

Popular Social Science

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REORGANISATION OF STATES IN INDIA

Text and Context

**Report of the States Reorganisation
Commission (1955)**

Introduced by
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The Historical Context: An Introduction

I

India's twentieth century history has seen four 'commissions' which have left a decisive imprint upon its political life: the Simon Commission, the Radcliff Commission, the Mandal Commission and the States Reorganisation Commission. The Simon Commission of 1928 galvanized nationalist India, created the unhappy circumstances that led to the death of Lala Lajpat Rai and paved the way for the historic *Purna Swaraj* declaration of the Congress at the Lahore session of 1929. The Radcliffe Commission of 1947 territorially reconfigured India, imposing boundaries which divided communities, uprooted millions and left a permanent imprint on the Subcontinent's life. The Mandal Commission of 1979-80 extended the principle of affirmative action to backward groups of the society. Last but not the least, the States Reorganisation Commission [SRC] of 1955-56 left tangible legacies in the reconstruction of India's political boundaries. Its efforts led to the emergence of certain principles which could serve as the basis for creating new states. It also promoted the idea of co-operative federalism within the Indian Union. More than the concrete findings of the Commission, its ideas, its method of working and the way in which its recommendations were dealt with by the Government of India provide important insights for all those interested in the history of contemporary India.

This essay examines the historical context in which the SRC came to be formed and looks at its mandate and terms of reference, the individuals who made up the Commission and the manner in which they worked. As is well known, the Commission's origins lay in circumstances of contention and conflict. To press for the demand of a separate Telugu state, Potti Sitaramalu, a Gandhian activist, began a fast-unto-death in Madras on 19 October 1952. After a protest fast which lasted a marathon 58 days, he attained 'martyrdom' on 15 December 1952, triggering violent and vehement protests across the Telugu-speaking areas of South India. On 19 December 1952, Jawaharlal Nehru as prime minister was forced to stand up in the Lok Sabha and announce that a separate Andhra state would be formed, consisting of the undisputed Telugu-speaking areas of Madras State and including parts of Bellary district, but would exclude Madras City. Linguistic agitations, which were becoming widespread and insistent in the early 1950s, grew particularly vociferous after the Andhra announcement, as demands began to be raised for the creation of Kannada, Marathi and Punjabi-speaking states. For example, the Communist journal Crossroads noted on 27 September 1953 that the Andhra decision would 'inspire the Malayalee, Kannadiga, Tamil, Gujarati, and Maharastrian people, and give added strength to their struggle for Aikya Kerala, Samyukta Karnataka, Aikya Thamizhagam, Maha Gujarat and Samyukta Maharashtra.' To galvanize political support and to put pressure on the Centre, the threat of hunger-strikes was often used.

The political leadership at the Centre at this point in time looked upon such agitations as an unwanted and untimely controversy which was unnecessarily sapping the political energies of the new nation, distracting it from its pressing need for political consolidation as well as rapid economic development. Jawaharlal Nehru likened the situation in January 1953 to a Pandora's Box:

I do not know if you have heard of Pandora's Box. It is a story in old Greek mythology where an inquisitive young lady opened a box which she ought not to have opened, and as a result all kinds of evil things came out which she could not put back into the box. So one has to be careful not to start something or open a box out of which all kinds of mutual suspicion and ill-will come out and then the main problem is lost sight of in our prejudice and argument.

Nonetheless, Nehru realized that linguistic agitations for separate statehood could not be dealt with on the basis of political expediency, with the ebb and flow of regional and linguistic passions. He believed that his Government must work with certain principles which may be applied with a degree of consistency in dealing with the demands for statehood which were being raised in different parts of the country. Such circumstances gave birth to the idea of an independent, high-powered Commission which could help bring about a measure of political consensus and strengthen the hands of the Government of India by rescuing it from situations of crisis in which it was being coerced into and having to deal in an *ad hoc* manner with populist agitations taking advantage of linguistic sentiments to press for new states. Thus, the key objective behind the formation of the SRC was a search for principles which could be used by the Nehru government to provide the basis for demarcating internal political boundaries within a federal structure.

II

Commissions of enquiry are often the stock-in-trade of governments to defuse crises and buy themselves time. If they succeed in doing this, they are able to leverage this advantage by having greater room for policy-making. Although Nehru decided that a States Reorganisation Commission would be necessary to systematically look at

these demands, he knew that conditions were not apposite for it to start its work. After the Lok Sabha announcement about the Andhra state, Nehru took steps to decelerate the process. He was at pains to emphasize that the Andhra decision had *not* been made under pressure, explaining that the Andhra situation had been somewhat exceptional as other state-holders in the composite Madras State had no objection to the Telugu-speaking areas constituting a separate province. This was not the situation in other parts of India where demands for the creation of new states had often been marked by contention and conflict over territory, over the demarcation of boundaries and the sharing of capitals and rivers. Further, Nehru made it clear that his government would not succumb to hunger-strikes or other such pressure tactics by those demanding new states to advance their cause.

Further, Nehru pointed out repeatedly that the SRC could not begin its work in a hurry. The political leadership in New Delhi realized that it could only address the complex and highly tangled issue when political conditions had settled down. The Commission, therefore, could not be appointed in a hurry; rather it must begin its work in a calm and conducive atmosphere. Nehru was conscious of this and wrote on 19 April 1953 to his Chief Ministers: 'I feel that after the establishment of the Andhra State, we should consider this whole problem of reorganisation of state boundaries in a realistic and dispassionate way... the purely linguistic approach is obviously not good enough. It is hoped therefore to appoint towards the end of the year some kind of a high-powered commission to go into this matter without fuss. We could then have the entire picture without fuss.''

Moreover, Nehru publicly and repeatedly made it known that the purely linguistic criterion was not enough to justify the creation of new states. He acknowledged that the linguistic principle was important, but that *alone* could

not be the basis upon which the SRC could possibly make its recommendations to create new states. The Commission needed to consider a holistic set of criteria. What these could be was for the Commission to discuss and agree upon. The stamp of this thinking was reflected in the Congress Working Committee resolution of 16 May 1953, personally drafted by Nehru, which declared: 'Any such reorganisation [of states] should take into consideration ...not only cultural and linguistic matters but also other important factors, such as preservation of the unity of India, national security and defence, administrative advantages, financial considerations and the economic progress of each State as well as of the whole nation.'

V. 2

Similarly, Nehru made it clear in his public speeches that linguistic demands could not be dealt with piece-meal, as the situation in one state impacted upon its neighbours. The affairs and fortunes of adjoining states were interconnected and agitations in one state often led to counter-agitations elsewhere. Thus, an all-India approach was needed and it was imperative, for this reason, to have in place an independent Commission to look at the *larger* all-India picture. The May 1953 Congress Working Committee resolution expressed 'regrets that a matter affecting the whole of India, in regard to which a policy has been clearly stated, should be made the basis for separate and often mutually hostile agitations'. Further, it warned that 'such an individual approach is not only likely to lead to harmful results but it is likely to create conflict and will delay the reorganisation desired.' To Kailash Nath Katju, the then Union Home Minister, Nehru stressed on 8 September 1953 that 'we are not going to consider any single case by itself, nor indeed we are going to consider this question except by appointing the promised high-powered Commission. It is for the Commission to see the picture of India as a whole and make such recommendations as they choose... it will be open to it [the Commission] to consider almost

any reorganisation of States and we do not wish to limit its discretion in this matter. No other attitude is possible, if we ask them to look at India as a whole.'

Although Nehru discussed with his colleagues the likely Terms of Reference of the proposed Commission, he was hesitant to express these in definitive terms. While he did not believe that any strict principles should be laid down, he took the view that the Commission, in carrying out its work, must keep in view certain basic considerations such as the unity of India, national security and the salience of the federal structure. In this regard Nehru expressed accord with the views of Acharya Vinoba Bhave who had suggested three considerations for the Commission: a) homogeneity of language as far as feasible; b) economic solvency of states; and c) national security, especially for the frontier areas. The Gandhian leader had also declared that, once the Commission's recommendations had been formulated, there should be no further political agitation.

In thinking about the Terms of Reference, Nehru was at pains to point out that the proposed SRC would not be a 'Boundary Commission' and that it should avoid a territorial approach. Instead, it needed to address *questions of principles* upon which states could be reorganised. Perhaps for him there had been too many unhappy memories of the Radcliffe Boundary Commission of 1947. He sharply pointed out to N. C. Chatterji, the Jan Sangh leader from West Bengal, that 'it is not strictly correct to state that any so-called Boundary Commission is going to be appointed... Government proposed to appoint a high-powered commission to consider various problems of reorganisation of States in India. I cannot at this stage say what the exact terms of reference will be.' Learning from the experience of the Radcliffe Commission, he took the view that 'the Commission should not take any public evidence. They can consult any individual or groups privately. They can receive memoranda. As far as possible, all this should be on

avoid public agitation

confidential basis. It is desirable to avoid public agitations on these issues.'

Even though an in-principle decision to set up a SRC had been taken soon after the announcement about Andhra, much thinking went into considering the next steps with regard to the mandate of the Commission, its terms of reference and, not the least, its personnel. Consultations were initiated with chief ministers, governors of states likely to be affected by the reorganisation and within the Union Cabinet. On 19 September 1953 Nehru shared with the chief ministers his own initial thoughts. On the timing of the proposed Commission, he indicated his intention to announce its formation in the winter session of the Parliament later that year, so that it may begin its work at the beginning of 1954. Then, consideration had to be given to the question of how large the Commission should be. Based on discussions within the Cabinet, Nehru felt that the Commission should be made up of not more than three members. However, the question foremost in everyone's mind was: who should be these three individuals?

There took place much discussion within government and party about the personnel of the Commission. In seeking soundings from his Cabinet, Nehru made it clear that the 'three persons should be outstanding and impartial. Those connected in any way with linguistic provinces agitation should of course be excluded.' Further, he was clear that the Commission should not be made up entirely of judges, but should be broad-based in terms of its collective expertise. When suggestions were made to him to consider appointing persons with a judicial background, he frankly expressed his disagreement. For example, Govind Ballabh Pant, the U.P. Chief Minister, had suggested the name of Justice S. K. Dar, who had earlier headed the Linguistic Provinces Commission in 1948 which had been appointed by the Constituent Assembly. This was turned down. Likewise, at a later stage when Nehru approached Saiyid

S. K. Dar Commission

Fazl Ali to take up the chairmanship of the Commission, the latter suggested that either Justice S. R. Das, then a serving Judge of the Supreme Court, or C. C. Biswas, the then Union Law Minister, be considered for the membership of the Commission. Nehru, once again, found himself unable to agree. 'I rather doubt', he replied to Fazl Ali, 'if Supreme Court Judges or High Court Judges are particularly suited for this kind of work, however good they might be as Judges.' In Nehru's mind, the problem was 'not a judicial one, but a political one'.

As a part of the effort to secure the best possible talent for the Commission, chief ministers and members of the Union Cabinet were urged by Nehru that 'each one of us should give serious thought' to the question of the composition of the SRC and its Terms of Reference. Views and names were to be sent direct to the prime minister, to enable him to finalise the matter after deliberations in the Cabinet, so that an announcement could be made in Parliament in the upcoming winter session.

There are indications that by October-November 1953 Nehru had formed some ideas about the likely cast of characters. One name which was put to him was of Saiyid Fazl Ali, then serving as Governor of Orissa. It is likely that no other than Dr Rajendra Prasad, the President, may have commended Fazl Ali's name. Be that as it may, Nehru was convinced of the merit of this suggestion and indeed, on 16 November 1953, he approached Fazl Ali. 'The subject is of the highest importance and, in fact, it means the drawing up of a new map of India', he stressed to Fazl Ali. 'It requires a combination of all kinds of abilities plus tact', Nehru pointed out and that, 'therefore, we have been much concerned about the choice of names for this commission'. Nehru continued: 'We feel we shall ask you to become the Chairman of this Commission. I hope you will agree. We have not decided about the other two names yet. Indeed, we should like to consult you about them before finalising

'abilities plus tact'

them.' On the Terms of Reference, he reassured Fazl Ali that 'they should be of the broadest character.'

When Fazl Ali sent his acceptance of the position, Nehru conveyed his appreciation:

..I am glad you are agreeable to accept the chairmanship of the Commission on the Reorganisation of States (please do not call it 'the Boundary Commission').

...We have not finalised our terms of reference yet. We shall do so after consulting you. But, I think I wrote to you, we want to word them as widely as possible to give the Commission a large discretion to recommend almost any change in India....

There is also the further question of whether every State should necessarily have the entire paraphernalia of Governor, High Court, Public Service Commission, etc, or whether it might be preferable to have a number of smaller States joined together for the purpose. Generally speaking, I am not very much in favour of huge States. It is quite possible that in the future they might develop into powerful autonomous units, something like satrapis. On the other hand, small States are top heavy and their economic development is difficult. It might be possible for large areas to be held together in a region for economic and some other purposes....

The primary considerations must necessarily be the unity and security of the country plus the economic development. Security specially applies to the border areas....

I imagine that before you enter into what might be called the boundary question, you will have to form some broad picture in your mind about the problem as a whole and how to approach it. I do not like the description of the Commission as one relating to boundaries. You may very well suggest something which changes the map of India internally ...

The Secretary of the Commission must certainly be a person of competence and I think it is only right that he should be a person whom you approve of.

However, even by this stage the names of the two other members were yet to be finalised. On 24 November 1953,

Govind Ballabh Pant suggested several names. These were of Justice S. K. Dar, Justice K. N. Wanchoo, Pandit Hriday Nath Kunzru, a Liberal politician and member of the Rajya Sabha and, finally Acharya Narendra Deva, a Socialist leader from UP. 'All of them are persons of outstanding ability, integrity and independence', Pant avowed. Further, he pointed out: 'None of them is connected with any of the States involved in linguistic agitation, and the first two have already been associated with enquiries of an allied character.'

One cannot fail to notice here the coincidence that, out of the four individuals which Pant had suggested three, like the Prime Minister himself, were Kashmiri Pandits! Of these, one name immediately commended itself to Nehru – that of Hriday Nath Kunzru. He took steps to discuss the matter with Kunzru, whom he intimately referred to as 'Hariji'. Kunzru expressed certain reservations in serving the Commission, as he was already committed to devote time for the Servants of India Society, of which he was Life-President. Kunzru saw himself bound by the discipline of the Society and, to be able to secure his services, Nehru had to approach S. G. Vaze, one of its key functionaries:

As a matter of fact we are thinking of this Commission in the biggest possible way, something that might reshape the whole map of India from many points of view. It is being entrusted with a historic task and I can think of no Commission which is likely to have work of such vital and far-reaching importance. It is after the most earnest thought that we have decided upon the members of this Commission and the few of us, who have been considering this matter – because in such cases it is difficult to spread the area of consultation – specially wanted Hariji in it. The President was also of this opinion.

I am quite sure that when you know the nature and vital importance of this Commission, you will have no objection whatever to Hariji joining it.

The problem of finding the third member came to be cracked when Nehru's thoughts turned to K. M. Panikkar, diplomat,

historian and writer. On 4 December 1953 Nehru wrote at length to Panikkar, then serving as India's ambassador in Egypt:

I now put before you a very important proposition concerning you. This relates to the proposed Commission for the reorganisation of States in India. You will realize without my telling you how vital the work of this commission is going to be. It will affect the whole future of India. Some people imagine that this commission is just to decide about some odd demands like that of Karnataka or Maharashtra or Kerala, etc. but I have been approaching this question from a much wider point of view....

It is our intention, therefore, to give the widest discretion to the proposed Commission to consider the whole problem of India in all its aspects and make their recommendations, whatever they might be. This is a big task and will, no doubt, require time. How long, I cannot say. But I should imagine anything from a year to two years.....

Anyhow the problem is of reshaping India and that is one of the biggest problems that we can face. I have given a tremendous deal of thought to this question of appointing a Commission. I have informally consulted a large number of people, all our Central Ministers, all our Chief Ministers, a number of our Governors, etc. Having done so, the burden of decision has to be taken now. I am anxious that we should make an announcement in Parliament before this session concludes, that is, by the 24th December...

With your wider experience in many fields, national and international, your historical knowledge and insight, I think that you will be able to be of great service in this matter. Indeed, I think that it should appeal to you.

Nehru took care to close his letter with a caveat: 'I have not mentioned this matter thus far to anyone except one or two of my colleagues. Therefore, this should be kept absolutely secret'. Perhaps he was mindful of Panikkar's earlier career as a journalist and his apparent propensity for 'leaks'!

forwards consultation - final

Let us now consider in some detail the cast of characters who had been assembled in the SRC. Sir Saiyid Fazl Ali (19 September 1886- 22 August 1959) had been a much respected Judge and was serving as Governor of Orissa when he was invited to chair the SRC. He belonged to a landed Zamindar family of Bihar and had his early education in Benaras and then graduated from Allahabad University. He then went to England to qualify as a Barrister from Middle Temple, London, and began his legal practice in Chapra, Bihar. In 1928 he became a Judge of the Patna High Court and was later elevated as its Chief Justice in 1943. In his long legal career, Fazl Ali came to be involved in adjudicating many complex cases. For example, he was asked by the Bihar Government in 1937-38 to settle the industrial dispute at Tata Steel Works, Jamshedpur. Subsequently, he served as Chairman of the Royal Indian Naval Mutiny Enquiry Commission in April 1946 and later as a Member of the Calcutta Disturbances' Enquiry Commission in September 1946. He was elevated as a Judge of the Supreme Court in June 1947 and served till his retirement in 1952. Through his long judicial career Fazl Ali came to win respect for his integrity and legal acumen from both the British (who honoured him with a Knighthood in 1941) as well as the nationalist leadership whose confidence he seemed to enjoy. Soon after independence, he represented India at the U.N. General Assembly in New York. Upon retirement from the Supreme Court bench in 1952 he was appointed Governor of Orissa. Later in 1956, he was awarded the Padma Vibhushan and appointed Governor of Assam, an office he held till his death in 1959.

Dr. Hriday Nath Kunzru (1 October 1887-3 April 1978) was a member of the Rajya Sabha and a widely respected public figure associated with a number of institutions and causes. Kunzru was the son of Pandit Ayodhya Nath, one of the founding fathers of the Congress in U.P. and a contemporary of Motilal Nehru, Madan Mohan Malaviya

and Tej Bahadur Sapru. Kunzru was educated at Agra and Allahabad universities and later the London School of Economics. In 1911 he lost his wife at a young age during childbirth and six months later another tragedy followed when he lost his only child. Kunzru is then said to have resolved to dedicate his life to public service. He began his political career in the Congress but later, under the influence of Sapru and Malaviya, joined the National Liberal Federation, becoming its president in 1934. The Federation was a loose conglomeration of like-minded individuals and Kunzru remained true to that tradition by contesting his first election – and every election thereafter – as an independent, non-partisan candidate. He was elected to the UP Legislative Council (1921–26), the Central Legislative Assembly (1926–30), the Council of States (1936), the Provisional Parliament (1950–52) and finally to the Rajya Sabha (1952–64).

Kunzru had in 1909 joined the Servants of India Society, founded by Gopal Krishna Gokhale, and subsequently became its Life President in 1936. He looked upon this responsibility as his first commitment in public life. He was held in great esteem as a non-partisan public figure who gave his time and effort to a number of causes close to his heart. He pioneered public interest in the study and research on international affairs by helping establish the Indian Council of World Affairs and served as its President from 1949 to 1976, as well as the Indian School of International Studies whose Board of Governors he chaired between 1955 and 1970. He also took a deep interest in defence matters and his efforts were instrumental in the establishment of the National Defence Academy in 1954.

At various times, Kunzru was a member of the Senate and Executive Council of the Benares Hindu University, University of Delhi, Allahabad University, and the Sri Ram Institute, Delhi. In recognition of his work, he was conferred honorary degrees by many of these universities. He was a

Gopal Krishna Gokhale - Servants of India Society

member of the University Grants Commission for 12 years from 1953 to 1966 and also served as its Chairman for a brief period. Kunzru's eclectic, yet wide-ranging public interests are evident when one considers that he was one of the pioneers of the Indian Scout movement and served as the first National Commissioner of Bharat Scouts and Guides. He also helped establish the Children's Film Society and served as President of the *Anjuman-i-Taraquui-e-Urdu*. Kunzru was nominated for the *Bharat Ratna* in 1968, but he declined the state award, citing his long-standing and principled opposition to such honours, which he had first voiced in the Constituent Assembly.

The SRC's third member, Kavalam Madhava Panikkar (3 June 1895–10 December 1963) had a distinguished public career as an author, historian, administrator and diplomat. He was born in Travancore, Kerala, and was educated at Kottayam and Madras and graduated with a degree in history from Oxford. He then qualified for the bar at Middle Temple, London. Panikkar had a brief academic career as a lecturer in history, first at the Aligarh Muslim University and then at Calcutta University. In 1924 he switched to journalism and became involved with the launch of the *Hindustan Times*, which was started by Madan Mohan Malaviya. He subsequently moved to service in the princely states, beginning with Patiala. He served as the Secretary to the Chamber of Princes and later in the 1940s as the Dewan of Bikaner. He had been present at the Round Table Conferences in London as a representative of Princely India. His princely service in excess of two decades earned him the title of 'Sardar' (chief) and got him closely involved in constitutional affairs.

A prolific writer, Panikkar authored a number of books on historical themes as well as constitutional issues. His historical writings explored the culture of Kerala and its past, Portuguese influences upon the Subcontinent and the maritime history of India. Panikkar wrote not only in



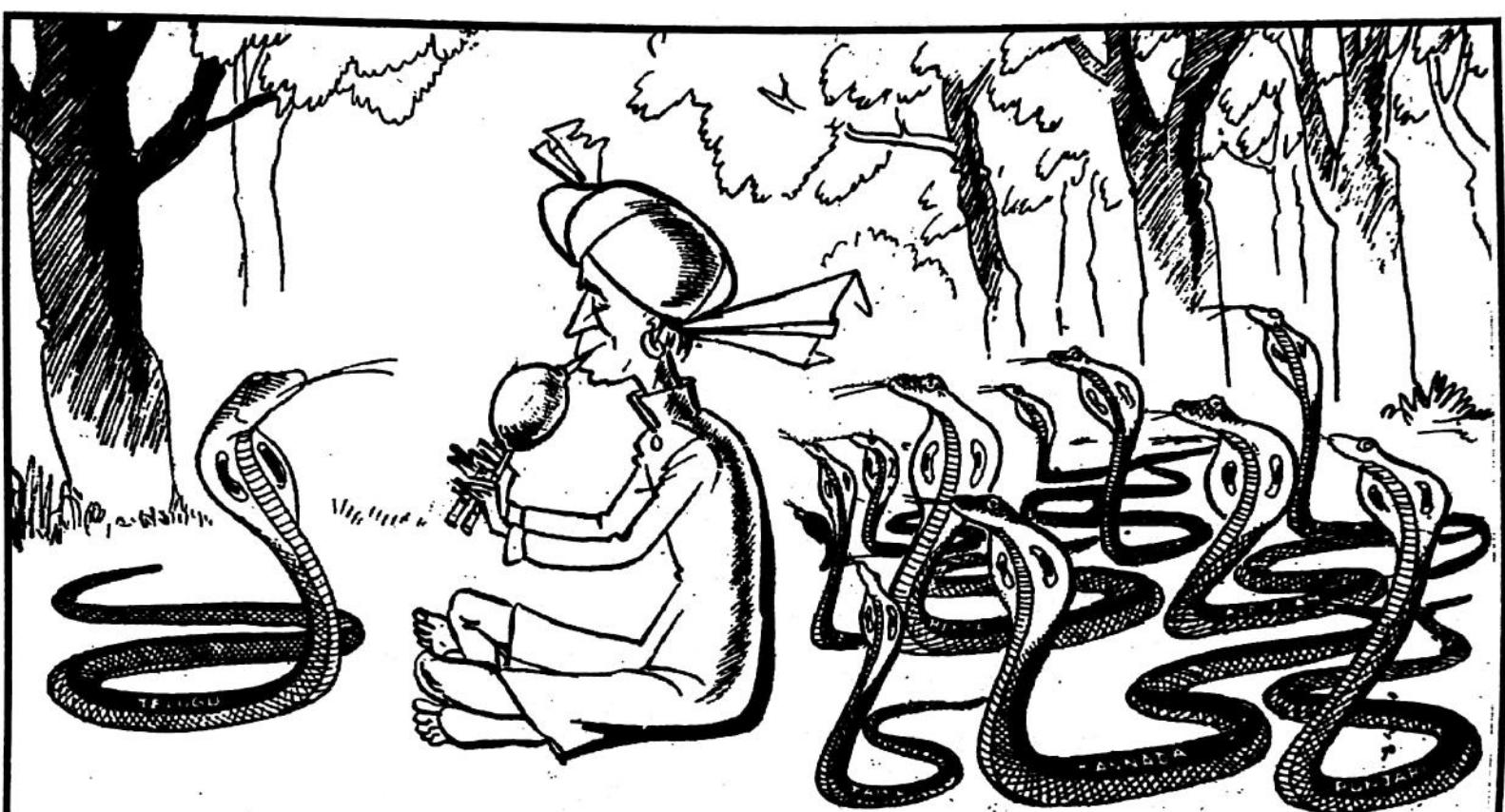
Fears have been expressed of the unity of India being impaired by the growing sentiment in favour of linguistic states.

Shankara Pillai's cartoon; courtesy: *Shankar's Weekly*, 23 May 1953.

English but also in Malayalam. He was a lifelong friend of the poet Vallathol and was the first president of the Kerala Sahitya Academy. His best-known work remains Asia and Western Dominance (1953). In addition to literary and historical works, Panikkar also engaged with contemporary issues such as future of princely states and constitutional developments. His writings drew widespread attention, including that of Nehru.

After independence Panikkar was sent as India's ambassador to China while it was still under the leadership of Chiang Kai-shek. He remained there through the Communist takeover of 1949 and in its aftermath and wrote of his experiences in In Two Chinas (1955). He was serving as India's ambassador to Egypt (1952-1953) when Nehru invited him to accept the membership of the SRC. In 1956 he resumed his diplomatic career as ambassador to France, a position he occupied till 1959 when ill-health forced him to return to India. He then served as Vice-Chancellor of Jammu University and later of Mysore University. He died in December 1963. The historian C.A. Bayly in his study of Indian liberal ideas describes Panikkar as 'Independent India's most incisive advocate of balance between the state and the people'.

With the personnel firmed up, on 22 December 1953 Nehru announced in the Lok Sabha the decision to set up a States Reorganisation Commission to examine 'objectively and dispassionately' the question of reorganisation of the States of the Indian Union. The official notification by the Ministry of Home Affairs, issued on 29 December 1953, set out the following task for it: 'The Commission will investigate the conditions of the problem, the historical background, the existing situation and the bearing of all important and relevant factors thereon. They will be free to consider any proposals relating to such reorganisation.' Further, the Commission was at 'liberty to devise their own procedure for their work, for collecting information



and for ascertaining public opinion.' The Government set a timelimit of 18 months for the Commission to make its recommendations.

III

The SRC began its work from a modest office located at 4 Kitchener Road (now renamed Sardar Patel Marg), just at the edge of New Delhi's Diplomatic Enclave. An illustrious Indian Civil Service (ICS) official, Prasanta Chandra Chaudhury joined as its Secretary and helped establish a small but highly efficient secretariat. Born on 21 October 1903, Chaudhury had been educated at the University of Punjab, the School of Oriental and African Studies in London and at Corpus Christi College, Oxford. He had joined the ICS in 1928 and served in Bihar and Orissa in various district and judicial appointments, rising by 1936 to the position of District and Sessions Judge. During the World War II years, Chaudhury served in the Government of India, first as deputy controller of broadcasting and then as deputy chief controller of imports in the Ministry of Commerce. He was awarded the CIE in June 1945.

The team at the Secretariat came to be augmented by Hari-Sharma, who joined as Joint Secretary. He had previously worked for many years in the service of princely states in the Punjab. Yet another key member of its staff was Professor P. N. Masaldan, who joined as Chief of its Research Wing. In this role he prepared numerous background papers on issues, such as the different classification of federal units in Part A, Part B and Part C states which then existed, as well as the several complex and tangled constitutional issues which the Commission had to grapple with. For example, one of Masaldan's background papers dealt with how internal political boundaries had been drawn in other countries, including France, China and Russia. Besides serving as an informal constitutional advisor to the Commission,

Masaldan took part in the deliberations which took place among its members. He contributed to internal discussions on the set of principles which could be used with a degree of consistency by the SRC for the creation of new states and for re-drawing the boundaries of the existing ones. He and his team also helped prepare summaries of the different regional demands which came to be placed before the Commission and helped evaluate the alternatives available. They also played an important role in the drafting of the Commission's Report. The SRC Secretariat was supported by the services of a map officer and a statistician. In addition, a pool of stenographers worked hard to record the voluminous minutes of interviews. Secretarial staff also put in considerable effort to manage the Commission's gruelling schedule of interviews and to make arrangements for its extensive travels across the length and breadth of India.

On 23 February 1954 the Commission issued a press note explaining its *modus operandi*. It invited 'members of the public as well as public associations interested in the problem of reorganisation of States to put their views and suggestions before the Commission by submitting written memoranda'. It expressed the hope that 'wherever any concrete suggestions are made they will be supported by historical and statistical data' and 'accompanied by one or more maps', if the formation of a new state was proposed. A deadline of two months was specified for the submissions to the Commission.

The SRC went on an extensive all-India tour between 1 March 1954 and 31 May 1955. It covered the entire length and breadth of the country visiting 104 places in its tour, which involved travel across 61,155 kilometres. The purpose of these visits was to 'make every effort to get a complete cross section of public opinion by meeting people from all walks of life'. This was achieved through interviews with individuals and groups. These meetings were held in private to enable frank and free expression of views. Individuals interviewed

included members of political parties, public associations, social workers, journalists, municipal and district board representatives and other individuals representing cultural, educational, linguistic and local interests. The SRC members aimed 'to ascertain public opinion... to make on the spot enquiries at different places and to understand the background of the problem and the popular sentiment on various aspects of reorganisation.'

The Commission made a conscious effort to move beyond the confines of the national capital, to reach out to individuals, even though it took care to interview the key political and administrative functionaries in the Government of India. The Delhi-based interviews came to only 178, which is rather small as compared to the effort invested by the Commission to investigate the problem in several regions. A great deal of its energy was spent in the Telugu-speaking areas where it met the largest number of people, as many as 1,480 individuals. These came, not just from Hyderabad, but from a number of cities which the Commission visited, including Gulbarga, Nalgonda, Warangal, Karimnagar, Guntur, Vijayawada and Kurnool. A similar intensity of effort on the part of the Commission could be seen in the Bombay region where it held extensive interviews in Poona, Ahmedabad, Dharwar, Belgaum, Aurangabad, Nagpur, Chanda, Amravati, Akola and Bidar, in addition to Bombay city itself. Similar exertions could be seen in the North-Eastern region where the Commission carried out interviews in Agartala, Silchar, Imphal, Kohima, Shillong, Gauhati, Golpara, Tura, Dubri, Margherita, Dibrugarh, Cooch Behar, Darjeeling and Kalimpong.

In its extensive travels the SRC was able to conduct interviews with as many as 8,943 persons across India. The list of persons interviewed and cross examined by the SRC reads like a 'Who's Who of India' in the 1950s, covering its political landscape across metropolitan cities, provincial capitals and district and *mufossil* towns. Besides face-to-

face interviews, the Commission spent considerable time in studying the enormous volume of written submissions made to it between March 1954 to September 1955. These took the form of letters, resolutions, telegrams and memoranda, in all a total number of 152,250 documents, which included about 2,000 'well considered' memoranda! All this contributed to delay the Commission's time frame. A request was made to the Government to extend its term by three months beyond June 1955. Then, as the Delhi summer heat became intolerable, Fazl Ali, Kunzru and Panikkar, together with the key staff, retreated to the cooler environment of Srinagar to deliberate and reflect upon their recommendations and to formalise these in a report.

IV

The Commission's Report was submitted to the Government of India in the last week of September 1955. The Report was divided into four parts. The first part dealt with the historical background. The Report noted that the existing structure of the States of the Union was the:

result of accident and circumstances attending the growth of British power in India, and partly a by-product of the historic process of the integration of former Indian States. The division of India during the British period into British provinces and Indian States was itself fortuitous, and had no basis in Indian history. The formation of provinces had been mainly governed by considerations of administrative convenience and economy and by reasons of military strategy and security. To the extent that there was a conscious or deliberative design behind the demarcation of administrative units, it was grounded in Imperial interests or the exigencies of a foreign Government, and not in the actual needs, wishes or the affinities of the people.

The Report noted that, as the former princely states had been in different stages of evolution, a transitional

expedient was adopted after 1947 to fit them into the federal structure of India. Such disparities which existed among them, and between them and the Indian provinces, led to the classification of the States into the three categories of Part A, B and C States. This categorisation was in cognizance of their different stages of development. The Commission further noted that none of the States represented a pre-existing sovereign unit, unlike the American colonies or the Swiss cantons. They were thus subject to the jurisdiction of the Constitution which empowered the Parliament to establish new States, increase or diminish the area of an existing State, or to alter its boundaries.

The SRC acknowledged that the Indian National Congress had accepted the linguistic redistribution of provinces in 1920 as a political objective. However, after Independence-Partition, there had been a growing recognition of the need to balance the linguistic principle with other factors such as national unity, together with administrative and economic considerations. The Report acknowledged that, while Andhra had been formed by the separation of the Telugu-speaking districts of Madras, in determining its boundaries, multiple factors – cultural, administrative and economic – had been considered, together with the linguistic principle. After considering the arguments for and against the reorganisation of states, the Commission concluded that 'the task of redrawing the political map of India must be undertaken now and accompanied without delay, in the hope that the changes which are brought about will give satisfaction to a substantial majority of the Indian people.'

The Commission spelt out four principles, which had governed its recommendations: a) preservation and strengthening of India's unity and security; b) linguistic and cultural homogeneity; c) financial, economic and administrative considerations and d) the successful working of the national development plans. The Report

further noted that the administrative set-up in strategic areas should be determined by considerations of national security and suggested that, when border areas were not under the direct control of the Centre, it would be safer to have large and strong border states.

The SRC noted that it was neither desirable nor possible to reorganise states on the basis of a single criteria, either linguistic or cultural, and took the view that 'a balanced approach to the problem was necessary'. The Report then went on to make recommendations for territorial reorganisation, the highlights of which are summarised below:

- That the number of States in the Union should be reduced from 27 to 16.
- The distinction between A, B and C States should be abolished, together with the office of *Raj Pramukh*.
- The States of Madhya Bharat, Mysore, PEPSU, Saurashtra, Travancore-Cochin, Vindhya Pradesh, Ajmer, Bhopal, Coorg, Himachal Pradesh, Cutch and Tripura should all disappear.
- Three new States should be formed to be known as Karnataka, Kerala and Vidarbha.
- The States of Bombay, Madhya Pradesh, Madras, Punjab and Hyderabad should undergo extensive changes.
- The States of Andhra, Assam, Bihar, West Bengal and Rajasthan should be subject to minor boundary changes.
- The States of Orissa, U.P. and Jammu and Kashmir (which was not included in the Terms of Reference of the Commission) should retain their present boundaries.
- Delhi, Manipur and Andaman Nicobar Islands should be constituted as Union Territories.

Perhaps the recommendations of the SRC with regard to Telengana and Vidarbha may be worth taking note of. With regard to Telengana, the Commission noted that Hyderabad was a multilingual state, with 47 per cent population speaking Telugu, 24 per cent Marathi, 11.6 per

cent Urdu, 10.5 per cent Kannada and 6 per cent other languages. The unity of the erstwhile Hyderabad State, being based not on a free association of the people but on personal rule, was purely superficial and public sentiment was 'overwhelming and insistent' on the need for its disintegration. The Commission recommended the transfer of its Kannada and Marathi-speaking areas to Karnataka and Bombay respectively, leaving the Telengana area, predominantly Telugu-speaking, as a unit by itself. While recognizing that 'impressive arguments existed for the union of Telengana with Andhra in a single Telugu-speaking state, the Commission noted that Telengana could be a stable and viable unit and that fears existed among its people that they might be 'swamped and exploited by the people of Andhra'. The Commission, therefore, recommended that Hyderabad should remain a separate state, but that provision should be made for its union with Andhra after the general elections of 1962, if a two-third majority of the state legislature expressed itself in favour.

In looking at the demand for a separate Vidarbha State, the Commission recommended that Vidarbha should be constituted as a separate state from the eight Marathi-speaking districts of Madhya Pradesh. Another significant recommendation related to Bombay which would remain as a bilingual state, consisting of Marathi and Gujarati speakers, with Bombay city as its capital.

The Commission made a series of recommendations on the implications of reorganisation. For example, it made provisions for the rights of linguistic minorities to primary education in mother tongue, if a sufficient number of pupils were available. It considered questions of inter-state arrangements regarding river waters and the creation of development boards for backward areas. In overall terms it affirmed the principle of national unity and cooperative federalism.

V

The Report of the Commission was submitted to the Government of India on 30 September 1955 and made public in the first week of October. As soon as the contents of Report became known strong public reactions came from several regions. On 10 October 1955 Master Tara Singh, the Akali leader, expressed his disappointment that the demand for Punjabi Suba had been rejected by the SRC. He declared that the Sikhs were facing 'a greater calamity than that of 1947', adding that the Commission's Report 'completely wipes us off the face of the earth.' In Western India, contention grew over claims and counter-claims being made over Bombay City as protagonists of both Marathi and Gujarati states made claims upon it. In Mysore controversy arose over the proposed merger of Mysore State with Karnataka, with representatives of Mysore protesting against the merger of their state with a 'backward area' and expressing the concern that its development would be 'stunted and retarded.' As reports of disquiet poured from across the land, the Government of India issued instructions to state governments to be watchful of the law and order situation arising from the reactions to the Commission's Report, especially in Punjab, Bombay, the Bellary district and the bordering areas of Bihar and West Bengal.

On 21 November 1955 Pant, the Home Minister, informed the Rajya Sabha the status of the implementation of the SRC Report. He stated that a Conference of Chief Ministers, which took place in Delhi on 22-23 October 1955, had already considered in-depth the proposals of the Commission. State governments were expected to formally convey their views by the end of November 1955, after which the state legislatures were to be consulted. The SRC Report was to be tabled in the winter session of the Parliament and it was proposed that a bill would be introduced in the early months of 1956, to be adopted by May 1956, so that the new

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states could be established on 1 October 1956, enabling the general elections to be held early in 1957 as scheduled.

Within the Congress Party, the Working Committee met on 8-9 November 1955 to consider the SRC Report. It set up a sub-committee consisting of Nehru, U. N. Dhebar, the Congress President, Maulana Azad, Education Minister, and G. B. Pant, the Home Minister, to consider some of the issues arising from the Report. On 16 January 1956 the Government of India announced that it accepted most of the recommendations of the SRC, although with certain adjustments and amendments. It went on to declare that it proposed to divide the Bombay State, into a Marathi and Gujarati state, with Bombay City as a centrally administered area. In coming up with this idea, the plan of creating a separate Vidarbha state, which had been proposed by the SRC, was altered and incorporated in the Marathi-speaking Bombay state. Further, the Government declared that its decisions with regard to Punjab and Andhra-Telengana would be announced later.

The Government of India's announcement triggered violent protests throughout Bombay State. Rioting broke out immediately in Bombay city and continued over the next three days. Schools, factories, government offices and shops were closed down. A general strike called by Left-wing organisations on 18 January 1956 brought the city to a standstill. Clashes took place between demonstrators and the police, which had shoot-at-sight orders, as buses and trams were attacked and public buildings set on fire. Even the power supply to parts of the city came to be disrupted and at some places train tracks were damaged. Curfew was declared at a number of places and the police had to resort to tear-gas shelling and firing to disperse the protestors. However, a week later, by 23 January 1956, conditions had returned to normal, although only after a heavy toll. According to official estimates, 75 people had been killed in riots, although unofficial reports put the

number at 300 and of those injured at over 500, including about 200 policemen. The protests were not confined to Bombay City alone, but spread to Pune, Sholapur, Kolhapur and Sangli.

In another corner of India, strong feelings in Orissa had been stirred up by the Government's rejection of Oriya territorial claims to certain areas of Bihar and Madhya Pradesh. A general strike was called at Cuttack during which the All India Radio station was attacked, aircrafts were prevented from landing at the airport and train services disrupted by squatters on railway lines. On 22-23 January 1956, serious rioting took place at Puri where the railway station and several government buildings were burned down, trains were detained, the local jail stormed and several convicts freed amidst scenes of disorder. Several hundred troops had to be flown into Orissa from Calcutta to assist the police in restoring order.

On 23 January 1956, the Congress Working Committee in a resolution entitled 'A Call to the Nation,' strongly condemned the violence which had taken place in Bombay and elsewhere. According to the Congress, the violence had 'produced a situation imperiling the future of India and her people... Even though mob violence has been curbed by governmental action, the situation that has arisen is a dangerous one and full of peril for the nation'. The resolution warned that 'it must be clearly understood that no changes will be made in decisions already arrived at, or that might be taken later, in regard to the reorganisation of States because of violence or terroristic methods.'

The controversy over Bombay, however, continued for several months. Between the publication of the SRC Report in early October 1955 and January 1956 intense discussions continued within government and party, taking into account the strong and deeply contested popular reactions. Controversies over the future of Bombay continued to hamper progress. At one stage the option

of creating two separate Marathi and Gujarati states and constituting Bombay City as a centrally administered area was considered. However, there was strong resistance to giving up control over Bombay City by both Marathi and Gujarati political and commercial interests.

VI

Notwithstanding the differences and controversies, the Government of India placed a draft of the States Reorganisation Bill before both the Houses of Parliament on 16 March 1956. The draft was intensely debated between March and May 1956. Much of the controversy over Bombay continued to plague the progress of the legislation. The Bill was given a second reading on 9 August 1956 and was adopted in its third reading without a division, although parliamentarians from the Hindu Mahasabha and the Communist Party continued to bitterly attack the Government. The States Reorganisation Act received presidential assent on 31 August 1956 and came into force on 1 November 1956 which marked the inauguration of the new States.

The work of the SRC provided a building block upon which India's federal structure could rest at a critical stage of democratic consolidation. The Commission was able to respond to powerful and competing regional sentiments and its members won respect for the qualities of diligence, integrity and impartiality which they brought to bear upon their task. The Commission's recommendations reconfigured the country's political boundaries and launched India on its momentous journey as a vernacular democracy, a journey which continues with an ascending trajectory, though punctuated by twists and turns.

Note on Sources and Further Readings

This essay draws upon the archival records of the States Reorganisation Commission at the National Archives of India as well as the private papers and published correspondence of several key individuals such as Jawaharlal Nehru, Rajendra Prasad, Govind Ballabh Pant and others. It also draws upon newspaper sources for the period. Its aim is to situate the work of the SRC in an historical context for a general readership. As such it has not been burdened by detailed references to archival sources. Readers who may be interested in further exploring the subject will find useful some of the works discussed below.

The debates about language politics in independent India and its potentially divisive role are discussed at length in Robert D. King, *Nehru and the Language Politics of India* (Delhi, Oxford University Press, 1998). Selig S. Harrison's *India, the Most Dangerous Decades*, (New Jersey, Princeton University Press, 1960) gives a sense of the deep conflicts which plagued India over issues of regional and linguistic identities. Although Harrison's prediction that India as a new nation would fragment and break-up has been belied, his book conveys a sense of the context of the 1950s in which the demands for linguistic states were rampant. More recently, Ramachandra Guha's *India After Gandhi* (London, Macmillan, 2007) offers a reconstruction of that period from a contemporary perspective.

As prime minister and leader of the ruling Congress party, Jawaharlal Nehru played a critical role in dealing with the challenge of states reorganisation. Readers may find two historical biographies of Nehru valuable for their meticulous archival research and readability. These are by Sarvepalli Gopal, *Jawaharlal Nehru, A Biography*, (New Delhi, Oxford University Press, 1979, Volume 2) and Judith M. Brown, *Nehru: A Political Life* (New Delhi, Oxford University Press, 2003).

Looking beyond the reorganisation of states of the 1950s, studies have focused more recently on regional aspirations and mobilisations in contemporary India. A volume edited by Asha Sarangi and Sudha Pai, *Interrogating Reorganization of States in India* (New Delhi, Routledge, 2011) offers several important regional case studies. Further, Ashutosh Kumar's edited volume, *Regions Within Regions, Rethinking State Politics in India* (New Delhi, Routledge, 2011),

Judith M. Brown

highlights the distinct sub-regional identities which are subsumed under many of the larger states in India and are increasingly asserting themselves in the electoral and political arena. Finally, readers would profit from Louis Tillin's Remapping India, New States and their Political Origins (New Delhi, Oxford University Press, 2013) which is a meticulously researched study of the political campaigns which led to the formation of Uttarakhand, Jharkhand and Chattisgarh.

GYANESH KUDAISYA

Louis Tillin
Remapping India,
New States and their
Political Origins

Reorganisation of States in India: A Historical Time-line

- 1901: North-West Frontier Area split from Punjab.
- 1902: Berar merged with Central Provinces to form Central Provinces and Berar.
- 1905: Partition of Bengal, with Bengal and Assam provinces reorganized into Eastern Bengal and Assam province and West Bengal province.
- 1908: The Indian National Congress recognized Bihar in 1908 as a separate province in its scheme of provincial Congress committees.
- 1912: Partition of Bengal was nullified: reunion of Bengali-speaking areas and separation of non-Bengali areas, with the formation of Bihar and Orissa province.
- 1912: Delhi province split from Punjab and the Imperial Capital moved from Calcutta to Delhi.
- 1913: Leaders of the Telugu-speaking parts of Madras began to press their demand for being constituted into a separate province.
- 1917: The Indian National Congress recognised the Telugu claim and formed a Provincial Congress Committee for Andhra. The Congress also similarly recognized Sind as a separate province.
- 1920: The Indian National Congress adopted a new constitution at its Nagpur session and reorganised its Provincial Committees on the linguistic basis.
- 1927: The Indian National Congress adopted a resolution stating that 'the time had come for the redistribution

- ~~of provinces on linguistic basis' and a beginning could be made by constituting Andhra, Utkal, Sind and Karnataka into separate provinces.~~
- ~~1933:~~ The Congress Working Committee passed a resolution in July 1933 at Wardha, assuring deputations from Andhra, Karnataka and Kerala that the problem of redistribution on the linguistic principle would be addressed as soon as the Congress had the power to do so.
- ~~1936:~~ Orissa province formed from parts of Bihar, Central Provinces, Berar, and Madras.
- ~~1936:~~ Sind separated from Bombay Presidency and constituted into a separate province.
- ~~1937:~~ The Indian National Congress at its Calcutta session reaffirmed the policy regarding linguistic provinces and recommended formation of Andhra and Karnataka.
- ~~1945-6:~~ The Congress in its election manifesto reiterated its stand that territorial areas or provinces should be constituted as far as possible on a linguistic and cultural basis.
- ~~1947:~~ Jammu and Kashmir became part of India by signing of the Instrument of Accession.
- ~~1948:~~ The issue of formation of linguistic provinces was referred by the Constituent Assembly in June 1948 to a Linguistic Provinces Commission [the S. K. Dar Commission] which reported in December 1948, recommending that time was not propitious for creation of new states, in the larger interest of Indian unity.
- ~~1948:~~ In December 1948 this was followed by a further examination of the question by a Sub-Committee appointed by the Jaipur session of the Congress, with Jawaharlal Nehru, Vallabhbhai Patel and Pattabhi Sitaramayya (the JVP Committee). It sounded a note of warning and pointed out that 'Language was not only a binding force but also a separating one' and

that in giving effect to the linguistic principle, 'a great many difficulties of far reaching character' would have to be faced. It was also admitted that if the popular demand for linguistic provinces was 'insistent and overwhelming', the practicability of satisfying the demand would have to be considered. The JVP Committee's report was adopted by the Congress in April 1949.

- 1948: Himachal Pradesh constituted with 30 former princely states, including Chamba, Mandi, Nahan, Sirmur and Suket.
- 1952: 19 October onwards, fast by Potti Sriramulu for a separate Andhra province for Telugu speaking people, culminating in his death on 15 December.
- 1953: 1 October 1953 constitution of Andhra state by separation of Telugu speaking areas of the composite Madras state.
- 1953: SRC appointed in December.
- 1955: The SRC submitted its report in October.
- 1956: The States Reorganisation Act took effect, reorganizing India into 14 states and seven union territories.
- 1960: Bombay state split into Gujarat and Maharashtra by the Bombay Reorganisation Act.
- 1966: Punjab state split into a smaller Punjab state, a new Haryana state and Chandigarh Union Territory, and a section merged with Himachal Pradesh. Chandigarh, formerly capital of Punjab, became joint capital of Punjab and Haryana.
- 1970: Meghalaya split from Assam as an autonomous state.
- 1971: Status of Himachal Pradesh changed from union territory to state.
- 1972: Arunachal Pradesh and Mizoram carved out from Assam.
- 1972: Status of Manipur and Tripura changed from union territories to states.
- 1975: Sikkim 'integrated' into India as a state.
- 2000: Chhattisgarh carved out as a state from Madhya

Pradesh; Uttaranchal carved out from Uttar Pradesh;
and Jharkhand carved out from Bihar.

2013: Announcement by the United Progressive Alliance on
the formation of Telengana.

2014: Bifurcation of Andhra Pradesh into two separate states
of Seemandhra and Telengana. Telengana was born on
2 June 2014.

INTRODUCTION

On 22 December, 1953, the Prime Minister made a statement in Parliament to the effect that a Commission would be appointed to examine "objectively and dispassionately" the question of the reorganisation of the States of the Indian Union "so that the welfare of the people of each constituent unit as well as the nation as a whole is promoted". This was followed by the appointment of this Commission under the Resolution of the Government of India in the Ministry of Home Affairs, No. 53/69/53-Public, dated 29th December, 1953 (Appendix A).

2. The task before the Commission has been set out in paragraph 7 of this Resolution in the following terms:

"The Commission will investigate the conditions of the problem, the historical background, the existing situation and the bearing of all important and relevant factors thereon. They will be free to consider any proposal relating to such reorganisation. The Government expect that the Commission would, in the first instance, not go into the details, but make recommendations in regard to the broad principles which should govern the solution of this problem and, if they so choose, the broad lines on which particular States should be reorganised, and submit interim reports for the consideration of Government."

3. Under this Resolution the Commission were required to make recommendations to the Government of India not later than 30th June, 1955. This period was subsequently extended to 30th September, 1955.

4. According to their terms of reference, the Commission were at liberty to devise their own procedure for collecting information and for ascertaining public opinion. After giving careful thought to the procedure to be followed, the Commission issued a Press Note on 23rd February, 1954 (Appendix B), inviting written memoranda from members of the public as well as public associations interested in the problem of the reorganisation of States. The relevant portion of this Press Note is given below:

"The States Reorganisation Commission, after giving due consideration to the procedure that would be most suitable for the expeditious execution of the task entrusted to them, have decided to dispense with a questionnaire.

They invite members of the public as well as public associations interested in the problem of the reorganisation of States to put their views and suggestions before the Commission by submitting written memoranda on matters on which they feel they can assist them. The Commission expect that wherever any concrete suggestions are made they will be supported by historical and statistical data and, if any proposal regarding the formation of any new State or States is made, it will, if possible, be accompanied by one or more maps, as the case may be."

5. It was announced in this Press Note that all memoranda should reach the Commission by 24th April, 1954. However, on account of the keen interest evinced by public organisations as well as the people in general in various aspects of reorganisation, and the nature of our enquiries, we did not adhere to this time limit, and communications ranging from simple telegrams indicating the wishes of particular localities to well-considered memoranda dealing with the problem as a whole continued to come almost to the very end of our appointed task. The total number of such documents received by us reached the figure of 1,52,250. The bulk of these communications is accounted for by simple telegrams, printed resolutions etc., denoting the wishes of particular localities to be included

within one or the other unit. The number of well-considered memoranda does not exceed about 2,000.

6. Side by side with the study of these memoranda, we commenced interviewing people from all walks of life. These interviews were held in private to enable the persons interviewed to express their views freely and frankly. The interviews started in New Delhi from 1st March, 1954, and were continued till about the end of July 1955. We started on 8 April 1954 on our all-India tour during the course of which we covered virtually the entire country and visited 104 places which involved travelling over thirty eight thousand miles. We have interviewed over nine thousand persons.

7. We made every effort to get a complete cross-section of public opinion. Care was taken to see that all those who represent public opinion were heard unless they were themselves averse to expressing any views. The people interviewed included members of political parties, public associations, social workers, journalists, municipal and district board representatives and other people representing cultural, educational, linguistic and local interests. The purpose of the all-India tour was not only to ascertain public opinion but also to make on-the-spot studies at different places and to understand the background of the problem and the popular sentiment on various aspects of reorganisation.

8. Under our terms of reference, it was open to us to submit an interim report, but at a fairly early stage we came to the conclusion that the submission of any interim report would not be feasible. The problems in peninsular India and some parts of the country outside it are inter-connected and we, therefore, did not consider it desirable to formulate our views on any question in isolation. We accordingly decided to study the various problems over the entire country before coming to any final conclusions about any particular region. This excluded the possibility of our submitting an interim report.

9. In our examination of the various proposals for reorganisation we have mainly relied on statistical figures as given in the Censuses of various years. The Census figures for 1951 have been compiled according to what are known as "Census tracts". It has, therefore, been difficult to estimate the mother-tongue figures on a taluk or tehsil-wise basis. We were given to understand that it might be possible to make estimates of taluk or tehsil-wise figures on the basis of certain statistical assumptions. Having regard, however, to the controversies which surround such assumptions, we took into consideration only the figures as printed in different Census reports in reaching our conclusions.

10. We have been cautious also with our financial estimates. We have studied in some detail the possible financial position and the economic potentialities of each of the proposed units. We have been reluctant, however, to lay undue emphasis on these estimates as figures of revenue and expenditure depend, to some extent, on imponderable factors. It may be theoretically possible to raise revenue in a particular unit according to a phased taxation programme, but whether such taxation will be imposed depends, at least to some extent, on political considerations. Control of expenditure in the broadest sense is also influenced by non-economic considerations. We did not consider it safe, therefore, to project present figures of revenue and expenditure into the future.

11. On the other hand, these financial estimates have some validity, because no unit will really start from scratch. It will have a certain financial heritage and a pattern of revenue and expenditure to begin with, and the picture of its financial position, at least in the near future, is not likely to be strikingly different from the present pattern. We have given some weight, moreover, to a study of the potentialities of economic development in the proposed units. Our financial estimates, therefore, represent only broad judgments of what is probable.

INTRODUCTION

12. Our report is divided into four Parts. Part I deals with the conditions of the problem of reorganisation of States and its historical background. Part II deals with the factors bearing on reorganisation. Part III contains our proposals for the reorganisation of the existing units. In Part IV we have discussed briefly the administrative and other implications of reorganisation and measures which might be adopted to minimise the stress of transition.

13. Before we conclude this introductory Chapter we wish to place on record our deep appreciation of the invaluable assistance we have received from the Secretariat of the Commission and all members of the staff. Had it not been for their ungrudging help and devoted work, cheerfully and efficiently rendered, it would not have been possible for us to complete our difficult task within the period at our disposal. We should also like to express our thanks to members of the public and representatives of political organisations and public associations who responded to our Press Note by submitting written memoranda containing much useful information and statistical and other material.