

INDIAN FEDERAL SYSTEM

A **COVID-19** PERSPECTIVE



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Covid-19 and Centre-State Relations in India

Debolina Mukherjee

Introduction

While there is no unanimously agreed benchmark on what constitutes an ideal federalism, adherence to democratic norms including that of an affinity for cooperative federalism, denoting greater synchronization and mutual respect between the two sets of governments, without compromising on the autonomy of either one suggests certain principles as desirable in the division of powers. Some of them could be sensitivity to regional needs, a consensual and coordinated approach to decision and public policy making, transparency, greater access to the corridors of power and, needless to say, a united population.

India, for all practical purposes, lacks most of the above characteristics. Given the fragile state in which India found herself both in the immediate past and aftermath of independence, the suggestion of adding the word 'federalism' was rejected and India, that is Bharat, became a Union of States.(Aleaz, 2001,p.27). Hence, considering the exigencies of the volatile situation, right from the outset, the states were to play at the peripheries. However, this was never overtly articulated; the official version remaining that as both the sites are products of the Constitution, and both derive their respective authority from the same, one is not subordinate but rather co-ordinate to the other. Statutory and structural measures to give