

Trends in Centre-State Relations: The issues which created tensions between the Centre and the states are:

1. Mode of appointment and dismissal of governor.
2. Discriminatory and partisan role of governors.
3. Imposition of President's Rule for partisan interests.
4. Deployment of Central forces in the states to maintain law and order.
5. Reservation of state bills for the consideration of the President.
6. Discrimination in the financial allocations to the states.
7. Role of Planning Commission in approving state projects.
8. Management of All-India Services.
9. Use of electronic media for political purposes.
10. Appointment of enquiry commissions against the CMs.
11. Sharing of finances (between the Centre and the states).
12. Encroachment by the Centre on the State List.

➤ Administrative Reforms Commission (ARC) :

- The Central government appointed a six-member ARC in 1966 under the chairmanship of Morarji Desai (followed by K. Hanumanthayya).
- The ARC finalised its own report and submitted it to the Central government in 1969.
- The important recommendations are:
 1. Establishment of an Inter-State Council under article 263 of the Constitution.
 2. Appointment of persons having long experience in public life and administration and non-partisan attitude as governors.
 3. Delegation of powers to the maximum extent to the states.
 4. Transferring of more financial resources to the states to reduce their dependency upon the centre.
 5. Deployment of Central armed forces in the states either on their request or otherwise.

Note: No action was taken by the Central government on the recommendations of the ARC.

➤ Rajamannar Committee:

- In 1969, the Tamil Nadu government (DMK) appointed a three-member committee under the chairmanship of P. V. Rajamannar.

- The committee submitted its report to the Tamil Nadu government in 1971.
- The committee identified the reasons for the prevailing unitary trends in the country. They include:
 1. Certain provisions in the constitution which confer special powers on the centre.
 2. One-party rule both in the Centre and in the states.
 3. Inadequacy of states' fiscal resources and consequent dependence on the Centre for financial assistance.
 4. The institution of central planning and the role of the Planning Commission.
- The important recommendations of the committee are as follows:
 1. An inter-state council should be set up immediately.
 2. Finance Commission should be made a permanent body.
 3. Planning Commission should be disbanded and its place should be taken by a statutory body.
 4. Article 356, 357 and 365 (dealing with President's Rule) should be totally omitted.
 5. The provision that the state ministry holds office during the pleasure of the governor should be omitted.
 6. Certain subjects of the Union List and the Concurrent List should be transferred to the State List.
 7. The residuary powers should be allocated to the states.
 8. All India Services (IAS, IPS and IFS) should be abolished.

Note: The Central government completely ignored the recommendations of the Rajamannar committee.

➤ Anandpur Sahib Resolution:

- In 1973, the Akali Dal adopted a resolution containing both political and religious demands in a meeting held at Anandpur Sahib in Punjab. The resolution generally known as Anandpur Sahib resolution.
- Their demands are:
 1. Centre's jurisdiction should be restricted only to defence, foreign affairs, communications and currency.
 2. The entire residuary powers should be vested in the states.

3. The Constitution should be made federal in the real sense and should ensure equal authority and representation to all the states at the Centre.

➤ West Bengal Memorandum:

- In 1977, the West Bengal government (led by the communists) published a memorandum on Centre-state relations and sent to the Central government.
- The memorandum suggested the following:
 1. The word 'union' in the Constitution should be replaced by the word 'federal'.
 2. The jurisdiction of the Centre should be confined to defence, foreign affairs, currency, communications and economic co-ordination.
 3. All other subjects including the residuary should be vested in the states.
 4. Article 356 and 357 (President's Rule) and 360 (financial emergency) should be repealed.
 5. State's consent should be made obligatory for formation of new states or reorganisation of existing states.
 6. Of the total revenue raised by the Centre from all sources, 75% should be allocated to the states.
 7. Rajya Sabha should have equal powers with that of the Lok Sabha.
 8. There should be only Central and state services and the all-India services should be abolished.

Note: The Central government did not accept the demands made in the memorandum.

➤ Sarkaria Commission:

- In 1983, the Central government appointed a three-member Commission on Centre-state relations under the chairmanship of R. S. Sarkaria, a retired judge of the SC.
- The Commission submitted its report in 1988.
- The Commission did not favour structural changes but it emphasised on the need for changes in the functional or operational aspects.
- The Commission made 247 recommendations to improve Centre-state relations. The important recommendations are:

1. A permanent Inter-State Council called the Inter-Governmental Council should be set up under Article 263.
2. Article 356 (President's Rule) should be used in extreme cases.
3. The institution of All-India services should be further strengthened and some more such services should be created.
4. The residuary powers of taxation should continue to remain with the Parliament, while the other residuary powers should be placed in the Concurrent List.
5. When the president withholds his assent to the state bills, the reasons should be communicated to the state government.
6. The National Development Council (NDC) should be renamed and reconstituted as the National Economic and Development Council (NEDC).
7. The Centre should have powers to deploy its armed forces, even without the consent of states.
8. The Centre should consult the states before making a law on a subject of the Concurrent List.
9. The procedure of consulting the CM in the appointment of the state governor should be prescribed in the Constitution itself.
10. The governor cannot dismiss the council of ministers so long as it commands a majority in the assembly.
11. The governor's term of five years in a state should not be disturbed except for some extremely compelling reasons.
12. The surcharge on Income Tax should not be levied by the Centre except for a specified purpose and for a strictly limited period.
13. The present division of functions between the Finance Commission and the Planning Commission is reasonable and should continue.
14. No change in the role of Rajya Sabha and Centre's power to reorganise the states.

Note: The Central government has implemented 180 (out of 247) recommendations of the Sarkaria Commission. The

most important is the establishment of the Inter-State Council in 1990.

➤ Punchhi Commission:

- This Commission on Centre-State relations was set up by the Central government in April 2007 under the chairmanship of Madan Mohan Punchhi, former CJI.
- The Commission submitted its report to the government in April 2010.
- The Commission gave 312 recommendations in its report. Some of the major recommendations are:
 1. The articles related to Emergency should be amended. It sought to protect the interests of the states by trying to curb their misuse by the Centre.
 2. The Centre should consult states before introducing bills on the subjects in the Concurrent List.
 3. In case of appointment of CM of a state, the Commission recommended that there should be clear guidelines on the CM's appointment so that the discretionary powers of the governor are limited in this regard.
 4. There should be a provision by which the President's decision to use his pocket veto power is communicated to the state within six months.
 5. The Commission also gave the recommendations regarding the appointment of governors. The state CM should have a say in the governor's appointment. There should be a committee entrusted with the appointment of the governors. The committee should comprise of the PM, the Home Minister, Speaker of the Lok Sabha and the CM of the concerned state. Even the Vice President can be involved in the procedure.
 6. In matters concerning internal security the Punchhi Commission recommended the creation of a superseding structure (much like the Homeland Security Department in the US), that gave prominence to the National Integration Council. It recommended that the council should meet at least once annually.