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MATERIAL**



MA POLITICAL SCIENCE

MPS 202- STATE POLITICS IN INDIA

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UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY MEGHALAYA

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MPS 202- STATE POLITICS IN INDIA

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OPEN AND DISTANCE LEARNING CENTRE

**UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY
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MASTER OF POLITICAL SCIENCE: I SEMESTER

MPS-202: STATE POLITICS IN INDIA

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CHAPTER-1

State Politics: Meaning, Nature & Scope

The study of 'State Politics' as a distinct academic field emerged in India in 1960s. There are many reasons for this, one obviously being the moment from single party dominant polity to the plural multi-party system. From late 1960s onwards many splinter groups of Congress Party started gaining their own identity and foothold in various states of India. The reorganization of India into various linguistic states also significantly contributed to this process. During the 1970s the newly emerged forces gained further momentum and seriously challenged the authority of the Congress not only at the Centre but also in many states. By 1980s this led to the raise of many regional parties in various states of India, from Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh in down South to Punjab and Jammu and Kashmir in up North. This changing composition of political landscape in India obviously demanded serious attention from the scholars of various disciplines more so of Political Scientists. Hence, many Political Scientists started studying state politics while focusing on historical identity of the state, its political status before independence, its role in the freedom struggle, the impact of integration of princely states or of linguistic reorganization, geographical location, infrastructure manifesting itself in social pluralism, religious, regional and caste dynamics, the level and pattern of economic development, human resources, the level of education and urbanization, etc.

To understand the dynamics of State Politics in India, many scholars attempted to develop theoretical frameworks through which the realities at the ground level can be captured. Some of the important scholars who have provided conceptual tools to understand contemporary politics in India and its states are Myron Weiner, Iqbal Narain, Rudolph, Paul Brass, Rajni Kothari, etc. These scholars are analysed political process using various theoretical frameworks such as Democratic Theory, Political Development, Marxism, Post-Marxism and Post-Colonialism, etc.

Myron Weiner organized two seminars in USA, one at University of Chicago in 1961 and other at Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) in 1964. Myron Weiner published the proceedings of the MIT conference as a book, *State Politics in India* (1968), the first one on state politics. This was followed by Iqbal Narain's edited book with the same title in 1976 in which an article on state politics of Jammu and Kashmir also appeared for the first time. These two books signalled emergence of State Politics as a distinct academic field. In this introductory lesson we will study these developments in the field of state politics in detail and their importance in familiarizing us with diverse patterns and complexities of Indian polity.

State Politics assumes an important dimension in any federal system where states operate as units of the nation, though not as independent and truly autonomous political entities. The creation of a federal structure implies the existence of territorial, cultural, linguistic, religious and socio-economic differences among the people of a nation, which make the states, differ greatly in the degree to which they fit this pattern. In the organization and spirit of their politics the states vary markedly. It is true that the impact of national policies and parties powerfully influence the form and behavior of state systems. But it is equally true that this impact strikes different states differently, contributing to the oddities and variations in organization and spirit of state politics. State politics, thus, provides an arena for basic and exclusive study and research.

However, the pre-eminent structure in India, characterized by a distinct bias in favour of the Centre of Union seems to remain a pertinent factor for why the Indian states failed to attract scholarly attention for a long time. But more than the uniformity in the constitutional structures and the unitarized federal set-up, a considerable disinterestedness displayed in the study of State politics may be attributed to a variety of other important reasons. It is argued quite often that states as political systems are artificial categories for analysis. Unlike various other segments of the policy, they are not "natural" functional entities. It is not without a cause that international scholarly attention, with quite a few exceptions, has been directed only to the national systems of new states and not to the subordinate units.

There are many other reasons which are responsible for late arrival of State Politics as a distinct

and autonomous field to analyse the political process in Indian states. The following section will pay attention to explain these reasons:

First, the nature of political choice now varies from state to state. We have moved a long way from the old Congress vs. Opposition scenario that was replicated all over the country. Nor have we entered a multi-party system in all the states. At the state level we can find all kinds of contests: bipolar, triangular, four cornered or even more fragmented.

Second, 'regional parties' or state-wide parties, have become more salient than ever before. The regional parties are now playing a larger role in the functioning of national politics. Though the BJP has massive mandate in the Lok Sabha, however, it has to negotiate and use all its political skills to gain support from the regional parties to get Bills passed in the Rajya Sabha. The state units of national parties too are more independent, at least in terms of the issues, strategies and styles, if not leadership, than used to be the case.

Third, governmental outcomes have become more variegated at the state level. Citizens' access to various goods and services varies across the country, within each state, district and town and even village. But the most significant variation now is the one among different states, which is a function of how everyday politics, including social movements and political struggles, relates to the governmental apparatus.

Fourth, state level politics is freer of the control of national politics and is often in a position to dictate terms to national politics. This happens in the most visible manner when state-wide parties determine the agenda of national politics or enjoy an upper hand in their bargain with national parties.

Fifth, a long-term process of differentiation of political community has ensured that the citizens' identity has crystallized around states. The reorganization of states along linguistic lines had set off this process. But a political community by that time had not emerged along the boundaries of states. The recent era in the evolution of democratic politics has witnessed the emergence of states as the markers of political identity. Each state has developed a distinctive political culture, its own vocabulary of politics. Some of the long-term political trends and patterns have also differentiated along state lines.

The 1989 Lok Sabha election, in particular, greatly accelerated the federalization process throughout the country, when a multiparty system with federal coalition / minority governments was ushered in at the national level. In the new party system regional parties have gained considerable power at the cost of national parties that have been diminished, fragmented, or have been unable to grow beyond a certain threshold of power. Led by one of the national parties like the Janata Dal, Bharatiya Janata Party, or Indian National Congress, federal coalition governments have been particularly vulnerable to the making and breaking power of the regional parties. Whereas regional parties accounted for 8.10 percent of votes and 6.95 percent of parliamentary seats in the popularly elected house before the 1952 general election, their corresponding shares have gone up respectively to 14.39 percent and 27.97 percent in 2009 general election.

DIVERGENT THEORITICAL PERSPECTIVES

The development of State Politics as an autonomous space to study political processes also, simultaneously, led to the many scholars opting for a variety of theoretical perspective to analyse developments in India's states. Though most of the scholars opted the dominant theoretical approach, democratic / political development, to analyse the political process, however, others are used the lenses of Marxism, Post-colonialism, etc. as an analytical tools to document political process.

DEMOCRATIC / POLITICAL DEVELOPMENT / SYSTEMS / MODERNIZATION THEORIES

Most of the scholars worked on state politics in India, more or less, broadly analysed the political processes from the dominant theoretical paradigm Modernization of Political Development. Developed in American Universities by scholars like Lucian Pye, Almond and Powell, Samuel Huntington, the political development or Systems approach focuses a set of categories, viz. political culture, political socialization, political mobilization, political development to analyse the political progression in "Traditional" vs "Modernist" paradigm. The scholarly works of Myron Weiner, Iqbal Narain, Rajni Kothari, Rudolfs, Atul Kohli, etc. are mostly fall under this broader category.

MYRON WEINER: ELITE VS MASS CULTURES

Myron Weiner was Ford International Professor of Political Science at MIT and a specialist in the fields of political development, political demography, migration, ethnic conflict, and child labour. He was one of the early thinkers on the problems of democracy in newly independent states. His award-winning book, *Party Building in a New Nation*, detailed how the Congress Party operated in five districts to ensure popular participation and to accommodate local interests and thereby reduce social tensions in the whole country. He

was deeply involved in the comparative study of electoral behavior in developing countries. As much as he valued democracy, he also clearly saw that modernization, rather than eroding ethnic and religious identities, could strengthen such loyalties and thus intensify internal conflicts. He documented the problems of ethnic conflict in *Sons of the Soil*.

In 1963, Myron Weiner published an article that regarded as one of his most important short pieces on Indian politics. In that article, he posited the existence in India of what he called two 'political cultures', one that manifested itself in the districts and localities, 'both urban and rural', and the other that inhabited the national capital, whose denizens occupied the Indian Civil Service, the Planning Commission, and the leading body in the governing party, the Working Committee of the Indian National Congress. Weiner clearly thought carefully when he chose names for these two cultures. He rejected the idea that one was a modern culture, the other traditional because, as he said, "there are aspects of both modernity and traditionalism penetrating both views". He chose instead the terms, 'elite' political culture and 'mass' political culture. The former was elite not only or even primarily in social background, but in its outlook which, despite Weiner's recognition that it contained traditional components, was modernistic and rationalistic.

The mass political culture reflected the social organisation and attitudes of the bulk of the country's population; local politicians who inhabited this culture understood and knew how to operate within the categories of caste, tribe, ethnicity, and local and regional languages. The elite culture operated largely in English, had a vision for the country as a whole, and was attuned as much to the outside, western world as to Indian society. Weiner thought it inevitable that the two cultures would clash as they expanded in opposite directions towards each other. He thought there was a danger to be feared from such a clash, which might arise especially from the conflict between the 'utopian' elements in the elite modernising vision and the orientation of politicians in the mass political culture towards their caste, kin

and ethnic groups and the demands for 'patronage and power' that emanated from them and their clients.

According to Weiner both cultures were also expanding: the elite culture was radiating out from its political centre in New Delhi, while the mass culture was expanding from the localities up to "the state legislative assemblies, state governments and state administrations". This resulted in the emergence of state as an important factor in the political arithmetic of Indian politics.

Recognising this reality, he organised two conferences on state politics and brought out a book out of it. He prepared a framework for the authors to analyse the political process within the state. The essays in his book compare and analyse the political processes of eight of the seventeen states. The contributors have attempted to treat the various states within a common framework, illuminating the changing patterns of political participation in India, the problem of integration within the states, the many state party systems that they have developed, and the performance of the state governments. Myron Weiner's approach treats each state as a constituent unit within a larger system, but nonetheless also as a separate political system. Thus, he says that the states can be studied "as constituent units of a larger system, and the units themselves are large enough to be studied as a total system". In fact, he tries to describe and analyse "the political process in a single state" and relates that process to (a) the socio-economic environment in which politics occurs, and (b) the performance of the Government.

Myron Weiner's framework, thus, reflects distinct biases towards the 'systems approach', but with an explicit difference. He has built Systems approach "with a difference in so far as it insists on its application with a development and hence, essentially dynamic perspective." While developing the framework, he delineates the conceptual image with five determinants: institutional, physiological levels of politics, socio-economic and political, and the elite structure. He then proceeds to construct a three-dimensional framework consisting of the contextual, structural and operational. In the contextual dimension, he includes following components: 1) history of a state; 2) the geographical locale; 3) infrastructure manifesting itself in social pluralism; 4) the level and pattern of economic development; 5) human resources; 6) the level of education; and 7) urbanisation. The structural dimension, according to Myron Weiner,

consists of formal constitutional structure (Governor, Chief Minister, Legislature, political institutions and political parties, pressure groups, administration framework, etc.). However, Weiner limits the third category of operational dynamics to the role orientation of the actors, political behaviour and functional dimension, etc.

IQBAL NARAIN: THREE DIMENSIONAL FRAMEWORK

An analytic framework evolved by an indigenous political scientist like Iqbal Narain for the study of state politics in India, though draws heavily upon “systemic approach”, is added by quite a few relevant dimensions. He has built it “with a difference in so far as it insists on its application with a development and hence, essentially dynamic perspective”.

He organised seminar in Rajasthan and invited scholars from most of the states in India to present a study on their respective states. As already pointed out, the State of Jammu and Kashmir also covered in this project and a first academic study on State Politics of Jammu and Kashmir was undertaken. He developed a framework and asked the participant to present papers on their respective state politics following the same framework. While developing the framework, Iqbal Narain delineated the conceptual image which consists of no less than five determinants: institutional, physiological levels of politics, socio-economic and political, and the elite structure. He then proceeds to construct a three-dimensional structure.

It includes following components : (1) history of a state: historical identity of the state, its political status before independence, its role in the freedom- struggle, and the impact of integration of princely states or of linguistic re-organisation; (ii) the geographical locale; (iii) infrastructure manifesting itself in social pluralism, (iv) the level and pattern of economic development; (v) human resources; (vi) the level of education; and (vii) urbanisation.

Though the analytical framework propounded by Iqbal Narain for the study of state politics in India draws heavily upon systematic approach, it is added by quite a few relevant dimensions. The analytic framework informing Iqbal Narain’s collection of papers view the political system of a state in India as a point of confluence of national, state and local politics, as a system of inter-connection and interactions between the governing-elite structure on the one hand and political institutions, process and policies on the other. State politics emergences in Iqbal Narian’s book,

basically as a case of linkage politics and its future are also the prospects of democratic polity in the country, as a whole, would depend on a movement away from politics of self-preservation of the elites to a politics of welfare of the masses; from a politics of drift to a politics of purposiveness; from politics of status quo to politics of socio-economic change; and above all, from politics of promise to politics of performance.

For Narain, the conceptual framework can be conjured up in terms of the nature of state politics which, in turn, leads to a discussion of its determinants. The most important determinants of state politics in India are: institutional, physiological levels of politics, socio-economic, political and the elite structure. He then proceeds to construct a three dimensional framework consisting of the contextual, structural and operational dimensions.

In contextual dimensions, he includes the components such as History of state, historical identity of the state, its political status before independence, its role in the freedom struggle, the impact of the integration of princely states or of linguistic reorganization, the geographical locale, infrastructure manifesting itself in social pluralism, the level and patterns of economic development, human resources and the level of education.

The structural dimension, according to him consists of the formal and constitutional structure like office of the Governor, Office of the Chief Ministers the ministry and the legislature, political institutions, parties and pressure groups and elections and administrative framework.

In the operational dimensions, Narain limits himself to the role orientation of the actors in the drama of state politics. He also discusses the behavioural aspect and functional aspect in the context of state politics.

RAJNI KOTHARI: CONGRESS AS A SYSTEM

The most influential account of the Indian politics from 'system' perspective was produced by Rajni Kothari in his *Politics in India* (1970). His theoretical tools were largely structural-functional. He identified the 'dynamic core' of the system of political institutions in India in the Congress Party.

The whole system worked through the dominance of the Congress. It was a

differentiated system, functioning along the organizational structure of the party but connecting at each level with the parallel structure of government, allowing for the dominance of a political centre as well as dissent from the peripheries, With opposition parties functioning as continuations of dissident Congress groups, the emphasis being on coalition-building and consensus-making at each level and on securing the legitimacy of the system as a whole. Through an accommodative system such as this, the political centre consisting of a modernizing elite was shown to be using the powers of the state to transform society and promote economic development. Kothari gave it the simple name 'Congress system'.

Kothari's framework was criticized at the time from different perspectives - for overvaluing the consensual character of the system, for overestimating the autonomy of the elite, for taking far too gradualist a view of social and political change, and so on: But its usefulness was overtaken by the events of the 1970s. The rise of militant oppositional movements and the increasing use of the repressive apparatus of the state, culminating in the Emergency, were clearly phenomena that went beyond the consensual model of the Congress system. From the 1980s, Kothari himself developed entirely different frameworks for presenting empirical as well as normative accounts of Indian politics.

However, Rajni Kothari in his later writings has attempted to develop a normative framework that serves less as an explanation and more as a critique of the present political system. He notes that unlike in the early decades after Independence, the national political elite has lost its autonomy and the state has ceased to be an agent of social change and has instead become more and more repressive. His argument is that there is a need now to assert, through grassroots movements and non-party political formations, the autonomous force of civil society over a repressive and increasingly unrepresentative state.

RUDOLFS: DEPENDENT CAPITAL AND FRAGMENTED LABOUR

In 1987, in their book, *In Pursuit of Lakshmi*, the Rudolphs examined more closely the internal functioning of organised groups or, put another way, groups in the organised sectors of the economy, particularly organised labour and organised capital and minimised their potential threat to the processes of modernisation, public order, and

economic development. They argued to the contrary that the trade unions were so divided, 'fragmented'. and competitive with each other that they lacked the ability to have a major impact on 'national policy'. On the other side, 'organised capital', operating in a restricted, but protected economic environment, was largely dependent upon government and could not and, in fact, did not oppose the thrust of the economic development strategy of import substitution.

Thus, both organized labour and organized capital, in the Rudolph's' understanding, emerged as the weaker parties in a triangular relationship with the Indian state, which had the capacity to prevail over these and other organized interests not only because the state was the strongest party, but also because it had "won wide acceptance for its claim that it has a special responsibility for nation building and economic development," in other words, that it had legitimacy that overrode the interests of organized groups such as labour and capital. In short, the Rudolphs, while coining the term 'weak-strong' for the Indian state, took the view that the state was strong enough to prevail against such interests.

MARXIST PERSPECTIVE

The Marxist approach to understand any society and changes therein, distinguish itself by emphasizing the need to initiate any investigation of social phenomenon in the context of the basic activity carried on by human beings viz. production through instruments of production, to extract and fabricate products from the nature to essential for the survival and persistence of human species. Marxist approach considers property relations as crucial because they shape the purpose, nature, control, direction, and objectives underlying the production. Further, property relations determine the norms about who shall get how much and on what grounds.

Thus, Marxist approach to understand post-independent Indian society will focus on the specific type of property relations which existed on the eve of independence and which are being elaborating legal-normative notions as well in terms of working out actual policies pursued for development and transformation of Indian society into a prosperous, developed one. The Marxist approach adopting the criteria of taking property relations to define the nature of society

will help in understanding the type of society, the class character of the state and the specificity of the path of development with all the implications.

Accordingly, Marxists argue that contrary to the spirit of the Indian Constitution that guarantees social, economic, political equality, India has remained poor with extreme inequalities. The inequalities of wealth and income distribution are increasing day after day. In the context of the caste system inequalities have assumed sharper, more anguished forms. Concentration of assets, resources and income is growing at a very rapid rate even among the capitalist groups. Unemployment has increased at a very rapid rate. In the context of market and money economy, such a dimension of unemployment reveals an alarming growth of inequality and misery. Educational opportunities are so created as to be accessible to those who have resources to buy them. This tends to accentuate social inequality in the country.

Many Marxists, in their studies, contend that the State, with the growing discontent and assertion of the masses is increasingly retrenching its welfare functions, expanding its repressive functions and is resorting to measures which curb the civil liberties and democratic rights at an accelerated tempo. In this way, the Marxist scholars argue, Marxism has an immense capability in enabling us to understand social, economic and political developments in a given society by exclusively focusing on property relation, place of capital and labour in these relations and the role of the State in shaping these relations. Similarly, the Marxist approach will help to understand the dynamics of rural, urban, educational and other developments, better as it will assist the exploration of these phenomena in the larger context of the social framework which is being created by the State shaping the development on capitalist path of development.

SUBALTERN STUDIES

Subaltern studies began as an intervention in the historiography of modern India in the early 1980s. There were then, on the one side, historians, mainly located in Britain and the United States, who wrote the history of nationalism as the attempt by Indian elites to mobilize popular support on the basis of traditional patron-client relations in order to compete for political power in a situation where Britain was preparing to decolonize. Methodologically, it was a mix of Weberian modernization theory with a large dose of English-style Namierite

analysis. On the other side, there were nationalist historians in India, many of whom were influenced by Marxism, who saw Indian nationalism as an anti-colonial movement led by the bourgeoisie but with a strong popular base mobilized by the leaders of the Congress. Subaltern studies intervened in this debate to point out that both sides were in fact claiming that nationalist history was entirely an elitist project, since neither side had any place for the autonomous actions of the subaltern classes. The first phase of subaltern studies began with a series of studies of peasant revolts in nineteenth- and twentieth-century India. The idea was that whereas under ordinary circumstances the subaltern classes were dominated by and dependent upon their masters, it was at the moment of rebellion that they were able to display their autonomous consciousness.

The word 'subaltern' in Gramsci's sense has gained worldwide currency in historical scholarship. In India, the word in its various synonyms in the Indian languages has entered the ordinary language of politics and journalism. The distinct approach and the debates it spawned have shaped the course of modern South Asian social science in significant ways in the last three decades. Many inquiries that were begun in subaltern studies, such as the use of ethnographic methods in historical scholarship, or the study of non-canonical vernacular printed material as sources of political and cultural history, or the political aspects of popular religion have now become major areas of research in themselves and acquired theoretical shapes that extend far beyond the original project of subaltern studies. Some of the questions raised by subaltern studies were fruitfully answered within the thirty-year project. Many others could not be answered within the limits of that project: they are now being addressed by other scholars working with other projects.

STATE POLITICS IN CONTEMPORARY INDIA

Yogendra Yadav and Suhas Pulshekhar, in their well-documented essay published in *Seminar* attempted to capture the nuances of state politics in contemporary India. According to them, the rise of state politics as an autonomous domain invites and requires theoretical attention by students of comparative politics. According to them, "the state politics in India has broken free of the logic of national politics and has acquired a rhythm and

logic of its own". This manifests itself in many ways related to one another. Yogendra Yadav and Suhas Pulshekar advanced ten "Theses" to conceptualise present day state politics in India, as stated below.

1. The political legacy of movements and ideologies at the state level has proved more enduring than that of institutions and organizations.
2. The emergence of states as real and imagined political communities has intensified political regionalism without weakening the ties with the larger, national unit or suppressing the emergence of sub-regional communities.
3. The greater political clout of the states and their unwillingness to share power with their sub-units has blunted the democratizing impulse of institutional reforms and accentuated inequalities across states instead of reducing differences in access to power.
4. The spread of a distinctive culture of democracy has given a regional flavour to political practice without ensuring a democratic culture, as emancipatory ideas confront majoritarianism and the populist tendency faces pragmatism.
5. Higher and more intense political participation at the state level has widened the base of democracy and sustained its legitimacy without enriching the quality of democratic outcomes.
6. Political regimes at the state level acquire their anchorage as well as bondage from the rise of dominant castes to power, which represents as well as halts the transfer of power to lower social orders.
7. As state politics gains greater autonomy vis-à-vis national politics and the central government, its capacity to resist corporate and other organized interests appears severely eroded, often producing regimes that act as the agents of dominant classes.
8. A system of competitive convergence has meant that the opening up of the format of party competition has not led to greater and more meaningful political choices for the citizen.

9. Struggles and movements seek to rupture the convergence of the political establishment but their non-political character limits their capacity to affect the political agenda.
10. A rise in the politics of coercion and state response to it leads to a spiral of shrinking space for democratic politics.

By advancing above these or trends, Yogendra Yadav and Suhas Pulshekar believe that these trends more or less stay for a long time. They also believe that some consequences of the rise of states as an autonomous platform of politics are clearly good with the potential of steering democracy towards further expansion. Not only is the possibility of greater autonomy for the states in itself a welcome feature, it has also led to a differential party system that reflects the social context more clearly than was the case earlier. A new set of elites has been able to enter politics through the rise of regional parties, and gates have been opened up for higher participation in politics by more diverse sections than before.

However, it may be too early to celebrate this development without keeping in mind the contradictions that are emerging in recent political developments. The BJP under Narendra Modi has defied some of the trends mentioned above by emerging as the most powerful party in contemporary Indian politics by almost penetrating into every state in India. Not only that, it has gained massive mandate on its own in the parliament and formed the government without depending on any of the regional parties for majority, though it has accommodated its NDA allies in the Council of Ministers. Yet, the fact that most of its rivals in various states are still the regional parties point to the influence of strong federal and regional tendencies in Indian politics. Though it has gained massive mandate at national level, but losing most of the state assembly elections also point to the weakness of the overarching strong political force in India. Hence, the trend of autonomy of State Politics will be a reality in Indian politics in the near future.

Linguistic States and Reorganization of States in India

The States Reorganisation Act, 1956 reformed the boundaries of Indian states and territories, systematizing them on language base. The newly drafted Constitution of India, which came into force on 26 January 1950, distinguished states into four main types.

States – Classification into 4 Types

Four main types of states are:

- Part A states
- Part B states
- Part C States
- Part D states

Part A States

- The former governors' provinces of British India
- These states were ruled by an elected governor and state legislature.
- Part A states were Bombay, Madras, Assam, Bihar, Madhya Pradesh (earlier Central Provinces and Berar), Punjab (earlier East Punjab), Uttar Pradesh (earlier the United Provinces), Orissa, and West Bengal.

Part B States

- These were former princely states or groups of princely states
- These states were governed by a Rajpramukh
- Rajpramukh is the ruler of a constituent state and an elected legislature.
- He was appointed by the President of India.
- Part B states were Patiala and East Punjab States Union (PEPSU), Hyderabad, Jammu and Kashmir, Travancore-Cochin, Madhya Bharat, Mysore, Rajasthan, and Saurashtra.

Part C States

- It comprised both the former chief commissioners' provinces and some princely states,
- These states were governed by a chief commissioner
- The chief commissioner was appointed by the President of India.

Part D States

- This state was administered a lieutenant governor appointed by the central government.
- Part D state consists of Andaman and Nicobar Islands only

Linguistic Province Commission

The Linguistic Provinces Commission, led by Justice S.K. Dhar, was established by the Constituent Assembly in 1948 to investigate whether linguistic provinces were desirable, particularly in the cases of Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Kerala, and Maharashtra.

At the time, the Dhar Commission advocated against it because it might jeopardize national unity and present administrative challenges.

Following this, in December 1948, the Congress formed a committee—also known as the JVP committee—with Nehru, Sardar Patel, and Pattabhi Sitaramayya to reexamine the issue.

The JVP Committee said that the timing was not right for the formation of additional provinces in its 1949 report, revoking the Congress' prior endorsement of the idea of linguistic provinces.

Language-based proposals for a separate state persisted even after this. In 1948-1949, language independence movements were once again active.

There was the Samyukta Maharashtra and Maha Gujarat movement, which worked to bring together the Kannada-speaking populations of Madras, Mysore, Bombay, and Hyderabad.

Formation of Andhra state

The Congress was urged to put into effect an earlier decision in support of linguistic states by Telugu speakers. They employed several strategies, such as petitions, speeches, street marches, and demonstrations, to further their interests.

A well-known independence fighter named Potti Sriramulu started a fast on October 19, 1952, and regrettably, he passed away on December 15, 1952, as a result of his commitment to the cause of a distinct Andhra. In Andhra, rioting, demonstrations, hartals, and violence occurred as a result of the uproar caused by his death. Violent protests against Andhra secession became known as the Vishalandhra movement. On December 19, 1952,

then-Prime Minister Nehru finally made the announcement regarding the creation of a distinct Andhra State.

Formation of State Reorganisation Committee

The effort to create further states along linguistic lines in other regions of the nation was sparked by the creation of Andhra Pradesh. Therefore, in August 1953, Nehru established the States Reorganisation Commission (SRC), which included Justice Fazl Ali, K.M. Panikkar, and Hridaynath Kunzru, to examine the entire issue of the restructuring of the states of the Union “objectively and dispassionately.” The majority of the linguistic principle was acknowledged by the committee, which also suggested redrawing state boundaries.

The State Reorganisation Committee’s suggestions were approved by the then administration. In November 1956, the States Reorganization Act was finally approved by the legislature. It provided for fourteen states and six centrally controlled areas. SRC opposed the division of Bombay & Punjab; Therefore, Maharashtra, where massive rioting occurred, was the location with the strongest response to the SRC report.

Later years

The linguistic reorganisation of India was essentially finished after more than ten years of nonstop conflict and popular efforts. But afterwards, a number of new developments emerged.

Formation of Sikkim

Sikkim was a “Protectorate” of India at the time of its independence. It indicated that it was neither a full sovereign nation nor an independent state like other states within India.

While Sikkim’s Chogyal Monarch controlled its domestic administration, India handled the country’s defence and diplomatic affairs. The residents of the state were dissatisfied with this arrangement and desired a democratic system of government. The Lepcha-

Bhutia community was a minority and made up the bulk of the state's population. Both the heads of the two communities and the Indian government offered their support to the state's citizens in this cause. The Sikkim Congress won the most votes in the 1974 assembly elections and supported closer ties to India. The Assembly initially requested "Associate State" status before passing a formal resolution of unification with India in 1975. A quick referendum that followed secured the assembly's support of its request for integration. This request was granted by the Indian Parliament, who recognised it as a state.

Liberation of Goa

In 1947, the British Empire's continuous reign came to an end. Portugal, who had held Goa, Diu, and Daman since the sixteenth century, steadfastly resisted leaving these areas. Portuguese mis-governance repressed the people of Goa and deprived them of fundamental civil rights. Additionally, forced religious conversions were practiced by the Portuguese. The Indian government initially made an effort to persuade the Portuguese to leave these areas and take into account the locals' popular uprisings. Eventually, on December 18, 1961, as part of Operation Vijay, Indian forces crossed the border into Goa, and on December 19, 1961, the Portuguese finally submitted to them. In 1987, Goa was admitted as a state to the Indian Union.

Reorganisation of States in Modern Times

Due to further demands of inhabitants of various areas, other new states were formed.

Uttarakhand

The 9th of November 2000 saw the separation of Uttar Pradesh into Uttarakhand, formerly known as Uttaranchal, which became India's 27th state. The 70-year struggle by the inhabitants of the hilly area for an independent state had finally been successful. Lack of development in a geographically distinct region 93% of the land is hilly, and 64% of the

overall area is forest and rising unemployment sparked the long-standing call for a separate state. The process began in 1930 when hill area people filed a motion by majority vote requesting an independent state of Uttarakhand. The Uttarakhand Rajya Parishad was established later in 1973 and served as a venue for the fight for statehood. In 1979, this changed became Uttaranchal Kranti Dal. Later in 1994, the then-CM Mulayam Singh Yadav established a committee to assess Uttarakhand's demands. The committee was in favour of the state's establishment. On November 9, 2000, Uttaranchal, which would later be renamed Uttarakhand, became the 27th state of the union.

Jharkhand

The aspirations for autonomy persisted in Jharkhand, the tribal region of Bihar that included Chhota Nagpur and the Santhal Pargana. Numerous significant traditional tribes, like the Santhal, HO, Oraon, and Munda, are concentrated in this area. In the late 1930s and early 1940s, a push for a separate state began as education and contemporary activity extended throughout the tribal area.

The demand for a separate state was later advanced by other tribal organisations and movements, including the Jharkhand Mukti Morcha, led by Shibu Soren. Finally after prolonged struggle for their separate state demand, the central government made Jharkhand-28th state of India on November 15th 2000.

Telangana

Telangana and Hyderabad state were combined to form the Indian Union on September 17, 1948. It is well known that the States Reorganization Commission (SRC) opposed the concept of combining Telangana with Andhra Pradesh and offered a number of protections to preserve the interests of the local population for some time.

In 1956, Telangana and Andhra were combined to become Andhra Pradesh. The Telangana Praja Samiti, led by Marri Channa Reddy, started an agitation in the area in 1969. Long periods of time passed during the conflict with no breakthrough.

Telangana finally became the 29th Indian state in 2014, putting an end to years of delays.

Conclusion

There are still unmet requests for state formation based on a variety of factors, including ethnicity, lack of development, and administrative difficulties. Demands for separate states on a variety of grounds demonstrate that there are other means of bringing people together besides language.

Constitutional Status of States in Indian Political System

The constitution of India being federal in structure divides all powers (legislative, executive and financial) between the centre and the states. However, there is no division of judicial powers as the constitution has established an integrated judicial system to enforce both the central as well as state laws. The centre-state relations can be studied under three heads:

1. Legislative Relations;
2. Administrative Relations; and
3. Financial Relations;

INDIAN FEDERALISM AND CONSTITUTIONAL POSITION OF THE STATES

The Indian political system and its Constitutional framework has been the most debated political text in the post independent period. This is due to its complex nature and character of diversities and pluralities. The Constitution ushers into the country a polity based fundamentally on two ingredients – a British type democratic system of government and federalism. The Constitution makes elaborate provisions covering many aspects of Centre-State and inter-state relationship, and in this respect it differs from the constitutions of the USA and Canada which contain only skeletal provisions to regulate inter-governmental relationship.

The one party domination of Congress in the early phase of independence to a large extent determined the evolution of federalism in India, since it was in power at both Centre as well as in states. This smoothed and facilitated the working of federalism in its formative period. It stabilized the political and administrative structure of the country, minimized tensions between various governments as allowed allegiance to one party, and helped in resolving many questions informally at party forums. But this situation has undergone a change from middle of the 1970s since non-Congress parties also gained popularity among the masses.

The founding fathers built the fabric of Indian Federalism on three pillars, viz., a strong Centre, flexibility, and co-operative federalism. Apart from the experiences of other countries suggesting a strong Centre, there were some very good indigenous reasons in India for the same. The past history of India conclusively establishes that the absence of a strong Centre leads to a disintegration of the country. Memories of one partition on the eve of independence were very fresh, and this warranted the taking of adequate precautions to ensure unity and prevent any separatist tendencies.

There was also the problem of defence looming large on the horizon due to the not so friendly attitude of Pakistan. Above all, India is an under-developed country whose socio-economic progress has been retarded for centuries. The framers of the Constitution foresaw that the country would have to force the pace of economic development so as to compress into decades the progress of centuries, and this could be done effectively by mobilizing national resources and using them properly under Central leadership. A unitary constitution could not have been adopted because

of the vastness of the country and the variety of its people and, therefore, the next best course was to have a federal structure with a strong Centre.

The approach of the fathers was thus pragmatic, keeping in view the unity and welfare of the country as the objectives to be promoted. The accent on the Centre was facilitated by two factors – the historical background of the country and the existence of one unified all India political party.

The strength of the Centre lies in its large legislative and financial powers, in its emergency powers and in its control over State Legislation in certain situations. The flexibility of federalism lies in certain expedients which can be used to mitigate the proverbial rigidity of a federal system and to increase the Centre's powers as a temporary adjustment if a situation so demands. As noted above, in other federations, the Centre has felt handicapped at times to take effective action to meet the socio-economic needs; this is sought to be avoided in India by having built-in mechanism to enable the Centre to get more powers without resorting to a formal amendment of the Constitution. Even the method of amending the Constitution is rather flexible. In its federal features, it can be amended by each house of Parliament passing a bill by a special majority and on the same being ratified by one-half of the State Legislatures and receiving the President's assent.

There is also the judiciary with powers to interpret the Constitution and thus to draw the necessary balance in accordance with the needs of the times. But, it needs to be stated that this should not lead to the impression that States are completely subservient to the Centre. They have their own powers; they do not exist at the mercy of the Centre but claim their status from the Constitution, and many conventions have been evolved making them more autonomous in practice than what they look to be in theory. Then, the political forces, recently released, have also cabined the Central initiative to some extent because it is more expedient for the Centre to carry the States along rather than always threaten to use its reserve powers. It might therefore be misleading if one were to take the ideas about the Indian Federalism merely from the constitutional text. For drawing a balanced picture, one has to search for practices and operating forces underneath the surface of the formal constitutional provision.

LEGISLATIVE RELATIONS

Articles 245 to 255 in Part XI of the Constitution deal with the legislative relations between the centre and the states. Besides these, there are some other articles dealing with the same subject. There are four aspects in the centre- state legislative relations viz.

- a) Territorial extent of central and state legislation.
- b) Distribution in the legislative subjects
- c) Parliamentary legislation in the state field and
- d) Centres control over state legislation

ADMINISTRATIVE RELATIONS

Article 256 to 263 in Part XI of the Constitution deal with the administrative relations between the centre and the states. In addition, there are various other Articles pertaining to the same matter.

FINANCIAL RELATIONS

Article 264-293 in Part XII of the Constitution deal with financial relations between the centre and the state.

VIEWS OF SARKARIA COMMISSION ON CENTRE-STATE RELATIONS

As long as there was monolithic party-system in the country and Congress party was in power, there was no real problem of centre-state relationship. It was because during this period (1950-67), there was no other political party which could provide an alternative to the Congress and every political leader looked towards this organization for his political career.

But situation practically changed in 1967, when the Fourth General Elections were held in the country. In this election, in as many as seven states, non-Congress ministries were formed. This process continued further. Regional parties like Akali Dal, AIADMK came into power. In 1977, Janata Party came into power in the centre, though for a short period of two and half years. In the nineties, one finds the system of coalition governments at the centre. In the states too, number of regional parties either with coalition or single-handedly came into power. All these factors were responsible for re-thinking of centre-state relations.

GRIEVANCES OF THE STATES

There were many grievances of the states particularly which were ruled by the party other than that of the central ruling party. To be brief, following were the main grievances of the states.

- (a) These states wanted more of autonomy, decentralization of powers in favour of the states.
- (b) These states also complained that they were not getting their due share from the national finance. Due to non-availability of funds, the states cannot undertake their developmental projects. It was further alleged that the Planning Commission allocated resources to the states not on the basis of development needs or population of a particular state, but only on political considerations.
- (c) There was also a strong grievance against the deployment of Border Security Force and para-military forces in the states.
- (d) Then another grievance of the states against the central government related to excessive control in its hands. It even tries to control such subjects which are not within its sphere.
- (e) These states complain that present day regional imbalances are because of lack of integrated approach of the central government towards developmental activities. Central sector projects are located taking party and not national interests into consideration, which result in increased regional imbalances.
- (f) There is still another grievance that the central government deliberately avoids taxation under article 299 of the Constitution whose proceeds are meant for the states and imposes excise duties on such items, which are source of income to it.

To address all these issues and grievances, demand for setting up a separate commission was gaining currency in the post-1967 period. In 1981, a meeting of the opposition parties demanded that radical changes should be brought about in centre-state relations. On March 24, 1983, the central government announced the appointment of a Commission under Justice R.S. Sarkaria, a retired judge of the Supreme Court, to review the existing arrangements between the centre and the states in the context of socio-economic developments on the one hand and keeping in view unity and integrity of the country on the other. The Commission submitted its report in 1988. The major recommendations of it have been given below.

RECOMMENDATIONS OF SARKARIA COMMISSION

- 1) It was not proper to curtail the powers of the centre as a strong centre was necessary for preserving the integrity of the country.
- 2) There was no need for making drastic changes to the Constitution as these have all along withstood stresses and strains of changes in society.
- 3) In the financial scheme, there was no need for major changes in the basic scheme as provided in the Constitution.
- 4) It favoured some amendments to provide for sharing of corporation tax and levy of consignment tax on advertisement and broadcasting.
- 5) It did not favour transfer of any subject from the central to the state or concurrent list.
- 6) It favoured deployment of central forces in consultation with the state government concerned.
- 7) No change in Articles 246 and 254 of the Constitution was recommended.
- 8) It did not favour the idea of the abolition of the office of Governor. It, however, favoured the idea that Governor should be appointed in consultation with the Chief Minister of the concerned state.
- 9) The Governor should appoint only such a person as Chief Minister who was either the leader of the majority party in the Assembly or could command a majority in the Assembly which he should be asked to prove within 30 days.
- 10) It did not favour deletion of Art. 356 of the Constitution but suggested number of steps to ensure that the power was only rarely used.
- 11) No state Assembly should be dissolved unless Parliament has approved proclamation of Emergency and that before imposition of President's rule, the possibilities of forming an alternative government should be explored.
- 12) It recommended that no Commission of Enquiry should be set up against any minister of a state government unless a demand to that effect is made by both the Houses of Parliament.
- 13) In the view of the Commission, the centre should hold consultations with the states before legislating on a subject mentioned in the concurrent list.
- 14) It favoured setting up of Inter-State Councils.
- 15) It also favoured activating Commissioner for Linguistic Minorities.
- 16) It recommended implementation of three language formula and also suggested creation of several new All India Services.

The Commission paid great importance to the principles of national unity and integration. It had given top priority to the codes of conduct and conventions for the purpose of avoiding the dangers of communalism and narrow parochialism and developing an integrated secular democratic federal polity based on understanding and maximum cooperation between the centre and the states.

CONCLUDING

Indian Constitution has all the features of a federation but it essentially differs from the classical model of federation, i.e., USA. Indian federal system has some peculiar features and these features give it a strong Unitarian bias. The balance decidedly tilts in favour of the strong centre. Whether it is distribution of powers or financial or administrative or legislative relations between centre and the states, the central government distinctly emerges to be powerful. This had brought practical difficulties in centre-state relations particularly after 1967. The states started demanding more and more of autonomy and powers. When the problem began to assume abnormal dimensions, the centre government set up a Sarkaria Commission to look into the matter and give its recommendations. The Sarkaria Commission was in favour of strong centre in order to protect national unity and integrity. However, it suggested maximum cooperation between centre and the states, without disturbing the major distribution of powers.

