

“Is Reorganization of States a Solution?”

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ABSTRACT

State reorganization has been implemented in India for years to resolve dispute and to avoid further conflict. The paper examines the factors and the measures that the government had undertaken to bifurcate the states. The demand and need for reorganization have held great importance in the past and was taken into consideration as the states were being bifurcated throughout the years. Throughout the years we see the public demanding a change on the grounds for a better identity and to promote welfare amongst the citizens. The paper examines the efforts taken by the government to meet the demands on the people and has concluded it is not the most effective solution as reorganization of states has been constant demand and the differences can never be settled.

INTRODUCTION

India is a large and diverse nation. Its religion is widely extensive while it is predominantly Hindu there are other religions such as Sikhs, Jains, Buddhists, Christians and Muslims. Language wise there are More than 19,500 languages or dialects are spoken in India as mother tongues, according to the latest analysis of a census released. There are 121 languages which are spoken by 10,000 or more people in India, which has a population of 121 crore¹. Hindi is predominantly spoken. In other words, India is having a wide diversity. Although this does not express the diversity present in India. After independence the union government's priority was to avoid anything resembling the partition that led to the creation of East and West Pakistan. India was reorganized on the basis of the committee report from the state's reorganization committee in 1956. This did not prevent the demand for new states. Primarily the states were divided by a linguistic basis, but it was not enough.²

THE MEASURES THE COUNTRY HAD TAKEN FOR THE REORGANIZATION OF STATES AFTER INDEPENDENCE

After the independence in 1947, India had 571 princely states which were later converted to 27 states. Reorganization of states can be divided into three phases. At the time they were formed based on historical and political factors and ignored the cultural and linguistic factors. The existence of multilingual differences problems arose. The sudden change in states gave way to urgent need to reorganize the states.

To fix this problem the Dhar Commission was set up in 1948. S K Dhar, a judge of the Allahabad High Court was appointed to examine the reorganization by basing it on linguist. The commission focused on administrative convenience and highlighted the economic, geographical and historical needs rather than the linguistic needs. This led to the formation of

¹ The Registrar General and Census Commissioner

² Kumar, Prabhat. “CHANGING ASPECTS OF STATES REORGANISATION IN INDIA.” (2018).

JVP committee in 1948 which has eminent members such as Pattabhi Sitaramayya, Vallabhai Patel and Jawaharlal Nehru to thoroughly examine the issue. The committee did not find the need to reorganize the states although said the issue can be re-examined if the public finds the need to do so.

HOW THE STATES HAD BIFURCATED

In spite of the ignorance of the importance of linguistic needs, the government paved way for Andhra which was formed for the Telegu speaking citizens in 1953. They were under the pressure to do so after the death of Potti Sriramulu's 56-day hunger strike. The sudden creation of the state led to new demands from other parts for the creation of new states. This led to the creation of the Fazl Commission. Fazl Ali was appointed by Nehru to look over and examine the new demands. The commission came to the conclusion that the country should be divided and must include three centrally administered areas and 16 states. The government did not agree with this and stated that under the state reorganization act 1956 that the country should be divided into 6 union territories and 14 states. The states were West Bengal, Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan, Punjab, Orisha, Mysore, Madras, Madhya Pradesh, Jammu and Kashmir, Kerala, Bombay, Bihar, Andhra Pradesh and Assam. The union territories were Tripura, Himachal Pradesh, Delhi, Manipur, Andaman and Nicobar islands, Laccadive and Minicoy and Amindivi Islands. The state of Bombay was bifurcated in 1960 to form Maharashtra and Gujarat followed by the formation of Nagaland for the Nagas in 1963 which was under the purview of the Governor of Assam. New union territories arose when the territories of Daman and Diu and Goa were obtained from the Portuguese and Karekal, Mahe, Chandernagore and Yaman from the French or they were merged into neighbouring states. The parliament paved way for the Punjab Reorganization act in 1966 for the formation of Punjabi Subha. Due to this change it led to the formation of Haryana and Himachal Pradesh was merged with the adjoining hilly areas. Chandigarh was made a union territory as well the common capital of Haryana and Punjab. The state of Meghalaya came into existence from the existing state of Assam in 1969. The conversion of Tripura and Manipur and Himachal Pradesh from union territories to states happened in 1971. Originally Sikkim had the status of an associate state but in 1975 it was given the status of a state of the Union of India. Mizoram was recognized as state 1986 although the status was acquired only on February of 1987. Goa was deemed a state in May 1987. They did so by separating the Union territory of Goa, Daman and Diu from the territory of goa. Daman and Diu till date has the status of Union territory. The union territory of Delhi is now a National Territory as of February 1992 under the 69th amendment. In 2000 three new states were formed, Uttaranchal, Jharkhand and Chhattisgarh.³ Lastly the state of Telangana was formed on June 2,2014.

THE FACTORS THAT LEAD TO THE REORGANIZATION OF STATE

The demand for statehood has always been brought. One important factor is the during independence there was no strong basis. The British provinces and the princely states were

³ Aggarwal, Mamta "Linguistic reorganization of Indian States after Independence"

divided into three groups. Group A that consists of former governor provinces of British India. They were presided over by the governors and comprised the state legislature. Group B were the Princely states that were governed by Rajpramukh and lastly the Group C were the states that had princely states as well as the British provinces which was governed by the Chief commissioner. This was not a rational basis for reorganization.

The second factor was the lack of democratic and decentralized system of governance. Until the establishment of Panchayat raj, India was subjected to numerous problems with the centralization of resources and power. The concentration of authority at levels such as the state and central level gave way to problems about the developmental imbalance as well as suspected ignorance of certain areas. Making the issue worse was the need to have a state language. The people believed that the majority could dominate and challenge the cultural and ethnic identities of others. The government paid no heed to these issues. This raised the issue of sperate statehood on the basis of difference on identity.

The third factor being the lack of government attention towards the development issues. The government did not give equal attention towards the development of all regions which did not allow for the growth of the states. The government's lack of attention to the North-East still shows as it is a ground for uprising and violence for the demand for separation. Another instance is the government's ignorance towards Telangana. They had ignored the development of the region which gave way to political conflicts.

Another factor is election propaganda to win votes. The demand for sperate statehood was fuelled by political motivation. The groups made it political issue with the purpose to get votes. An example of this is the formation of Chhattisgarh as it was an electoral promise between the two parties BJP and Congress. Creation of sperate statehood became a panacea to the problems of the country. The politicians had time and again exploited the issue of ethnic, cultural and language differences to win the masses.

Lastly was the issue of identity. This has always been a source of empowerment, but the public has been misusing it to favour them. It has now become the standard for the full attainment of prosperity, peace and full development. This should by far be the most important as one always craves for self-identity, at a big scale as well as small. The issue for separate statehood is not deeply political in nature but simply starts with giving the citizens of India an identity. It does not just give a sense of identity, but it works towards bringing the people together and establishing a sense of belongingness amongst them.

THE NEED FOR REORGANIZATION OF STATE

There was the need for sperate statehood on the basis of cultural and language different cases to promote a sense of security. The demand for separate statehood arose in 1950 and it was on the basis of language. The Tamil speaking residents had identified as a separate cultural and homogenous ethnic group. This led to demand for a separate state. The state reorganization recommended that the state should be reorganized by using the linguistic basis by justifying that it would create a sense of security amongst the citizens of India. Although

this method was not effective and still gave way to clashes between groups. The problem with the grouping on the basis of language was the ignorance of the minority as they were grouped on the majority. The reorganization would strengthen the federal structure of the country. Forming states on the basis of cultural and ethnic grounds is justified as it strengthens the federal structure of the country. It has been noticed that the general response to the reorganization has only helped in nation building and federalism. Federalism is hard to achieve in heterogenous society such as India. The nation must work to achieve unity and development.

The reorganization will help promote democracy. The reorganization has been promoted on the basis that it will ensure a bigger participation of marginalized section and thereafter promote democracy. The suppressed groups will get the recognition they deserve and a chance to share their views. The voting percentage in India is currently low, by reorganization of the states it is giving the people what they want and including them in the political process with this they hope they will then participate in the voting process and improving the democracy.

The smaller states will be administratively easier to manage making it efficient. Currently states like Karnataka, Punjab, Gujarat and Maharashtra are more efficient compared to the states in north east such as Chhattisgarh and Jharkhand. Having smaller states is not separating a small state from a bigger one. Therefore, the structure must be restored more than making sure a small state would be more efficient by dividing it. The smaller units will be more politically unstable with comparison to the bigger ones. It would help the economic development as this was the basis for the reorganization of Uttaranchal and Chhattisgarh. although this is not valid as the states have become the centre for political and economic scams⁴

CONCLUSION

States reorganisation has had a long history and had many levels to it which have been made better over time. with the history of India beginning from the British rule we do see the growing importance of Reorganization of state. Further the weak basis that India originally stood by to reorganize the states was not enough. We know this as we see the numerous changes India went through. The reason that nation provides to undergo reorganization is not valid as they do not obtain the said goal. It has it worse rather than fixing the solution. The lack of proper basis for the reorganization of state has made it a threat to the country and the unity and development of India. Moreover the reorganization of states weakness the nation rather than uniting the nation. With this we can say that reorganization of states is not a solution.

⁴ Rai, Anuradha. "STATE REORGANIZATION IN INDIA: REAL-POLITICKING OR ELECTORAL POLITICS." *The Indian Journal of Political Science* 73, no. 4 (2012)