

## Should Mumbai be made a Union Territory?

Written by Administrator  
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Fifty years after their formation as different states of the Indian Union, Gujarat and Maharashtra have much to be proud of. Both states are among India's developed and industrialised states. Both states have above-average human development indicators and a record of good performance across many sectors.

In the world of business and commerce, both states have distinguished themselves. On the occasion of their golden jubilee, the point has been made that at the time of their creation, there was a view that Bombay, now Mumbai, should be made a Union Territory.

It is possible to imagine that Gujarat could have had its capital in Baroda and Maharashtra in Pune, and Bombay (Mumbai) could have remained a more cosmopolitan city. Today it is difficult to turn the clock back and there is not much popular support for the idea either in Maharashtra or Gujarat.

However, as India's major metropolitan centres grow, there may be a case for re-examining the question whether some large metros should be declared Union Territories open to all Indians for purposes of education and employment.

It is easy to see a tension between the growth of regionalism and regional politics on the one hand, and the rapid expansion of increasingly cosmopolitan metropolitan centres like the National Capital Region of Delhi, the greater Mumbai, greater Hyderabad and greater Bengaluru urban agglomeration on the other.

If Mumbai is only for Maharashtrians and Hyderabad only for the people of Telangana, the process of national integration that urbanisation brings with it can be seriously threatened.

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In a democracy, everyone must respect sentiments like regionalism and linguistic affinities of the people. However, an open society must also respect the right of every citizen to live and work wherever she pleases in the country.

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