

Title: Need to grant statehood to Vidarbha immediately.-Laid

SHRI VILAS MUTTEMWAR (NAGPUR): Sir, the Union Government have agreed to grant Statehood to Uttaranchal, Chhatisgarh, Delhi and very recently Pondicherry respecting sentiments and aspirations of the people but mainly out of political compulsions without accepted norms of economic viability, size of populated area, infrastructure facilities and potential viability etc. However, in doing so, it is a matter of great concern, the most valid demand for restoration of Statehood has been deliberately ignored by the ruling Party who has committed in its manifesto to restoration of Statehood to Vidarbha and have deliberately forgotten their commitment to the people.

This is very strange and deceptive attempt to suppress the popular upsurge among people of Vidarbha over the issue of restoration of Statehood granted by S.R.C. In 1956 on the basis of rational or valid criteria. The experiment of merger with Maharashtra has failed miserably as will be clear from the mounting backlog in development in all sectors of developmental activities. Dandekar Committee has highlighted mounting economic backlog of Vidarbha and expressed concern about the neglect of Vidarbha in the development process. The people of Vidarbha are convinced that their economic progress is possible only in separate Vidarbha. There is a growing public upsurge on the issue of restoration of Statehood to Vidarbha. All the people's representatives from Parliament to down below Panchayat Samities have supported the demand in a democratic and peaceful manner so far. All the political parties including BJP have supported the demand for restoration of Statehood to Vidarbha.

In the face of all this, ignoring the popular demand would tantamount to perpetuating the gross injustice leading to serious consequences. The Government should respect the aspirations of the Vidarbhaites.