



Mains Practice Question

Q. “The reorganisation of States in India is an unfinished task”. Discuss. (250 words)

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Approach

- Examine the reasons and situations in which reorganisation of states took place in India previously
- Enumerate the impact of such reorganisation to these States and India as a whole
- Give reasons, alongwith recent issues, that why such reorganisation is still an unfinished task.
- Also provide a suitable way forward.

Introduction

Having achieved India’s independence from British rule, reorganization of more than 500 princely states into effective provincial units was one of the biggest tasks. In pursuance of the same, **S. K. Dhar commission (1948)** and **JVP Committee (1948)** advocated for reorganization of states based on geographical contiguity, administrative convenience, financial self-reliance and potential for development. However, with the sudden death of Potti Sriramalu following hunger strike in demand for Andhra state created a volatile situation and **Fazl Ali Commission** was set up (in 1953) and its recommendation for reorganization of state based on linguistic criteria was accepted.

Benefits of re-organisation of states based on linguistic criteria

- **Created psychological integration of people with Indian Union:** When India gained Independence, many groups were apprehensive of safety and security of their linguistic identity. These groups could be conciliated through linguistic organization.
- **Easy to administer:** It created cohesive administrative units as low literacy (around 10%) after Independence was the norm and use of local languages made administration convenient and accessible to people.
- **Created Indian Union:** Unlike Pakistan and Sri Lanka, which witnessed a division and civil war due to linguistic sentiments, India’s linguistic reorganization formed a strong Indian Union.

However, the reorganisation of states **has been an unfinished task** as outcome of linguistic reorganisation has not been quite positive **in the long run:**

- **Resulted in unequal sizes of province:** Differences are visible in States like UP and North eastern states. This has led to imperfect resource distribution. With few states garnering attention, while few states shrouded in negligence.
- **Opened pandora’s box:** In India there are more than 600 languages and many dialects; satisfying linguistic aspirations of all groups is quite impossible. For example: demand for redistribution of boundaries of Maharashtra and Karnataka based on language.
- **Fueled the forces of regionalism:** As a result, India is still a nation in making and its sub-national sentiments are given precedence over Indian unity and integrity.

Recent creation of new states like Telangana, Chhattisgarh, Uttarakhand, Jharkhand are based on developmental needs, where it was found that states, even after having enough resources, could not grow

like the rest of its parent state.

In recent times, **Belagavi issue** has created political tussle between Karnataka and Maharashtra. Belagavi is an area in Karnataka, which has a sizeable Marathi-speaking population and has been at the heart of a five-decade-old border row between Karnataka and Maharashtra whose final order from Supreme Court is still awaited.

Way Forward

In the light of the above discussion, it can be inferred that India due to its multi-cultural and linguistic diversity cannot ever satisfy all linguistic groups. Thus, there is a need to **redraw the map of India** with **rational criteria** to create equal opportunity for all states to develop. Nevertheless, it can trigger huge regional and political resistance. So, **debate, discussion and deliberation** are the need of the hour to create a favourable ground to accept reorganisation of states through **'fountain effect'** or 'bottom up effect' to create a strong Indian nation.

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