



Tamil Nadu Forms Committee to Review Centre- State Relation

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Why in News?

Tamil Nadu has formed a **three-member high-level committee** to review [Centre-State relations](#) and recommend measures to strengthen state autonomy, focusing on constitutional provisions, power devolution, and state government autonomy.

What are the Core Issues in Centre-State Relations?

- **Erosion of Legislative Powers:** Many subjects have been moved from the [State List](#) to the [Concurrent List](#), reducing states' control over crucial areas like education and health.
 - The [42nd Amendment Act of 1976](#) moved five key subjects like education, forestry, wildlife and bird protection, the administration of justice, and weights and measures from the State List to the Concurrent List, following the **Swaran Singh Committee's (1976)** recommendation.
- **National Policies:** States highlight that National policies often override state-specific policies, limiting the autonomy of states to decide what is best for their people.
 - Tamil Nadu raises concerns that the Union government's implementation of the [National Eligibility-cum-Entrance Test \(NEET\)](#) for medical admissions has overridden the state's policies that prioritized opportunities for students from marginalized communities.
 - Similarly, the [National Education Policy's three-language formula](#) and the withholding of funds for Tamil Nadu's education programs have sparked resistance from the state government, arguing for the preservation of its linguistic and cultural uniqueness.
- **Fiscal Disparities:** States argue that the [Goods and Services Tax \(GST\)](#) system has led to revenue loss, leaving them with less financial freedom to implement local policies.
 - Tamil Nadu argues that for **every rupee it contributes to the Centre, it gets back only 29 paise**, discouraging its role in driving national economic growth and making it feel penalized for its success.
- **Reduced Representation:** States like Tamil Nadu feel penalized by the [delimitation process](#), which could **reduce** their representation in Parliament despite proactive population control measures.
- **Exclusion from Key Decisions:** States believe they are often excluded from important national decisions such as [demonetization \(2016\)](#), undermining the **participatory governance** envisioned in India's federal framework.

What are the Key Recommendations of Various Commissions Regarding Centre-State Relation?

- **Rajamannar Committee (1969):** Formed by Tamil Nadu, the [Rajamannar Committee](#) was the **first state-level initiative to review Centre-State relations**.
 - It criticised the growing **centralisation of power** that undermined state autonomy.

- Though the **Constitution appeared federal**, the committee said it functioned unitarily, turning states into administrative arms of the Centre.
 - It flagged **Articles 256** (States must comply with laws made by Parliament), 257 (allows Union to direct states in certain cases), **365**, and **356** for enabling undue Centre control and recommended repealing Article 356.
 - The committee called for strengthening the **Inter-State Council (ISC)** to restore federal balance.
- **Administrative Reforms Commission (1969):** Recommended establishing an **ISC** under **Article 263** and appointing experienced, non-partisan individuals as **Governors** to promote cooperative federalism and impartiality in state administration.
 - It advocated greater **delegation of powers and financial resources to States** to reduce their dependence on the Centre, along with regulated deployment of Central armed forces.
- **Sarkaria Commission (1983):** Recommended that Article 356 should be used only in rare cases, as a last resort, with prior warnings to the State and clear justification.
 - Recommended making the **ISC** a permanent body, leading to its formal establishment in 1990 through a Presidential Order.
 - It advocated for **prior state consultation on central laws affecting state subjects**, formula-based central grants, and greater autonomy in deploying central forces.
- **Punchhi Commission (2007):** Recommended that states be consulted via the Inter-State Council before introducing bills on Concurrent List subjects and sought regulation of the Union's treaty-making power on State List matters.
 - This would enhance state representation in their internal affairs and promote cooperative federalism.
 - Suggested revisions in the allocation of financial resources, with more autonomy for states in fiscal matters.

Read more: [Frictions in Centre-State Relations](#)

Drishti Mains Question:

Discuss the challenges to state autonomy in India's federal system and evaluate the recommendations of the various Commissions in addressing these issues.

UPSC Civil Services Examination Previous Year's Question (PYQs) Mains

Q. Though the federal principle is dominant in our constitution and that principle is one of its basic features, but it is equally true that federalism under the Indian Constitution leans in favour of a strong Center, a feature that militates against the concept of strong federalism. Discuss. **(2014)**

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