INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF ADVANCED LEGAL RESEARCH

CRITICAL ANALYSIS ON THE IMPACT OF COALITION POLITICS ON THE INDIAN PARLIAMENTARY SYSTEM

-   Rukmani Sachdeva[1]

ABSTRACT

As a great success, India chose democracy and has fought for over 70 years to maintain a functioning democratic system. The research of coalitions is still in its development and is very new in India. However, it may turn out to be quite important for our country. These coalitions are an essential part of democracy's growth. This is being contested whether parliamentary democracy and federalism can survive with coalition governments, and if parliamentary government and federal polity operates within the limits of coalition governments then whether that is helpful and compatible to the difficult process of nation building. Coalition governments under a parliamentary system are not inherently stable. Coalition politics necessitate changes and improvements to the legislative model to meet the demands of the coalition system. The present research paper examines how coalition politics has made a notable influence on executive and legislature and it also examines the impact of coalition politics on the Party System of India's Parliamentary Democracy. At last, the present research paper also includes valuable measures which can improve the present parliamentary democracy in Indian coalition politics.

Chapter – 1: Introduction

1.1 Overview of the Research

A coalition government is a parliamentary government's cabinet in which multiple parties work together. Typically, such a government is established when no single party obtains a majority in the parliamentary elections. However, a coalition government may be formed in times of

---

[1] LL.M. Student at Symbiosis International University

national crisis or emergency, such as during warfare, to provide a government with the high level of perceived political legitimacy it seeks while also helping to reduce internal political turmoil. In a legislative government, a coalition government is a body of advisors formed when various political parties agree to collaborate in the administration and management of a country or community. Coalition governments are established when no single political party achieves a clear majority, and opposing parties instead agree to work together. It is being debated whether parliamentary government and federal polity can coexist with coalition politics and if the parliamentary government and federal polity functioning within the limitations of coalition politics are compatible with the difficult process of nation-building. The following are the political and constitutional aspects of coalition politics.

The Chief Minister's leadership is an acknowledged principle of the Indian Parliamentary system, but it does not appear to be empirically tenable in the framework of coalition politics in our Indian society.

The age of coalition politics in various states broadened the scope of the Governors' discretionary powers.[2] The Governors' actions in exerting their constitutional powers at their discretion drew harsh criticism. For obvious reasons, Governors have found it difficult to handle circumstances when coalition partners are numerous, varied, and its margin of strength is small, or where parties and groups have proved to hold the coalition at ransom.

Political homogeneity, another feature of parliamentary government, is based on thematic uniformity. Under coalition governments, efforts are made to create thematic unity through minimum programmes.[3] The coalition parties have different support structures that work against minimum-program initiatives.

The Prime Minister is considered as the "keystone of the cabinet arch; he is viewed as "first among equals" or "a moon amid lesser stars; above all, in the words of Laski, he is the centre of the cabinet's life and death; such a scenario no longer exists. In a coalition system, it is the coordination of the constituent elements that decide on issues such as ministerial appointment, portfolio distribution, formulation of a common minimum plan, and so forth. Naturally, the prime minister's position becomes very weak, even miserable, and he has to work according to

---

[2] Austin, Granville., The Indian Constitutions: Cornerstone of a Nation, Delhi 74 (Oxford University Press, 1966.)
[3] Vidyut Chakrabarty and R.K. Pandey, Indian Government and Politics 69 (Sage Publications New Delhi, 2008)

the pleasure of constituent elements and not the president. The facts indicate that in any difficult circumstance, the prime minister has to rely upon the support of other parties. During the period of coalition government prime minister's actions are heavily influenced by the viewpoints of the government's supporting or participating parties. The prime minister's major concern and priority are to guarantee the government survival by avoiding any kind of harsh and fearsome characteristics. It goes without saying that governance of the country takes a step back in such a scenario with the prime minister simply passing the time without any creditable acts of commission or omission.

Cabinet governance is well-known for its unity. The ministers all speak in unison. If he disagrees with the official narrative, he should resign. However, ministers may now be heard speaking in a different tone on any critical topic. The Prime Minister has no real influence over his colleagues, and he is forced to soften his tone or reinterpret his comments to appease the critics who have a seat among the opposition parties.

Minor parties with a local or small regional base can hold cabinet positions in a coalition. Their outlook is pitifully chauvinistic, and as a result, they battle over the pork barrels while paying little attention to national interests. Furthermore, certain parts are so nefarious that they threaten to resign, forcing the Prime Minister to find a way to appease them.

Above all, there is the loss of the values and beliefs upon which a government operates or should operate. Pragmatism emerges as the dominant ideology, and all constituent elements abandon their commitments. There are no such things as Rightism, Leftism, or Centrism. The functions of the government seem to be directionless. The fear of the future haunts it, and so the power-hungry politicians manage to pull on things for as long as they can by all means.[4]

There is a viewpoint regarding coalition politics that coalition governments under a parliamentary system are not inherently stable. Coalition politics necessitate changes and improvements to the legislative model to meet the demands of the coalition system. Coalition politics has had a notable influence in three areas: the executive, the legislative, and the party system. This coalition history since 1977 demonstrates that the scope of coalition politics may be established with or without philosophical foundations, but a combination of parties with nothing in common cannot bring about the growth of norms that would be necessary for the

---

[4] Pue Ghosh, Indian Government and Politics 80 (PHI, New Delhi, 2012)

system's stability.[5]. The future of coalitions is dependent on this critical aspect.

1.2 Research questions

In the present research, the following are the research questions:

1. What is the impact of Coalition politics on the Indian Parliamentary System and constitutional institutions?
2. What are the effects of coalition politics on the Indian parliamentary democracy's party structure?
3. What are the measures to strengthen the Parliamentary system in Indian Coalition politics?

1.3 Objectives of the study

Objectives of the present research are as follows:

1. To research the working and functioning of India's parliamentary democracy.
2. To research the impact of coalition politics on Indian parliamentary democracy.
3. To research and analyse the effects of coalition politics on the Indian parliamentary democracy's party structure.
4. To determine the functions of regional political parties in Indian parliamentary democracy.
5. To propose measures to improve the effectiveness of parliamentary democracy in Indian coalition politics.

1.4 Statement of Research Problem

Coalition governments have become an unavoidable and necessary component of national and regional politics in India nowadays. For at least three decades, India has experimented with numerous alliances at the national level. Regional political parties have been formed in order to create a coalition government as well as to challenge and overthrow the current governments at the federal and state levels. The survival of the BJP-led NDA government at the centre has relied on the cooperation of regional parties following the formation of the United Front Government in 1996 and the subsequent installation of the BJP-led government in both 1998 and 1999. With the help and cooperation of regional parties, the UPA-I and UPA-II governments were created in 2004 and 2009, respectively. The regional parties shared power at

---

[5] Singh M.P. and Saxena., Indian Politics: Contemporary Issues and Concerns 40 (PHI, New Delhi, 2008)

the centre, which influenced their potential. Political scientists and leaders have debated the potential influence of regional parties on the Indian political system, but the reality is that they have arrived to stay, even at the national level, and play a considerable role. More than anything, regional parties have repeatedly proven that they have come to play a significant role in national government.

This demonstrates that, in the present political environment, regional political parties have played an essential role in national coalition politics. The purpose and aim of the present research are to establish the impact of coalition politics on parliamentary democracy in India.

1.5 Significance of the study

In the present research, there is an attempt which has been made to research the impact of coalition politics on the Indian Parliamentary system. The present research focuses on the impact of Indian coalition politics on the constitutional institutions, and the present research also includes the effects of coalition politics on the party system of the Indian Parliamentary system. The present research will critically analyse the impact of coalition politics on the functioning of parliament, party systems and executive of Indian parliamentary democracy.

1.6 Research Methodology

The research methodology which has been used in the present research is doctrinal. Doctrinal research entails analysing case laws, organising, ordering, and systematising legal ideas, and studying a legal institution. As a result, the technique used here necessitates a review of relevant literature, as well as the study of theoretical, practical, legislative issues. The study will be focused on secondary sources. Secondary sources for the topic include scholarly books, research reports, journals, dissertations, textbooks, and relevant websites. These secondary sources have been examined for the present research to study the impact of coalition politics on the Indian Parliamentary System.

1.7 Hypothesis

1. Smaller parties, especially regional and caste-based parties, have little alternative but to be appendages of either the BJP or the Congress, either before or after elections.
2. Coalition politics is growing. Political parties are getting more competent at dealing with contradictions, and they may now coexist at the Union level with strong competitors in the states.

3. Coalition governments in a parliamentary system are not always unstable; stability is dependent on a number of circumstances and elements.

4. Coalition politics necessitate variations and innovations in the Indian parliamentary system to meet the demands of the coalition system. Coalition politics had a notable influence on the three areas, i.e., executive, the legislative and the party system.

1.8 Literature Review

Anil Kumar edited "India Politics at a Crossroads."[6] is based on the nature and scope of India's political and social issues. It covers a wide range of topics in India, such as coalition government, federalism, regional and social movements. On the other hand, it also examines the factors that have impacted and formed the political process over time. Thus, the descriptive and explanatory modes of thinking about Indian politics have research implications.

Thakurta and Shankar[7] examine the success of major political parties such as the Bhartiya Janata Party and the Indian National Congress, as well as regional parties, indicating that coalition is just not a fantasy but a stark reality for a country like India, at both Central and State levels. The primary themes of Sundaram's writings are the trends and challenges of coalitional politics, the experiences and possibilities of the United Front administration, a study of minority governments in India, and the crises of governance and coalition government.

Sahni in his book 'Coalition Politics in India'[8] identified and highlighted the challenges and possibilities of coalition governance in a very clear manner for the first time. He studied about coalition theory and coalition defections as a method of government. The coalition theory from an international perspective, illustrating examples of countries such as Lebanon, Ceylon, the United Kingdom, and France, as well as discussing the utility, durability, and workability of the coalition set up for a diverse nation like India from historical, cultural, and economic backgrounds.

Subhash C. Kashyap's edited book 'Coalition Government and Politics in India'[9] depicts the most significant and current political trends following the electoral result, such as the creation of a "hung parliament" and the establishment of minority administrations. Different articles

---

[6] Jana, Anil, Kumar edited, Indian Politics at the Crossroads, Common wealth publishers, New Delhi, edition, 1998.

[7] Thakurta, Paranjay Guha and Raguraman, Shankar, "A Time of Coalitions - Divided We Stand ", SAGE Publication, New Delhi, 2000

[8] Sahni, Naresh Chandra (Ed.), "Coalition Politics in India," New Academy Publishing Co.

[9] Kashyap, C. Subhash., Coalition Government and politics in India, Uppal publishing House, New Delhi, 1997

were dedicated to models of coalition governments at the state and local level, as well as the experience of other nations, which is quite relevant to the current study.

Riker (1962) discusses the processes of coalition politics in his book, "The Theory of Political Coalition."[10] This work makes a significant theoretical addition to political science, particularly to political coalition theory. The author formalised political theory using game theory and deduced the size principle. Using the model of n-person games, Riker develops three major propositions for coalition government: first, the "size principle" (i.e., the tendency of winning coalitions toward the minimal winning size); second, the "strategic principle" (i.e., the participants move forward toward a minimal winning coalition); and third, the "disequilibrium principle" (i.e., the selective elimination of coalition participants).

Singh and Mishra (2004) incorporated numerous studies on coalition politics in India in their edited book, "Coalition Politics in India: Problems and Prospects." The book is broken into four sections. The first section examined the circumstances, causes, and effects of coalition governance in India. The second section discusses the operation of coalition governments at the federal and state levels. This chapter also discusses the many stages of inter-party electoral coalitions, as well as the evolution of coalition ideas in the context of political events and ideological explanations. The third chapter of the book is devoted to the polity's and society's deeper structures, as well as their interactions with coalition administrations.

Sarkar (2016, April) makes the argument in his article 'Federalism & Coalition Politics: A Study on Indian Context'[11] that with the advent of separatist movements threatening national unity in contemporary India, several regional political parties have become an essential aspect of politics at the local level, state and the national levels. Author examined that the connections between national and regional parties are heavily reliant on the functions that members of the parties at the central and regional levels develop with one another.

Tamala (2009, December), in his research paper 'Coalition Politics in India: 2004-2009,'[12] discusses the efficiency of coalition administrations in India between 2004 and 2009. The major issue addressed by the author in this piece is the relevance of the frequently used concept of "coalition dharma," or a moral code of conduct regarding various elements of a coalition politics. The author argues that the coalition mandate of keeping coalitions together only to stay in power leads to unethical actions. According to the author, a big and unprincipled alliance

---

[10] Riker, William. politics in Theory of Political Coalitions, Oxford and IBH Publishing Company, New Delhi.
[11] Sarkar, Sri Goutam (2016, April). Federalism & coalition politics: A study on Indian context. Retrieved from http://www.iosrjournals.org/iosrjhss/papers/Vol.%2021%20Issue4/Version-6/J0214065661.pdf.
[12] Tamala, Krishna K. (2009, December). Coalition politics in India: 2004-2009. Asian Journal of Political Science.

would debilitate a government while also leading to political corruption and even intimidation. Lesser parties with some ideological affinity and a single goal, on the other hand, would be good to a stable democracy.

Kailash (2007, January) in his research paper 'Middle Game in Coalition Politics'[13] focuses on the post-formation dynamics of coalition administrations in India at the centre. The author investigated and concentrated on learning and coalition management mechanisms. The author contends that the middle game is about dealing with unpredictability and uncertainty and responding to the unexpected; it is about creating connections, solidifying similarities, working out disagreements, and widening the government participatory base.

Mukherjee's (2017) book "The Coalition Years: 1996-2012" is a compendium of his experiences as a politician from 1996 to 2012, as well as his career as a cabinet member, including ministries of Defence, External Affairs, and Finance beginning in 2004. He recalls each of the incidents that occurred during this time period with candour. His book examines Indian parliamentary system very gracefully and also shares all the big political incidents that took place from 2004 to 2012. Thus, he argues in this book that the coalition years from 1996 to 2012 were one of the most critical eras in the nation's political history.

Dodd (1976) examines the difference in cabinet durability throughout modern parliaments in his book, 'Coalition in Parliamentary Governance,'[14] outlining parliamentary circumstances that are favourable to stable government. This research is founded on the basic idea that parliamentary governance may be considered as a game, and the type of the coalition that forms the cabinet determines the outcome of the game. The author studied and examined the theory to parliamentary party systems, presenting empirical interpretations of the two negotiating conditions. The author has highlighted the analysis's shortcomings, indicating areas for additional in-depth future research on parliamentary situations. He went into great detail about the findings' substantive importance for our conceptions of party systems Indian Parliamentary system. As a result, this book is extremely beneficial for the present research to analyse the coalition politics in our Indian Parliamentary System.

Chatterjee (1998) presents a comprehensive introduction to the study of Indian politics in his edited book, 'State and Politics in India.'[15] This collection of magnificent pieces presents an overall perspective of Indian politics as it exists today—complex, energetic, and dynamic—

---

[13] Kailash, K.K. (2007, January 27). Middle game in coalition politics. Economic and Political Weekly, XLII (04), 307-317

[14] Dodd, L.C. (1976). Coalitions in parliamentary governments. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

[15] Partha Chatterjee (Ed.), State and politics in India, New Delhi: Oxford University Press.

more than sixty years after independence. This book assists the researcher in examining India's primary political systems, as well as analysing processes of dominance and opposition that play an important part in Indian politics.

Mehra, Khanna, and Kueck (2003) contended in their edited book, 'Political Parties and Party System,'[16] that the rise of political groups and the party system in the world's largest, most complicated, and most volatile democracy reached a tipping point around the turn of the century. Various studies have explored the social, cultural, and economic components of the Indian party system, as well as its fragmentation.

Chapter-2: Conceptual Analysis of Coalition Government in India

2.1 Meaning of Coalition Government in India

The concept "coalition" comes from the Latin word "coalitio," means "to develop together." Thus, coalitions technically refer to the process of combining pieces into a single body or as a whole. In politics, a coalition is an association of several political parties. Coalition is a multi-party governmental phenomena in which a number of minority parties join together to run the government, which would otherwise be impossible. An alliance or coalition is created when many groups agree to cooperate and define a common programme or agenda on which they will work. A coalition government is constantly subject to pulls and pressures, especially in a multinational country such as India.

When two or more political parties team up to establish a government and wield political power by means of a mutually agreed-upon program/agenda, the system is known as coalition politics or coalition government. In contemporary parliaments, alliances are formed when no one political party can collect a majority of the votes. Two or more parties with enough elected members to constitute a majority may then be able to agree on a common platform that does not necessitate too many significant concessions with their separate ideas and continue to create a government.

2.2 Evolution of Coalition Politics in India

INC won the needed majority to establish the government in our nation in the first four Lok Sabha elections (1952, 1957, 1962, and 1967). Despite a rift in our party of INC in 1969, Indira Gandhi's minority administration was able to keep with the help of the CPI, the DMK, as well

---

[16] Mehra, Ajay K., Khanna, D.D., & Kuecket, Gert (Eds.) Political parties and party system. New Delhi: Sage Publications.

as other parties. The INC won the 1971 elections and installed a one-party government once more. The dominating Congress party, on the other hand, was soundly beaten in the 1977 elections. Since then, the Centre has had a variety of coalition governments.

The first coalition in free India occurred at the union level in 1977, when non-congress forces combined under the leadership of Morarji Desai in the guise of the Janta administration. Lohia, Ram Monohar In 1963, he proposed the Anti-Congressism or Non-Congressism approach. He believed that because the INC success in the previous three general elections with a landslide, there was a widespread belief among the people that INC could not be destroyed but that it had arrived to retain power indefinitely. Lohia asked the opposition groups to run a single candidate against INC candidates so that non-Congress votes are not split and the general public is not under the impression that INC cannot be defeated. The ideology of Dr. Lohia worked and was successful in general elections of 1967, when the INC was defeated in seven states and Samyuktha Vidhayak Dal governments were created by the Opposition parties of the moment. Lohia's formula sowed the seeds of Indian coalition politics. Morarji Desai's experience led to the formation of the first coalition. He was India's first prime minister who was above the age of 60. This is how Coalition politics were introduced in our Nation.

2.3 Phases of Coalition Government

1. **Pre-election Coalition:** This means when parties used to do the adjustments between themselves. This form of alliance is significant since it occurs before an election. It promotes deeper understanding between political parties in general and members of the party specifically, providing a shared platform and attracting voters through a unified manifesto. Electoral alliances and electoral adjustments are part of the pre-election alliances. Prepoll agreements between the parties are quite usual. They may reach an agreement on a shared agenda or just agree not to oppose and even support one other's candidates in certain constituencies.

2. **Post-Election Coalition**: Unlike pre-election alliances, post-election coalitions exist only after the parties or leaders representing them have completed the general election. It is a union formed to share political power and manage the country. It is a post-election compromise or arrangement. To put it another way, it is an opportunistic sort of coal. The desire of parties to divide political influence and control the state leads to the formation of a post-election alliance. A post-election alliance is greatly simplified if it is established by a pre-election consensus. In a multiparty system, parties and breakaway factions must manoeuvre to establish a majority

coalition to form the cabinet. There are several talks and a great deal of give and take. There might be some horse dealing and other forms of transactions. Personality, tradition, style, and chance all play a role in the development of any specific coalition, with each group attempting to take a vital position. The key position is that held by the final additional group of a minimum winning coalition. The coalition will be dissolved if this group withdraws.

Chapter-3: Impact of Coalition Politics on Constitutional Institutions

India, which has established a parliamentary government structure inside a federal system, has constitutionally established the parliamentary structures at both the Centre and the States. The same legislative ideas and standards are largely implemented at both levels. When proved helpful, improvements and ideas tried and successfully implemented at the Centre and state level. The Indian Constitution has mainly followed the Westminster model of legislative institutions for both the Central and State governments. In India, there are three areas which are important organs of Constitutional Institutions and coalition politics have made noticeable impact on them and they are the Executive, the Legislature and the Party system.

3.1 Impact of Coalition Politics on the Executive

Coalition politics have an impact on the three aspects of the parliamentary executive: cabinet formation, cabinet administration, and the cabinet nature. These legislative, institutional, political and human aspects of the Cabinet system are intertwined with the two major procedures of the parliamentary executive, namely Cabinet establishment and Cabinet administration. Since the majoritarian Cabinet and the coalition Cabinet differ in the above three characteristics, they have different effects on the two processes and their outcomes. According to Article 74 and article 163 of the constitution of India, there shall be Council of Ministers, led by the Prime Minister / Chief Minister, to assist and support the President of India / Governor of the State in the execution of the work and in the performance of their duties. According to legislative procedure, the Prime Minister / Chief Minister is the leader of the majority party in the Parliament / State Legislature, and he appoints his colleagues to the Council of Ministers.

In coalition governments, the head of the main party is normally chosen as the head of the coalition's parliamentary party, but he must also be acceptable to the coalition's partners. The alliance could choose the leader of a minority party to lead the Cabinet at times. The

fundamental concept appears to be that the head of the Cabinet, regardless of his own party's strength, must be acceptable to all coalition partners whose votes may be important in choosing the Prime Minister/Chief Minister[17]. Usually, it seems like the elections of the parliament or the state legislature becomes the occasion for choosing the PM of India or Chief Minister of the state since the entire election process revolves around the leader of the party or coalition of parties. But under the Coalition Government the post-election circumstances might disrupt the previous agreements.

Coalition is a negotiation process amongst parties that is continuous from beginning to end. The participation of the partners in the Ministry, the allotment of proportionate seats, and the division of responsibilities or portfolios among them are frequently the subject of heated debate. It is permissible if the main parties receive a larger proportion since they are expected to have a higher interest in election campaigns and a greater level of responsibility in governance. However, it is common in India for smaller parties to want a substantially bigger payoff in terms of the quantity and seniority of posts, and they frequently succeed in obtaining them. This is especially true when the major party is reliant on smaller parties to keep the coalition together. Minor partners appear to believe that it is exclusively the responsibility of the main party to keep the coalition together, and they frequently act irresponsibly. To put it another way, the leading party becomes the loser in the negotiating process since it must pay up a portion of its fair share to please the pressuring parties. This must come as a shock that in certain coalitions, all MLAs from the allied party are appointed as Ministers in order to keep the Ministry afloat.

Council of ministers once established, the difficulty of organizing and bringing them together occurs. Ministers might just have conflicting or contradicting views, objectives, and ambitions since they are members of different political parties. The absence of political homogeneity is the most defining characteristic of a coalition Ministry[18]. As a result, managing ministerial companions and supervising their operations necessitates exceptional expertise and tolerance on the side of the Prime Minister/ Chief Minister.

Alliance is the skilful performance of a tightrope balancing act requiring compromises among two or much more distant and even opposing points of view. The payoffs resulting from the

---

[17] N. Jose Clander, "Coalition Politics and Constitutional Reform" in B.I. Fadia (ed.) page 90-91
[18] Harish Kare, "The Governance of Coalition Government", The Hindu, 30 July, 2000.

negotiation process may be the decisive factor. Because each party tries to take more and offer less to the other coalition members, the centrally positioned parties have an edge in coalition negotiating[19]. Within the main alliance, there could be mini-coalitions that act with the goal of grabbing specific favours for themselves. Specific shared interests created by several members, establishing a mini-coalition, run contrary to the broader and overall goals of the government and may eventually lead to the government's collapse.

This has been noticed that forming alliances or coalition between two parties reflecting the very same socioeconomic divisions or philosophical origins may be more difficult than between two parties reflecting distinctive social bases. However, it is certainly true about the like-minded political parties that, parties with the same background or philosophy, are more likely to converge than parties with different backgrounds or ideologies. Both statements are correct, though appearing to be contradicting, however the outcome of coalition formation is dependent on the type of negotiation circumstances. And once the alliance is formed, socioeconomic distinctions and ideological proximity are irrelevant.

3.2 Impact of Coalition Politics on the Legislature

Coalition government did not result in structural reforms in the Parliament or state legislatures. The legislative officials stay the same, as do the norms of procedure and the conduct of business. There are just as many legislative parties and committees since there are political parties involved, and there'll be a combined parliamentary party representing the whole coalition, whether ruling or in opposition. Committees would be formed and supervised in accordance with the same rules that govern legislative procedures. Bills can indeed be passed if the requisite majority is obtained in accordance with the rules. When it becomes impossible to collect a two-thirds majority without the support of an opposition, constitutional reforms may be significantly impeded or pushed back. When the alliance achieves a two-thirds majority by itself, it must also take every one of the coalition partners with it.

The Parliament was established as the centre of power under a parliamentary form of government, with the cabinet remaining reliant on and accountable to the Legislature. As time passed, the Cabinet reasserted political influence and significance. And the Legislative administration began to be known as a "Cabinet dictatorship." The advent of

---

[19] Akhtar Majeed, "Coalitions as Power Sharing Arrangements", in Akhtar Majeed (ed.) page 8

alliance politics, and the resultant weakening of the Prime Ministerial role, led to alter the function of Parliament in regard to the executive.[20]

As government participants, the coalition parties are required to provide stability and jointly bear responsibility for the government's performance. However, because they are of different origins and personalities, they frequently cause conflict and mutual criticism. As a consequence, a coalition government includes a framework for mutual checks and balances. But, the reality of coalition performance deviates from the idealized image of easy cooperation and polite dissent. They occasionally have explicit fights on the floor of the home and outside.

Chapter – 4: Impact of Coalition Politics on Party System

Coalition Government is around political parties and the tactics they perform in order to maximise their reward. This becomes significant when no single political party can achieve power on its own. In these kinds of cases, a political party forms forces with another one or more parties to contest elections and/or create a government. The term "coalition" derives from the Latin word "coalition," which means "growing collectively." A coalition or Alliance is essentially an association of parties that make decisions together. A coalition is essentially an alliance of political groups that chose to work along during or after the election process to share power in running the government. Coalition governments or political party alliances could occur before or after the elections. Certain political parties might join together, combine their resources to coordinate them effectively, and collaborate to maximise their gains by defeating opponents in the electoral process. If there is a single coalition battling the competitors in parties, the alliance has a better chance of gaining extra votes than that of the rivals. If two powerful coalitions are opposed against one another[21]. The result would be similar to that of strong two-party systems, with either setting a majority for the government. When more than two coalitions compete, the outcome would be in support of one of them or none, with no coalition able to form a majority. In the latter case, just a subsequent alliance of two or more coalitions may form a government.

1. Disunited parties vs. a single coalition

---

[20] Raju Abraham, Role of Political Parties in State Legislature (New Delhi, 1999).

[21] Ram Sundar, D. (Ed.), "Coalition Politics in India: Search for Political Stability, ", National Publishing House, New Delhi, 2000.

2. First versus second coalition.

3. The first coalition v/s the second coalition versus the third coalition.

Alliance entails a commitment on the part of the political parties involved in accomplishing a practical shared policy, notwithstanding the fact that they are ideologically far apart. Parties should agree on a shared minimal plan of action, with implementation being the goal of power sharing[22]. It necessitates 'ideological concessions' on the part of both radical and fundamentalist groups. Sometimes right-wing and left-wing groups join together to defeat a mutual opponent. Alternatively, it could be a combination of secularists and communalists, or even Marxists and anti-Marxists. In any situation, shared strategies for constructive action must be developed.

The negative goal of disrupting a government or stopping a political party from gaining power could not result in the formation of a coalition. Whenever 'like-minded parties with same political agendas form alliances, developing a shared strategy may not face major challenges. When politically divided groups are obliged to collaborate, serious issues arise. The minimum essential plan becomes a single platform for all coalition parties. It cannot be the sum of all the manifestos of the many political parties, which may include contradicting views and pledges.[23]

The common minimum programme reflects compromise and the bare minimum that the political parties have agreed upon. Numerous political or 'fundamentalist' compromises would have to be taken by the main political parties in order to accommodate the politically and fundamentally distant parties. Long-standing alliances will grasp the significance of CMPs and therefore will plan for the elections early enough. To establish a shared vision, hastily assembled alliances frequently reach haphazard agreements with very little or no understanding amongst them.

Minor parties seem unable to acquire power on their own under a single member constituency multiple party system, thus they attempt to form alliances with larger parties. Small parties, especially, struggle to expand above their areas of power under a single member constituency system, and their appeal is confined to their vote banks. As a response, in order to widen their

---

[22] "The Cabinet system in a Coalition Situation", in Subhash C, Kashyap (ed.), Coalition Government and Politics in India (New Delhi, 1997), page 98.

[23] Maheshwari, S. R., 'Coalition Government - 1976 Indian Experience: 1946-1996,' 'Politics in India, "New Delhi, July 1996, page 23

area of influence or strength, they must form alliances with the other political parties. At the very same time, every party is restrained by other parties from expanding into the latter's territory[24].

As a result, the alliance both provides opportunities for expansion and hinders progress. One political party may attempt to push the boundaries by promoting conflicts and undermining other parties. Internal conflicts eventually kill the political parties, however for the time being, the divided parties are tolerated without collapsing the alliance. Also, when encouraged by other coalition partners, an internal breakdown within a coalition party may be handled as an internal affair of the party in question. The propensity to accommodate divided parties benefits minor parties in coalitions at the expense of the parent party, and they gain political advantages disproportionately.

Personality or character -based alliances and parties are a typical occurrence in today's politics. Any coalition among two freshly developing personality-oriented parties becomes nearly impossible in such instances, regardless policy closeness or similarity of social basis. Fierce rivalry among opposing leaders and their supporters may prompt the closure of a meeting location.

Other feature in Indian politics is non-participatory external assistance, which several parties want to provide in order to maintain a political party or alliance of parties in power without agreeing to undertake government duties. Parties consider the implications of their involvement in the next Parliamentary or regional elections to the State Assembly, as well as other reactions in State politics. And, if the rewards from instant authority are smaller than the latent rewards in store for them, they will naturally opt to avoid immediate power.

Chapter -5: Impact of Coalition Government on Centre – State Relations

The active engagement of regional parties in the Indian government, both at the centre and also at the state level, has resulted in numerous of developments and influenced the Centre-State relationship.

In light of current political trends, the influence of the Coalition Politics on Centre-State relations can be considered under the following headings:

---

[24] D. Sunder Ram (ed.) Coalition Politics in India NPH (Jaipur, 2000), page 258-262.

5.1 The Governor's office

According to the coalition form of governance, the selection of the governors has recently gone through a rocky patch. Legislative compulsions to create governments, particularly at the national level, based exclusively on the majority-gaining political party almost always end in worsening of Centre-State relations. Furthermore, this would subject the Governor's office to the sensitivities of political influences and concerns. For instance, the latest removal, transfer, and resignations of the Governors of Rajasthan, Bihar, Tamil Nadu, and Punjab, who have been earlier selected by the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) government, and, specifically , the way in which the govt of the United Progressive Alliance (UPA) tried to deal with the Governor of Tamil Nadu by getting into a preventable political controversy, demonstrate beyond a doubt that Indian politics has gone a long way to come within the scope of federalism.

There was a case in Tamil Nadu which was related to the governor's change, specifically to satisfy the state's coalition party and that too against the will of the governing party in the Tamil Nadu state without substantial and reasonable grounds for such a drastic step, illustrates the need for reinforcing the office of the Governor in India[25]. This scenario was complicated further when the Chief Minister of the state of Tamil Nadu moved to the Apex Court by submitting an affidavit containing certain extracts from the discussion with the home minister, which the opposition and the members of coalition government at the national level contended and said that this violated Oath of Secrecy.

Despite the fact that the controversy was settled legally, with the Apex Court declining to grant interim relief to the government of Tamil Nadu in order to prevent the Centre from transferring the governor without the consent of the State's Chief Minister, it has had a significant impact on the centre-state relations. Another instance that may be used to illustrate that the post of Governor under a coalition politics is influenced by political urges is the UPA government's demand to replace Bihar Governor Rama Jois.

5.2 The Growing Demand for State Autonomy.

The presence of regional parties in the Centre has a substantial influence on the Indian federal system. The establishment of a coalition politics has resulted in a significant divergence from the features of Indian federalism, which is characterised by centralising tendencies. With the

---

[25] The Pioneer" (New Delhi), 15 March, 1998

rise of regional parties, their desire for state autonomy has soared.

The inclusion of regional parties has led in an insecure, weak central government. In the election system, each coalition party strives to establish its particular geographical, cultural, and economic interests. Regional parties place greater attention on the growth of their territory or region rather than the advancement and growth of the country as a whole.

Chapter -6: Measures to Strengthen the Parliamentary Democracy in Indian Coalition Politics

The following suggestions and recommendations have been given for not just strengthening the parliamentary democracy in Indian coalition politics but also for improving the performance of coalition politics in India:

1. The coalition government at the Centre, that was seen as an exception in the aftermath of the 1977 General Elections, has now become a more or less constant part of the political system. However, the nation did not have a positive experience with alliance politics and government. So far, all five trials have left an unpleasant taste in people's mouths. Unfortunately, no experiment has lasted long enough to build faith in coalition governments. The crises that have overtaken all of the Coalition politics since 1977 have highlighted basic constitutional problems, and presidential acts have been a point of conflict. The system of "external support" must be discontinued, as well as all partners should join the government. "External Support" means authority without accountability for its actions and inactions. Strong conventions must be established to prevent resort to it[26]. For this, the President may need to take on a proactive role, insisting not just on the involvement of all coalition partners in government, but also on strong commitments against internal instability.

2. According to ex-President of India Shri R Venkataraman, it is desirable to have a "National Government" that is a government of all abilities. It is suggested that instead of the majority party ruling, a system with enough involvement from all parts be devised. It is wished that this system will replace confrontational politics with co - operative politics and will provide a genuine democratic alternative to the current constitution, as well as a proposal for a national

---

[26] Bhambri, C.P, Coalition Politics in India, Shipra Publications, Delhi, 2010, page 182

executive as an alternative to the current form of parliamentary government, which gives rise to alliances or Coalition Politics.[27]

3. Article 83 of the Constitution of India should be amended to assure that Lok Sabha is not disbanded before the completion of its five-year tenure. During the rise of political instability in the nation, Sri. R. Venkataraman, Sri. Nija Lingappa, Sri. P.A. Sangama, and many intellectuals have vehemently campaigned for full tenure of the Lok Sabha.

4. The Prime Minister, as the country's Chief Executive, should indeed be chosen by the will of the people directly for a five-year term, so that he cannot be removed out of office based on the personal whims of dissatisfied members of Parliament. However, if he breaks a law or goes against the people, he may be ousted by impeachment, as in the case of India's President.

5. It would be accurate to say that, the parliamentary system is a kind of party government. However, the moment's necessity would be to have a bi-party system because it has enhanced the essence of parliamentary democracy in the United Kingdom. This may be achievable in India by constitutional amendments. The opposition is successful because it is always ready to present an alternative to the party in power in the event that the government is deposed as a result of a no-confidence vote.[28]

6. Regional parties play a significant role in every country's national politics. As a result, it is necessary for them to outgrow their ideology in the preservation and provision of national interests, all of which leads to a strengthening of collective leadership while also ensuring that national parties comprehend and accommodate regional ones. "Alliances are: of the party, by, and for the party" is a widely known phrase. What's required is for political parties, both national and regional, to go beyond caste, creed, colour, location, and religion, language, money-muscle power, and like in order to build a vote bank, and instead carve a niche for themselves on value-based concerns. In a nutshell, politics should be fuelled by intelligence and motivated by morals.

7. The coalition government should be established as genuine. A broad-based policy, as proposed by the Second Reforms Commission, must be implemented to ensure the country's socioeconomic progress. In order to retain the integrity and sanctity of the Governor's office, the Governor's office must be freed from the grasp of political parties, and reforms must be implemented for the same.

---

[27] Kashyap Subhash, Our Political System, National Book Trust, Delhi, 2008, page 198.

[28] Narang A.S., India Political System, Process and development, Op. Cit, page 684.

8. The government must devise a system to guarantee that both the ruling and opposition parties have a productive and positive role in making and executing the country's main policy choices. It is a necessary precondition for Parliamentary System to perform properly. However, in the political game rivalry, both between parties and between people, matters are determined not on the basis of national interest, but of party or personal benefit. A shift in the character of ruling and opposition is required for a government by consensus, particularly in this period of political insecurity[29].

All of these recommendations might be examined in terms of improving the Indian parliamentary system and eliminate some of its flaws. Any hurried move to replace it with a presidential system may harm and may turn into counterproductive. For the time being, the Parliamentary system must be granted some time in order to implement some reforms. Currently, the Parliamentary system of India is attempting to adapt to the reality of coalition politics. It has demonstrated its capacity to adapt to changes in the Indian political system.

Chapter-7: Conclusion

A democratically elected government is a custodian of the interests of whole population, even those who disagree and criticise the government's policies and practices. According to this perspective, an effective party system is indeed a requirement for a Parliamentary democracy. The political party is the mechanism that produces majorities and implements political power. It acts as an intermediary between the citizens and their government. Political parties control the procedures for selecting and qualifying important government workers and vetting them for the authority to develop, implement, supervise, and interpret policy. Governments formed by alliances are minority governments created in the centre by an alliance of Regional Parties. Regional Parties, on the other hand, do not place an emphasis on national interests, and as a result, they do not work together to ensure the smooth operation of government. Coalition

politics necessitate changes and improvements to the legislative model to meet the demands of the coalition system. Coalition politics has had a notable influence in three areas: the executive, the legislative, and the party system. The coalition governmental system allows different socio-

---

[29] Thakurta, Paranjay Guha and Rajaraman, Shankar, "A Time of Coalitions - Divided We Stand ", SAGE Publication, New Delhi, 2000.

cultural and economic groups to engage in the governance of the country, but it creates a lot of friction between the Centre and the States. The regional parties in the centre strive to express and aggregate regional interests that are unrelated to the national interest, which has an impact on the nation's overall growth. The most crucial position required for the appropriate management of centre-state ties, the Office of the Governor, is likewise politicised in order to ensure the coalition government's stability.

References

➢ Arora. B. (2000) `Negotiating differences: federal coalitions and national cohesion", in F. Frankel, Z. Hasan, R. Bhargava and B. Arora (eds) Transforming India: Social and Political Dynamics of Democracy, Oxford: Oxford University Press 176-206.

➢ Austin, Granville, (1966), The Indian Constitution Cornerstone of a Nation (Oxford: Clarendon Press).

➢ Banerjee, Anil Chandra, (1977-78), The Constitutional History of India: 1919 – 1977, Vol. III, (Delhi: Macmillan).

➢ Basu, D.D., (1992) Introduction to the Constitution of India (Delhi: Prentice Hall of India).

➢ Cook, T. (2002) Nested Political Coalitions; Nation, Regime, Programme, Cabinet, London: Praeger.

➢ Kashyap, Subhash C., (ed.) (1972) Indian Parties and Politics (New Delhi: Institute of Constitutional and Parliamentary Studies).

➢ Riker, W. (1962) The Theory of Political Coalitions, New Haven: Yale University Press. Riker, W and Orde shook. P. (1973) An Introduction to Positive Political Theory, Englewood Clefts: Prentice Hall.

➢ Sahni, N.C. (ed.) (1971) Coalition Politics in India (Jullundur: New Academic Publishing House).

Sharma, T.R., (ed.) (1986) New Challenges of Politics in Indian States (New Delhi: Uppal Publications).