targets. Further the growth rates achieved in the first two years of the Eleventh plan, that is 2007-08 and 2008-09 by Chhattisgarh and Uttarakhand were significantly higher than those achieved in their parent State. Apart from releasing the creative energies of the people, viability of smaller States may have contributed to better governance, attracting greater private investment from outside as well as Planning and utilizing resources more efficiently.



### **Establishment of Telangana Rashtra Samithi (TRS) for Separate Telangana**

In December 2009, Telangana Rashtra Samithi leader Sri. K. Chandrasekhar Rao started his fast unto death, demanding the creation of the separate State of Telangana in Andhra Pradesh. The Union Government acceded to the demand and announced that the government would initiate the process of creation as a separate State. Before discussing the implication of the demands of creation of different States, it is pertinent to elaborate the basic and background for these demands.

Language is one of the most important contributing factors to diversity of India. According to 2002 census, more than 29 important languages are spoken by more than one million people in the country. Yet, more or less; the group of people speaking the same language has historically tended to congregate together in identifiable geographic areas on linguistic lines. Since historical times, hinterlands of minority groups speaking different languages than that of majority group have been found. For example, a large number of Marathi speaking people have settled in Indore and Gwalior, which are otherwise predominantly inhabited by Hindi speaking population.

Despite these small aberrations, Language continued to be a common linking factor of the people in the same geographic region. As a result, the language of the majority people of the geographic region was accepted to be the language of commerce, trade, education and all the transactions. Rich literature in these regional languages flourished over the years. Naturally language emerged as a common thread binding people together. The common bonding fostered by common language was so strong that at times it transcended other strong forms of identity such as religious lines met with stiff resistance from Indians. Because the Linguistic States were formed, it was expected that the unification of geographic region under one State with majority people speaking the same language would pave the way for uniform and rapid development of the States. However, the expectation of uniform development could not be fulfilled in some cases. As a result, demands for creation of new States started being made with greater fever. The region, where the demand for a separate State was being made, had a distinct culture of its own and it was further beyond the language of the State.

As a result, the region needed a separate State of its own in order to safeguard its distinct culture.

The region, where demand for a separate State was being made, was more backward than the rest of the State and the rulers of the State failed to provide proper attention to the development of the region.

As a result, the region needed a separate State in order to have its own development. The region, where demand for a separate State was being made was more developed than rest of the State. As a result, higher revenue from the region was being spent on other parts of the State, thereby denying the region the right share of its development. The demographic characteristic of the region where the demand for new State was being made was different from the rest of the State. As a result, the policy of caste-based reservations of the parent State had undesirable effect on the region.

### **Negligence of Traditional Practices**

Often two or more of these characteristics overlapped in the demand of new State. For example, both Chhattisgarh and Jharkhand had predominantly tribal population with distinct culture. Their distinct culture was perceived as not being safeguarded in the parent States of Madhya Pradesh and Bihar respectively. Moreover both these regions were underdeveloped in their parent States. Both regions were rich in minerals and it was perceived that the rulers of their parent States were negligent of development of the region. Further, apart from the issue of development, the issue of different demographic composition of Uttarakhand was also important in the demand for the Statehood to the region. Unlike the parent State of Uttar Pradesh, the region of Uttarakhand had majority of upper castes.

Therefore, it was perceived that the caste-based policies of the State of Uttar Pradesh were detrimental to the region. The separate Statehood sentiment in these regions today emanates from a perception of a centre-State relationship with the politically more powerful dominant region, which has allegedly exploited the rich mineral and other natural resources of their periphery in a colonial way of evolution. Ironically most backward regions of some of these States are actually the richest in terms of natural resources. It was the articulation of this strong sentiment of being treated as an "internal colony" that has earlier led to the setting up of development Boards in Kutch, Saurashtra, Marathwada and Vidarbha. Unlike the linguistic States, most States in the Hindi belt were actually never organized on a linguistic basis and were in fact the remainders of the linguistic (Madhya

Pradesh) or the gifts of British colonial policies (UP& Bihar).

It was the lack of politicalization on the part of various cultures, regions in these States that made it possible for these non-linguistic mega States to continue to exist. Initially leaders like G.B. Pant thought it fit to keep the bigger States intact to counterbalance the 'fissiparous' tendencies of linguistic regionalism, which these leaders feared could degenerate into regional chauvinism, inimical to national integration. K.M. Panikkar a member of the States Reorganization Commission (SRC) was severely criticized for suggesting division up of States by G B Pant and Jawaharlal Nehru.

Though many of the reasons for separate Statehood are the same as in the past, tribal identity (Jharkhand and Bodoland), language differences (Gorkhaland) and control over one's own resources (Chhattisgarh and Uttarkhand) made the requirements to be granted for separate Statehood have been changed. In some instances the language continues to define the distinctiveness of the region but not in most cases. Telangana indicates, a common language as the requirement for an independent whether or not a region was likely to be granted Statehood, no longer seem to speak to the like hood of groups demanding Statehood today.

### **Contemporary Conditions and Demands for Smaller States**

India is being asked to realign federal system into smaller units that encourage local-based politics. Besides the language, resources, culture and identity are also the factors responsible for demanding new States. The larger States of Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh on the other side are considered to be providing stability and administration convenience. However, the expected outcome of these contemporary demands is the difference from past claims for a separate State. While today's Indian government was more reluctant to admit new States into the Indian Union, but as witnessed in early August 2000 when three new States were approved, seems to be much more likely to grant Statehood demands. Several State agitations reflect strikingly similar demands to past Statehood conflicts. Jharkhand State was carved out of several districts in southern Bihar, contiguous districts of West Bengal, Orissa and Madhya Pradesh highlights the continuing vitality of ethnic makes in regionalist politics to the extent that the Jharkhand a 'tribal' dominated State. However

in many more cases, centre- State conflicts and inter State tensions are now primarily focused on economic and political but not on Culture issues.

Regions as diverse as the city of Bombay dominated by the local ShivaseenaParty and continuing conflicts in Assam, base their claims on the basis of 'sons of the soil' arguments, seeking to protect the employment prospects of 'local people'(or ethnic groups) against the claims of a swelling tide of migrant laborers.<sup>19</sup> In Punjab, continued control by the central Government on policies concerning food procurement continues to prompt doubts about the center's sincerity about the economic interests. Regional movements demanding greater rights to self-determination have accused both State and national governments of discriminatory allocation of resources and undue political interfaces at the State level. Though each of these conflicts varies in its manifestation of religion, language and identity or their belief that they are victims of State government, there is a common sense of frustration and aggression. Development of newly created States (2000): The newly created smaller States, namely, Uttarakhand, Jharkhand and Chhattisgarh, has achieved much higher growth rates in their GSDP than the targets set for the Tenth five Year plan, whereas the growth rates achieved by their parent nations, namely, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar and Madhya Pradesh fell significantly short of the targets.

Further, the growth rates achieved in the first two years of the Eleventh plan, that is, 2007-08 and 2008-09, by Chhattisgarh and Uttarakhand were significantly higher than those achieved by their parent States. Apart from releasing the creative energies of the people, viability of smaller nations may have contributed to better governance, attracting greater private investment from outside as well as Planning and utilizing resources more efficiently.

An extremely encouraging development is in respect of Bihar, where the median growth rate achieved at 9.7 percent per annum during these two years was significantly higher than in Jharkhand at 5.8 percent annum. This may be explained by improved governance, of late, in this State, facilitated the least by the fact that with the creation of Jharkhand, Bihar has become less heterogeneous and much smaller in area, with the size of its population getting reduced by approximately 25 percent.

Experience has demonstrated the failure of regional planning to ensure adequate development of backward regions within the larger provinces.

This is explained by the political planning in democracy inherent in such States characterized by regional unevenness in development. The experience of Maharashtra and Gujarat amply illustrates the failure to develop backward regions, despite the existence of constitutional provisions for setting up Regional Planning Boards and the powers entrusted to the Governor to review the progress of development under such regional plans. This experience underlines the need for conceding separate Statehood for certain backward regions like Telangana and Vidarbha.

The new dimension of like Population growth and the multiplicity of development functions have rendered governance in large States inefficient. Secondly, in the context of development planning under democracy, significant regional diversities with respect to the historically inherited levels of infrastructure and institution within certain large States have given rise to serve tensions concerning the distribution of benefits from growth. These tensions have reached a point where harmonious development seems no longer possible without their break-up into smaller countries which are relatively homogeneous.

### Geographical Conditions of State of Telangana

The Telangana movement for Statehood is perhaps the oldest manifestation of regionalism in India. It began prior to Independence when efforts were made by the Nizam of Hyderabad (princely ruler) to maintain Hyderabad as an independent State distinct from India. This though did not happen and Hyderabad was merged with the larger Madras province as part of India. Later the Telugu speaking portion of the Madras province was separated to create the Telugu speaking State of Andhra. This though did not pacify the separate demands of Telangana. The desire to separate from Andhra Pradesh has persisted basing their claims of linguistic and cultural differences along with unequal development. Popular support has always been in favour of the smaller States so to cite this as a primary reason. If popular support was the main consideration in advancing Statehood, then the State of Uttarakhand would have been created several years ago. Finally, Brass's last principal of State formation, that States must be formed on the basis of rationale and not capriciously is to be questioned as these principles are useful in explaining why in the past India either opted for or against new States. While several small and even miniscule regions, both in and outside the

Hindi belt, have been demanding separate States for themselves, some of these demands have been more persistent than others which have been largely been dormant.

HD Deva Gowda's Independence Day declaration of his government's resolve to create a separate State of Uttarakhand in 1996 may be recalled here that there was a spurt in demands for smaller States immediately after Deve Gowda's declaration in 1996. Kodagu Rajya Mukti Morcha (Coorg) under its leader Nachhappa (pioneer, November 23, 1997), Purvanchal Mukti Morcha (comprising 20 districts of eastern Uttar Pradesh) headed by raj Kumar Singh (pioneer, January 18, 1997), and a steering committee comprising leaders of movements for smaller States of Uttarakhand, Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh, western UP, Gorkhaland and Poorvanchal, under the leadership of former civil aviation minister PurushottamKaushik (pioneer, January 24, 1997), all came to the fore in the months immediately following the August 15, 1996 declaration. All these and some more such demands are now likely to get further activated. The western UP leader Ajit Singh (son of the legendary Jat leader Charan Singh) has once again convened a meeting in August at New Delhi where leaders supporting the demands for Gorkhaland, Telangana, Vidarbha, Poorvanchal and Bundelkhand, perhaps only to strengthen his own demand of a separate Harith Pradesh comprising of 23 districts of western U.P. Bundelkhand comprising district of the Vindhya plateau in southern Uttar Pradesh (U.P.) and the neighboring district of the northern Madhya Pradesh. The film actor Raja Bundela has been voicing this demand for quite some time now with some other politicians of the area. This was also later supported by the ex-U.P. chief minister N.D. Tiwari who contested a Lok Sabha election from the Jhansi constituency of the region.

Poorvanchal in Uttar Pradesh comprise the most backward districts of eastern U.P. which have been on the margin of the green revolution that earlier brought agricultural prosperity to the western district of the State. The Pragatisheel Bhojpur Samaj has often demanded even a larger Bhojpur, comprising 25 districts of eastern U.P. and neighboring Bihar with Varanasi as its capital, and inclusion of Bhojpuri language in the eighth schedule of the constitution (pioneer, April 16, 1997). A consequent demand for the separation of the more prosperous western district of U.P. which has been the bastion of the green revolution and has variously been named as Pashcim Pradesh or more



recently as Harith Pradesh by Ajit Singh. He has in fact convened a meeting of Western Uttar Pradesh leaders on August 19 this year to forcefully put his demand for Harith Pradesh. It is interesting to recall that 97 out of the 100 MLAs from this region had submitted a memorandum to the SRC in the early 1950s demanding the separation of these western districts, but demand was turned down (perhaps rightly so) allegedly on account of lack of public sentiment on this matter.

In the case of the non-Hindi regions are even more interesting where separate Statehood demands have been the strongest Ironically in those States which were once known as the linguistic States and which were actually enlarged into larger linguistic units in the aftermath of long-drawn agitations. Thus the most powerfully argued cases have been those of Telangana and Vidarbha in Andhra Pradesh and Maharashtra respectively. It may be necessary to recall that while these regions became parts of their parent States as a result of agitations from their co-linguistic groups in coastal Andhra and Mumbai, they also made representations before the SRC to demand separate States of their own. It is different that despite sympathetic recommendations in this regard their creation did not find favor with the regime of the day.

After the Congress Party dominant and reigning since independence fell and left a large political leadership gap at both the centre and local levels, the locally-based political movements gained importance. For any national party to win the center seats they should have the support of regional based political parties. Thus, when the united Front, the BJP and the congress all lost their leadership position in New Delhi, it was due to the pulling out of a State political parties that no longer wanted to support the party in power. Indian politics is defined by alliances and parties that no longer wanted to support the left party. Regional political parties have emerged as truer representatives of the aspirations of a wider group of people who is to argue that the TDP is not an alternative to the Congress or BJP for the people of Andhra Pradesh, or the Assam Ghana Parishad in Assam? (India Today 30 April, 1997). Thus, the need to understand the State in separation from the center is pivotal. It no longer is the case of the center being above and isolated regional levels, now the State levels directly affect the political outcome at the center.

In recent period India's democracy has shown an increase in primordial group activity based on caste, religion and identity. These groups struggle to form

political majorities that can advance their interests through access to centre rule. The potentialities of social identities inspired party formation that hoped to mobilize on these constructs. The lexicon of India's current political parties is evidence to this parties mobilized around religion nationalism (the BJP), caste and tribe (the Lok Dal), caste alone (the Bahujan Samaj Party), tribe (the Jharkhand MuktiMorcha), religious separatism (the Akali Dal), cultural identity (the Tamil Dravidian parties and nativism (the Shivasena). Overall, the number of political parties has multiplied since 1989 when elections centered on a single party ticket (Sanghavi and Thakkar 2000:514). Recent election shows that coalition government win elections, not single party tickets. In 1998 an 18 party coalition formed the winning national ticket and the 1999 BJP led National Democratic Alliance (NDA) consists of twenty four parties.

### **Phase I Formation of States on Linguistic Lines**

Language is one of the most important factors contributing to the diversity of India. According to the census of 2001, as many as 29 languages are spoken by more than one billion people in the country. Yet, more or less, the group of people speaking same language has historically tended to congregate together in an identifiable of geographic areas on linguistic lines. Since historic times, hinterlands of minority groups speaking different language than that of majority group have been found. For example, a large number of Marathi speaking people have settled in Indore and Gwalior, which are otherwise predominantly inhabited by Hindi speaking population. Despite these small aberrations, Language continued to be a common linking factor of the people in same geographic region. As a result, the language of the majority of people of the geographic region was accepted to be the language of commerce, trade, education and all the transaction. Rich literature in these regional languages flourished over the years. Naturally language emerged as a common thread binding people together. The common bonding fostered by common language was so strong that at times it transcended other strong forms of identity such as religious lines met with stiff resistance from Indians.

### **Phase-II Formation of Smaller States**

As the Linguistic States were formed, it was



expected that the unification of geographic region under one State with the majority people speaking the same language would pave the way for uniform and rapid development of the States. However the expectation of uniform development could not be fulfilled in some cases. As a result, demands for creation of new States started being made with greater fervor.

### Characteristics for Demand for Small States

The region where demand for a separate State was being made had a distinct culture of its own and it was further and beyond the language of the State. As a result, the region needed a separate State of its own in order to safeguard its distinct culture. The region where demand for a separate State was being made was more backward than rest of the State and the rulers of the State failed to provide proper attention to the development of the region. As a result, the region needed a separate State in order to further its own development. The region where demand for a separate State was being made was more developed than the rest of the State. As a result, higher revenue from the region was being spent on other parts of the State, thereby denying the region the right share of its development. Consequently, demand was made that the region needed a State of its own in order to further its own development.

The demographic characteristic of the region where the demand for new State was being made was different from the rest of the State. As a result, the policy of caste-based reservations of the parent State had undesirable effect on the region. Consequently demand was realized that the region needs a State of its own. Often two or more of these characteristic overlapped in the demand of the new State. For example, both Chhattisgarh and Jharkhand had predominantly tribe population with distinct culture. Their distinct culture was perceived as not being safeguarded in the parent States of Madhya Pradesh and Bihar respectively. Moreover, both these regions were underdeveloped in their parent States and the regions were rich in minerals and it was perceived that the rulers of their parent States were negligent the development of the region. Further, apart from the issue of development, the issue of different demographic composition of Uttarakhand was also important in the demand for the Statehood to the region. Unlike the parent State of Uttar Pradesh, the region of Uttarakhand had a majority of upper castes. Therefore, it was perceived that the

caste-based policies of the State of Uttar Pradesh were detrimental to the region. Apart from these successful demands for the creation of new States; other demands have been raised, as follows.

*Vidarbha:* The demand for Statehood for the Vidarbha, region of Maharashtra, has been raised mainly on the issue of underdevelopment of the region.

*Gorkhaland:* The demand for Statehood for the Gorkhaland region of westBengal has been raise mainly on the issue of distinct hill culture of the region, which is different from rest of the State.

*Bodoland:* The demand for the Statehood for the Bodoland region of Assam has been raised mainly on the issue distinct tribal culture of the region, which is different from rest of the State.

Apart from these, large scale reorganization is also likely to give impetus to demand from the other remaining regions which include creation of Harit Pradesh, Purvanchal and Bundelkhand in Uttar Pradesh, south Tamilnadu in the State of Tamil Nadu and Kutch in Gujart have also been raised, though not as vociferously as the four mentioned above. It may be noted that demands for creation of new State of Bundelkhand by combining the districts of Jhansi, Mahoba, Banda, Hamipur and Chitrakut from Uttar Pradesh and the districts of Datia, Tikamgarh, Damoh, Chhatarpur and sagar from Madhya Pradesh has also been raised. Smaller region like Coorg (or Kodagu) in Karnataka. With the demand of Telangana getting accepted, it can be expected that the demand for the creation of different States will be raised more stridently. As a result, the central administration is likely to set up a second State reorganization commission.

### Ambedkar Views on Smaller States

As mentioned earlier, the demands for new States such as Jharkhand had been raised since pre-independence period, these demands were relegated to secondary position till the reorganization of States on linguistic lines was first completed. However once the demand of linguistic State was fulfilled that these demands came to the fore. Summing up, two kinds of reasoning underlie the standpoint of the Dalit communities. Some have favored smaller States, citing the view point of Ambedkar that "minorities" among whom he counted the SCs/STs and minorities would be better off in smaller States as they could make their voice heard and have better access to political power and governance.<sup>23</sup>

Taking this logic forward, groups like the Andhra demanding Telangana State arguing that splitting of the State would break the domination of Upper castes and provide opportunities for the SC, ST and OBC communities in both the States. That Dalits and other disadvantages groups would gain in smaller States was a view point articulated by some Dalit groups or representatives in the other two parts as well. The movement for Statehood is liable to lose legitimacy once politicians hijack the movements for their selfish desires. The demagogues, through their wit and propaganda, can create an impression of mass support for carving the new State. However, the support for new State might not exist in reality to the extent being portrayed. Even worse is the hijacking of the demand for new States by unsocial elements that turn otherwise seemingly legitimate movement violent. Subash Ghising launched a movement, Gorkha National Liberation Front (GNLF) for the creation of new State of Gorkhaland in West Bengal. During the initial days, this movement was violent. However, he signed an agreement with the State and union governments for the demand however even after the creation of the hill council, the movement could not be kept entirely free from violence.

### Effectiveness of New State

One argument in favor of small States is that the administration of small States is easier and the State government can demonstrate better control over the State than the government in a large country, thereby ensuring more rapid development of the nation. Arguments have been made both in favour and against this view. In India by 2010, the States of Gujarat, Maharashtra, Karnataka, Haryana and Punjab were far ahead of other States in terms of economic indicators. However how much of this progress is attributed to pro-development leaders and how much of the progress is due to the size of the State assembly are more prone to political instability. This might hinder the development of the State. Changing of sides by a handful legislators can potentially force change of government and hence cause instability in the State.

The State of Goa and to some extent Jharkhand bears testimony to that. Of course the State of Sikkim (where P.K Chamling has been the Chief Minister since 1994) and Arunchal Pradesh (where Geong Apang had been the Chief Minister for about 16 years) are notable exceptions.

The result of coalition governments in India is that political leaders are more apt to attend to local constituency demands in order to gain political support. Coalition politics, in which several political parties must combine in order to form a majority government; State politicians have had an increasing role in formatting the regional as well as national agenda of the country. During the early years of the Congress party dominance, Jawaharlal Nehru, Rajeev Gandhi and Indira Gandhi were all seen as leaders that had more of a national presence than one where their local constituencies carried them to the national platform. They were leaders whose names were synonymous with India. Today, though, with the decline in importance of national issues, the need for a leader to identify her/himself with the image of India has dissipated. No longer do charisma and image have importance, but instead how a leader can relate to local constituencies is primary.

However coalition governments and leadership style cannot successfully meet regional autonomy demands unless the institutionalization process is itself accommodating. Leadership along with the institutional accommodation increases the likelihood of regional autonomy demands being met. To the extent that leaders are willing to devolve power, there must be a political structure in place that accommodates regional demands. Following Atul Kohli's (1998) definition of institutionalization, as central State authority, a leader can only successfully appeal to separate movements if there is room for accommodation within the central authority. "The degrees of institutionalization of the central State influences the degree to which State authorities can 'impose' their preferred vision of the political order on the societies they govern".

### Why such demands arise?

1. Lack of participation in mainstream politics and decision making from a particular region.
2. Distinct cultural identity based on language, tribe etc in a particular pocket of the State.
3. Stance from the power centre in the State leading to problem of administrative inefficiency and sense of alienation among the people.
4. Vote bank politics.
5. Economic backwardness, deprivations and discriminations.

### Advantages of small States

1. It will increase administrative efficiency leading to proper utilization of resources.
2. Small States are more effective for fiscal management.
3. The popular demands, needs and problems of region may be addressed efficiently
4. There shall be greater competition among States for more development.
5. It will not add to the burden of administrative expense, which could be utilized for development work.
6. Development will take place and regional disparities will become narrow.
7. First, the change mode of electoral representation has led to assertiveness of the hitherto politically dormant region. The political articulation and mobilization along caste/ethnic/language-based social cleavages undertaken by these newly emergent State/region level parties remain territorially contained and freely cross the regional lines.
8. Growing regional inequalities in terms of income and consumption in the post reforms period have accentuated the perception of neglect and discrimination. Coastal Region/developed regions have invariably benefited more from the flow of private investment as compared to the regions at peripheral location.

### Conclusion

Larger States also pose several challenges. Notwithstanding the fact that the UPA has been reduced to a minority, they are surviving just on the support of two mutually antagonistic parties from a single State. Thus, with their brute Parliamentary strength, large States can determine not only the fate of Governments at the Centre but also influence policies. Smaller States including those in the North East are victims of neglect to a great extent due to their poor presence in the Parliament. Even the bitterest opponent of the Central Government in small States like Chhattisgarh or Goa would not think of daring the Centre to withdraw all its civil servants from their State, as has been done by the Government in Uttar Pradesh. Smaller States created by the NDA Government including Chhattisgarh

and Uttarakhand have done comparatively well in contrast to their situation as part of Madhya Pradesh and UP respectively. The smaller the States, the lesser would be their monopolistic or hegemonistic tendencies and political clout as is the case with larger States. Moreover, all States would be equal partners in progress.

Both small and large States have their advantages and disadvantages. Therefore, the demand for Statehood has to be studied on a case to case basis. Certain parameters such as developmental yardstick, aspirations of the local population, economic and administrative viability and convenience and other aspects that have to be factored into before taking up an issue. Political gains, as is apparent from the UPA decision on Telangana, should not be the guiding factor in such critical decisions. As the linguistic States were formed, it was expected that the unification of geographic region under one State with majority people speaking the same language would pave the way for uniform and rapid development of the States. However the expectation of uniform development could not be fulfilled in some cases. As a result, demands for creation of new States started being made with greater fervor. These demands of smaller States in general have the following characteristics: The region, where demand for a separate State was being made had a distinct culture of its own and it was further and beyond the language of the State. As a result, the region needed a separate State of its own in order to safeguard its distinct culture.

The region where demand for a separate State was being made was more backward than the rest of the State and the rulers of the State failed to provide proper attention to the development of the region. As a result, the region needed a separate State in order to further strengthen its own development. As a result, higher revenue from the region was being spent on other parts of the State, thereby denying the region the right share of its development. Consequently, demand was made that the region needed a State of its own in order to further its own development. The demographic characteristic of the region where the demand for new State was being made was different from the rest of the State. As a result, the policy of caste-based reservations of the parent State had undesirable effect on the region. Consequently demand was made that the region needed a State of its own. In any case, more States cannot replace decentralization and devolution of powers to the grassroots as the ultimate guarantor of good

governance. Moreover, irrespective of the size of the States, the need of the hour is undoubtedly a stronger Centre in the wake of threats to national unity and security from internal insurgents and external enemies. It has to be ensured that demands for smaller States do not dilute the powers of the Centre, which would be detrimental to national interests.

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