

India needs a strong centre

India is often described as a land of unity in diversity, but this description has not held good always. The most important lesson history has for India is that whenever the Centre has been weakened; the country has gone to pieces. The history of India bears ample testimony to this fact that for centuries together the same story was repeated over and over again. The history repeats itself many a time because men refuse to learn from it. One in a few decades there appeared a great general like Ashoka or Samudragupta who subdued numerous principalities and established some sort of Central authority over the greater part of the country. But as soon as the strong men disappeared from the scene, petty chieftains again carved the land into a number of small States perpetually at war with one another.

For thousands of years, therefore, India as a single political and cultural entity existed only in the imagination of romantically inclined foreigners, while the too frequent lack of a powerful central authority attracted a succession of invaders, from the Aryans to the British. It was during the British rule that India, as we know it today, took its present shape and established a strong Centre whose writ ran throughout the country. This unity was further strengthened by the rapid development of means of communications and transport.

Keeping in mind the lessons of history, the founding fathers of our Constitution tried to create a strong Centre. They gave us a constitution which has been described as “federal in form but unitary in spirit.” While laying down the pattern for distribution of powers between the Centre and States, they weighed the scales preponderantly in favor of the Centre, and also vested it with residuary powers.

No one can call to question the bona fides of those who provided for strong Centre to serve as the pivotal point in the governance of free India. They were, as men of unimpeachable integrity. Being patriots to the core, they had nothing but the good of the country at heart. They were keenly conscious of the need for investing the Central Government with sufficient legislative, administrative and financial power, to enable it to cope with all threats to the country's sovereignty and integrity from within or without. They were also keen to keep alive the spirit of national unity and homogeneity.

It is now widely admitted that the linguistic distribution of India, undertaken with the best of intentions in 1959, was a serious political blunder inasmuch as it conceded responsibility to sub-nationalism, and to that extent weakened our sense of national solidarity. In fact, it became the starting point from where separatist tendencies began to raise their heads in various garbs once again. It provided

ambitious regional straps with a cover behind with which they continue trying to build pockets of personal power in the name of language, religion, culture etc. There can be no mistaking the direction in which all this is taking the country.

India occupies an important position on the world map. Her political stability is a matter of concern not only for her own people but also for other nations also. Having an international Juvenile delinquent country (Pakistan) with endless potential for mischief as a neighbor, she needs to maintain constant and strong vigilance to ensure the security of her frontiers and internal strife's. We have been fighting proxy wars in Jammu and Kashmir for the last more than a decade and it has taken toll of many precious lives and still the matter does not end anywhere. Otherwise, in the circumstance that are prevailing now especially, sooner or later, history is bound to repeat itself.