



Does India need smaller states?

Description

Reasons for separate statehood demands :-

- Unequal development.
- Poor governance.
- Negligence.
- Perceived negligence. Some people are feeling that they are neglected, though they are not.
- Differences in Language/ culture/ ethnicity.
- Historical reasons. Some regions have great history, so the people there want separate state.
- Located at a long distance from the administrative center. If the capital is very far from the region, they feel neglected. And it's difficult to travel to capital for administrative related works.
- Marginalization of people based on their region. There is an unequal distribution of state funds among regions within the states.
- Selfish motives of few politicians. Some politicians do spread misinformation and encourages people to protest for separate state, so that they will get power and monetary benefits.

In Favor :-

- Decentralization and bringing the govt. closer to people enhances efficiency of governance.
- Problems like Naxalism can be tackled easily in smaller states because there will be more focus, if the area is small.
- In large states, administration may not know the needs of local people.
- In larger states, resource rich places may not get benefits of it's resources because the benefits may go to some other places of the same state.
- Administration of large states is complex.
- Kerala & Goa are small states and have developed very well.

- Jharkhand, Uttarakhand done better in reducing poverty & in improving agriculture growth rate after being separated from their parent states – Bihar & Uttar Pradesh respectively.
- The smaller states can support the local panchayats better than the larger states can.
- Cultures, languages will be preserved.
- Initially, when the states were reorganized on linguistic basis, there was a fear that this may lead to the secessionist tendencies. Instead, it made the unity of India stronger because everyone felt safe & secure as their aspirations were met. The same is the case with the separate statehood demands. If people are happy, there will be no threat to unity of India.

Against :-

- More no. of states means the greater instability at the center.
- More no. of states can lead to more inter-state water disputes, power sharing and resource sharing problems.
- The places, which are in demand for statehood have no economic viability and hence will end up in creating more problems. Forming of new states involves a lot of expenditure on infrastructure and administration etc.
- If the present statehood demands are accepted, more separatist demands will start from the other regions.
- If we keep on dividing the states, it'll be very difficult to maintain the unity of the nation.
- Forming of new states can't guarantee the development of the region. Rather concentrating on effective planning and efficient use of resources can solve the problems.

Facts :-

- At the time of independence, India consists of 562 princely states and 11 British provinces.
- Integration of Indian states is the result of the then Minister of Home & State Affairs, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel's efforts.
- Potti Sriramulu's death during his fast unto death for the demand of 'Andhra' state (NOT Andhra Pradesh) made Govt. to appoint States Reorganization Commission. States Reorganization took place on linguistic basis by States Reorganization Act, 1956.
- After further sub-divisions, India now has 29 states and 7 union territories. Telangana is the latest formed state.
- Still there are several [separate statehood demands](#).

Conclusion :-

It's not the problem of smaller states or larger states, it's the problem of lack of good governance. Administration must take proper care in ensuring equal development.

Your Turn...

What are your thoughts on this topic? Feel free to express your opinion in the comment section below.