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REGIONALISM AND NATIONAL INTEGRATION IN INDIA



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ABSTRACT

In the post-independence period, it has often been conflicting as well as collaborating force, largely depending on the manner of accommodation. Regionalism in India is deeply rooted in its manifold diversity of languages, cultures, tribes, religions, communities, etc. It originates from the feeling of regional concentration, which is often fuelled by a sense of regional deprivation. The country of more than a billion people of different castes, creeds, 555 customs and cultures, India's broad regions are distinct from one another. For instance, southern India, the home of Dravidian cultures, itself a region of many regions is very different from the north. To say, every region is quite different from one another, will not be an exaggeration. In Indian context, regionalism refers to assertion of distinct ethnic, linguistic or economic interests by various groups within the nation. Since the roots of regionalism lie in linguistic, ethnic, economic and cultural identities of the people living in specific geographical area, political scholars have treated various forms of regionalism which

include economic regionalism, linguistic regionalism, political regionalism and even sub-regional movements in the general frame of regionalism. In other words, it is the manifestation of those neglected Socio-political elements which fail to find expression in the mainstream polity and culture. These feelings of frustration and anger resulting from exclusion and neglect find expression in regionalism. Prejudices and biases have a lasting impact on the mind of the people. They themselves do not play a part in the political process, but as a psychic factor they do influence their party organisations and their political behaviour. Seen in this perspective, regionalism in India, as elsewhere, is basically a psychic phenomenon. It has its root in the minds of the people.