



Regional identity and being part of the mainstream

The country should be moving toward cooperative federalism and not coercive federalism

1. A myopic view of “nationalism” by certain sections needs to be countered effectively to protect our dignity and identity. Modern India is conceptualised on the idea of unity in diversity, and all our actions should be sensitive to protecting this beautiful idea.
2. The current Central Government’s politics focuses on centralisation, with special attention to undermining the interests of non-Hindi States.
3. The government is intruding into the economic, political, cultural and educational autonomy of States. Modern India has evolved to be more than just the Union of States.
4. We should be moving toward cooperative federalism and not coercive federalism. The policies of the BJP government are inconsistent with the vision of the Constitution drafting committee with respect to Centre-State relations.

The South has been subsidising the north

1. It is a known fact that the South has been subsidising the north. Six states south of the Vindhyas contribute more taxes and get less. For example, for every one rupee of tax contributed by Uttar Pradesh, that State receives more than ₹1.79.
2. For every one rupee of tax contributed by Karnataka, the State receives less than ₹ 0.47. Karnataka has also been hit by a denial of Goods and Services Tax compensation cess as promised by the central government through the Goods and Services Tax (Compensation to States) Act, 2017.

Specific issues

1. The problems are more than just the finances of State governments. Many issues of federalism are affecting the identity, social structure and political economy of our State.
2. Our government had requested the central government to include the Karnataka flag in the schedule of the Emblems and Names (Prevention of



Improper Use) Act, 1950, based on the recommendations of the committee for the Karnataka flag.

3. It is unfortunate that the central government is still procrastinating over the recommendation without granting formal inclusion. Is the desire of the people of Karnataka to have a flag for their State, to give primacy to the Kannada language and to have greater say in the running of their own lives inconsistent with the objective of building a strong nation?

Centralisation of education

1. The National Education Policy is another tool of the BJP to proliferate Hindi in non-Hindi States and to take away the rights of the States by promoting centralisation with respect to education.
2. The policy negates the spirit of the Constitution and is inconsistent with Article 246 of the Indian Constitution. Under the new three-language formula, it is consequential for the students from the south Indian States to choose Hindi as the third language.
3. Schools will not have enough resources to arrange for faculty to teach more subjects for third languages, which means Hindi will be the only choice.
4. It is important to recollect that in 1947, India was a young nation and we needed to be cautious of any divisive or secessionist tendencies. India, therefore, became a Union of States with a strong Centre.
5. When Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel went about integrating the princely States into the Union, a strong Centre did make sense.

A perspective

1. Today, over 70 years down the line, we have done admirably well as a nation. The Constitution of India has stood the test of time.
2. We have also learnt useful lessons from turmoil in Tamil Nadu over Hindi language imposition and demands of autonomy from certain States such as Punjab and Assam. From a Union of states, we are evolving into a federation of States.
3. Therefore, we should not think the demands for greater federal autonomy and recognition of regional identity are inconsistent with our nation.