

## P R E F A C E

Federalism in India has been adopted and adapted by the framers of the Constitution of India with a deeper purpose of forging unity and integrity amidst a situation dominated by economic backwardness, volatility of the society, new political system, multiethnic, multilingual, multi-religious pulls. Federalism was not just a political system but was to work as a strategy to resolve the multiple crises arising out of such myriad factors. The leadership in India believed that as India embarks on the path of development such crises would be resolved especially those arising out of primordial loyalties. A decade and a half went by quite undisturbed but soon ripples were felt within the polity as the internal democracy within Congress was waning coupled with disgruntlement amongst the local level leadership as stalwarts within the state politics either retired or were dead. The vacuum created was quickly utilized by the regional elites well versed with the nuances of regional concerns, wasted no time and developed political formations based on identity issues or issues related to regional deprivations and started staking claim for representation and recognition of their claims for self determination either through formation of new states, linguistic recognition or autonomy. No doubt these turbulences did have an impact on the political process in India which was responded to by diverse mechanisms of accommodation and compromise. The present study tries to take a look into the impact of such turbulences on the Indian political process, since 1977, when for the first time coalition government was formed in the Centre thereby signaling a break from the one party dominant system to a coalition system. This coalition was formed by the national political parties and different from the coalition governments formed in 1989 at the centre. The 1977 coalition government was short lived and soon Congress emerged as the dominant political party but regional political parties were a force now and no national political party could ignore their importance. Since 1989 the trend was different as the regional political parties became kingmakers at the centre. Coupled with this the economic reforms and marketisation of economy made it imperative on the part of the both the Centre and the State to go for cooperation and coordination rather than conflict. It was now necessary for all the political parties to not go towards extreme conflicts as none knew who would be required to be a political ally. Many scholars felt that this trend was going to stay. However, 2014 electoral results at the Centre led to the return of the one party dominant political system as BJP emerged victorious as single dominant political party at the Centre. Not only

this, subsequent state elections also reflected the same trend and in majority of the states BJP emerged victorious. This has made it all the more important for us a researcher in India's Government and Politics to probe deeper and reflect on the impact of regionalism on federalism in India.