

# Now, Vidarbha can't be put off

**VIJAY DARDA**

**I**t is a historic day today. The Congress Working Committee has resolved that a separate state of Telangana should be formed. It has also laid out a road map for the creation of the new state.

We the people of Vidarbha welcome this decision with just a cheer. The CWC resolution refers to the 1956 situation in the context of Telangana, and this places Vidarbha on the same footing, as both these regions were recommended for independent statehood by first States Reorganisation Commission. Besides this, both the regions were asked to merge into the larger linguistic entities for the sake of uniformity. It is not just a

Shiv Sena that Vidarbha did not get its due when Chhattisgarh, Uttarakhand and Jharkhand came into existence. Now, with the rest of Andhra Pradesh coming to terms with the creation of another Telugu speaking state, the lovers of Marathi should not be putting up road blocks for the creation of another Marathi-speaking state. After all, if this country can have more than one Hindi speaking state, there is nothing to damage the Marathi language if there are multiple states with Marathi as the official language.

This is the most appropriate time for setting in motion the process for creating a separate state of Vidarbha. The issue of its logic, validity and demand has been settled

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coincidence that both the regions have had similar experiences with regard to compatibility with the larger entities in which they had merged reluctantly.

I had drawn the attention of the Congress president Sonia Gandhi to this possibility some months ago, when a decision on Telangana appeared on the horizon. I had requested her that the demand for a separate Vidarbha should also not be ignored and a simultaneous decision should be taken.

Now, that after due deliberations the Congress leadership has arrived at a conclusion for Telangana, it is clear that the demand for separate Vidarbha cannot be put off any longer. The rationale for separate Vidarbha has been acknowledged and accepted by the leadership of the Congress party in the past. The BJP has always been convinced of this demand and in 2000 it was only due to the pressure from

several times in the past, and there is no need to start the process de novo. The Congress leadership should in all fairness to the patient and simple people of Vidarbha extend a similar resolution for the creation of a separate Vidarbha along with Telangana and initiate the same legal, constitutional and parliamentary formalities that would be completed within the next few months.

As the Congress leadership has accepted the rationale for creating smaller states, it is logical to expect that given the leadership qualities, the sagacity and political wisdom of the Congress president Sonia Gandhi and the rest of the leaders who have played their role in bringing such a difficult decision to fruition, would also move ahead and fulfil the regional aspirations of people who have long been denied the benefits of development.

**(The author is a member of Rajya Sabha and chairman of Lokmat Media)**