

Present political scenario of Jammu and Kashmir and agenda of alliance between PDP and BJP

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Abstract

The study is an attempt to evaluate the prevailing democracy in Jammu & Kashmir and the current hung government and its agendas' for future development. Almost all the main countries of Asia are undergoing through the change by the means of globalization, modernization and the Changing global balance of power which is transformed from the international environment same is found in the state of J&K besides this, the Assembly election in the state is now the matter of the electoral competition. The study analyzes elections held to state legislature in 2014. Aspects like, participation of local political parties and national political parties has been evaluated, performance and participation of some major political parties, participation of electorate, representation given to women candidates etc have been studied. It was Mission of Bhartiya Janata Party (BJP) headed by Narendra Modi to win 44 seats in J&K to get majority in legislative Assembly. But due to fractured mandate no party get clear cut majority in the house and the only alternative that was coalition government between People's Democratic Party and Bhartiya Janata Party. Both parties agreed for coalition government to promote balance in the sensitive state of J&K.

Keywords: Jammu & Kashmir, India, state legislature, assembly elections, coalition government, hung government

Introduction

The J&K state had been consisted of three political regions. Including Ladakh towards the east, Jammu towards the south, Kashmir Valley towards the west, Indian controlled parts of J&K have a multi-party democratic system of governance. The main political parties in the state of J&K are People's Democratic Party (PDP), Bharatiya Janta Party (BJP), National Conference (NC), Indian national congress (INC). But in the assembly elections of 2014 the state of J&K saw a good voting percentage of 65% (which is the indication of majority of people participation in the government to enjoy their political rights) PDP remains at the top with 28 seats. The second largest party was Bharatiya Janta Party with 25 seats and Indian National Congress stands at the 3rd position by securing 12 seats in the legislative assembly of the state having 87-member house.

Coalition Politics is a phenomenon of a multi-party government where a number of minority parties join hands to run the government. A coalition is formed when many splinter groups agree to join hands on a common policy by plunging their broad differences to form majority. Coalition government is a product of politics in a parliamentary democracy. It is a development due to the exigencies of a multi-party system in a democratic set up. It is a type of government formed or constituted when no single party is able to secure majority on its own. Thus, in a democracy based upon a majority party system, such a situation enables a number of minority parties to come together and form a coalition government. Coalition of parties may take form

either prior to the elections, called as pre-poll alliance, or after elections, called post- poll alliance. An interesting side to this election process which brought some sort of obsession amongst masses, political parties and media as well, was the fact that the elections were taking place in a quadrilateral space where NC was till that point, the three generation ruling party (though with much damage done by it to its popular claim of being liked in the state) PDP emerged as the leading party by securing 28 which was the leading opposition party, Congress, losing all its appeal nationwide and BJP, the emerging party with a changed popular charm across nation, all set to build itself up in the Muslim majority. It is in such a background that one has to make sense of the numbers and then understand the success and failure of the political parties.

Objectives

1. To understand the role of coalition government in mounting the political prospective.
2. To highlight the agenda of coalition government for all the three divisions of the state.
3. To examine the security and political measures of both the allied partners.
4. To investigate the PDP-BJP Coalition Government in Jammu and Kashmir.

Methodology

The information for this paper has been chiefly collected from the secondary sources which include: Books, Journals, News papers and government reports Internet.

Popular perception towards the agenda of New Alliance

People as a whole in most parts of Kashmir valley are constructively taking the PDP-BJP Alliance on a positive note. Framing the above perception, a number of assumptions can be made like, the PDP-BJP alliance is an unholy alliance or as some may say the alliance is actually a people's alliance. However what matters on ground is how the alliance is perceived currently by the masses in the valley. How they observe the subsequent years of the alliance needs to be interpreted.

Srinagar

Srinagar, the summer capital evoked a resistant response as far as the alliance is concerned. People here don't give the impression to be giving much acceptability to the clubbed ideologies. Though admitting that much cannot be said about the government since it is too early, people in this part of Srinagar mostly believe that the Alliance is playing a hoax with masses. BJP cannot deliver good governance. The alliance in allotment of funds between J&K will be biased with respect to the valley, giving more funds to Jammu. Therefore, it is a potential threat to valley. People here seem to be giving acceptability to the alliance on two grounds:

1. It is accepted in valley since it is in alliance with a state party whose leader is the Chief Minister for the six year term.
2. People accept the alliance since BJP is in power at centre level also, which would mean BJP and PDP can maintain good relations with center for better development of J&K.

Also what came through while probing the above questions amongst the masses was that many people felt that PDP has betrayed them by forming such an alliance. Recalling the Gujarat massacre, people feel that the Alliance is not good for Kashmir. Further a more rigid opinion comes from the younger section of society, especially students, from the North Kashmir, Downtown area of Srinagar. Here the youth though not firmly against the Alliance voice the fact, that they in no sense feel related to BJP. A young student in her 12th standard expresses her dislike for the Alliance saying, "BJP is a Hindu party. We share our Kalima with PDP. PDP-NC Alliance would have been the best for valley since they are regional parties and know our problems better".

South Kashmir

In South Kashmir, we surveyed District Anantanag, District Kulgam and District Pulwama. The prevailing sentiment was that people mostly didn't support BJP but wouldn't mind to see it in alliance with PDP if it promises them a good governance and development. The commonly quoted understanding by people for not associating themselves with BJP, which further is explained by BJP not winning a single seat from Valley in the recent State Assembly Election, is the fact that BJP conducted massacres in Gujarat. People here often cite the social media be it Facebook or YouTube as the proof to show the activeness of the party in the Ghar Wapsi Campaign of RSS. People find the party to be Anti Muslim. However much of their acceptability comes from the fact that they find BJP good for development. A Kashmiri pundit from District Anantanag says, "BJP has a communal image here. Since it is their first chance in Valley, to correct their

perception amongst people they should focus on development".

North Kashmir

However a very striking response came from North Kashmir. The three districts we surveyed in the region largely seem to be not only liking the alliance but also are fairly happy with it. Indicating that the Alliance would do well with lesser chances of a major clash happening between the two blocs, people here want the alliance to sustain for its given six years so that it does address the grievances of people. People here do find the nature of alliance different, considering the fact that BJP is a Hindu party to them. But what steers this part of Kashmir more than the ideologies of the two parties is the fact that they want government, whichever ideology it holds on, to perform well for the masses. People want the alliance to engage with their disarrayed heaps of problems be it the crucial issue of youths unemployment, the fact that the state which supplies electricity to the North of India is left in darkness for greater part of the year, the issue of water, price rise, negligent attitude of government towards roads etc. However what also needs to be stated here is that most of the people though accept BJP in power but their acceptability rests on the big fact that people would credit BJP to political power only when it appears in an alliance with a state party.

Kashmiri Pundits

As far as the Kashmiri pundits of the valley are concerned, all expressed their support to BJP'S coming to power. However what many Pundits especially the one's settled in Pundit Camps expressed was that PDP in power wouldn't help the Pundits at all.

Purpose of the Alliance:

1. The PDP and the BJP have entered into a Governance Alliance based on an agreement and agenda which is an effort towards seeking a national reconciliation on J&K.
2. The purpose of this alliance is to form a coalition Government which will be empowered to catalyze the settlement and confidence building within and across the Line of Control (LoC) in J and K by ensuring peace in the state. This will, in turn, create an enabling environment for all round economic development and prosperity of the state and the people.
3. The main motive of this alliance is to provide a stable and a representative government in J and K which:
 - a. Respects the mandate given by the people.
 - b. Strengthens the institutions and widens the sphere of democracy through comprehensive politics.
 - c. Provides smart supremacy of the govt. and the people of the state.
 - d. Brings about self-financing and balanced development of all three regions of the state.
 - e. Creates conditions to facilitate resolution of all issues of J&K.
4. While recognising the different positions and appreciating, the perceptions of BJP and PDP have on the constitutional status of J&K, considering the legislative and political realities, the present position will be maintained on all the constitutional provisions pertaining to J&K, including the

special status in the Constitution of India.

5. Governance Reforms

- a. The State Govt. will be transformed into a Smart Govt. which will be transparent, practical and accountable. It will be reformed and redesigned to be an enabler for business and a strategic partner for long term private sector growth.
- b. It shall be the mission of the coalition government to be the most ethical state in the country from the present day position of being the most corrupt state. For this, new governance systems shall be introduced with national support and international expertise to provide effective inclusive governance, honest and service delivery.
- c. The governance framework envisaged will include people-public-private partnership and institutional capacity building. This will enable the state to seek national and international financing for its developmental plan and projects for foreign investments in sectors like, education, infrastructure, power, tourism horticulture, agriculture and medical services.
- d. The overall economic policy will bring into line the economic structure of J&K with its own resources, skills and society. The economic policy will not be formulated for government's own activities but for private businesses and enterprises.
- e. It will ensure that powers and transference of decision making is in practice devolved to three tier Panchayats, Municipalities and Corporations. The 3rd tier of governance will be empowered to fulfill their statutory functions effectively and efficiently by giving them fiscal responsibilities, functional roles etc.

6. Political Initiatives

- a. The Union Government has in recent times initiated several steps to normalise the relationship with Pakistan. The coalition government will try to find to support and strengthen the approach and the initiatives taken by the government to create a reconciliatory environment and build chance for all in the peace and development within the subcontinent.
- b. The same will be pursued by taking CBM (confidence building measures), such as, enhancing people to people contact on both sides of the LOC; encouraging civil society exchanges, taking travel, commerce, trade and business across the LOC to the next level and opening new routes across all three regions to enhancing connectivity.

7. Security Matters

The Security Measures by the Collation Government: The present scenario of J and K has improved too much from that of 1990's so far as defense point of view is concerned the collation government will work to build better public confidence in its sustainability. The entire public of the State of J and K are now able to recognize the value of peace and normalcy in the state. In the security matter, the current coalition government will see the security situation in the state thoroughly with a view to scrutinize the need and prestige of all the special laws being applied to the state in view of the situation which is improving. The both political parties of collation government have in olden times the difference of

opinion regarding the Armed Forces Special Powers Act (AFSPA) and its need in the State. At present Arms force special power act is a matter of agenda for the current allied government, the present collation partners will see the distressed areas of the state and make important changes as per the need of common people of the state with informing and getting into self-assurance with the union government of the country. The lands that are acquired by the security forces in the state without any lease and licenses under the provision of the Land Acquisition Act will be returned to the rightful legal owners, except in a situation where retaining the lands is absolutely imperative in view of a specific security requirement. In any case, monetary remuneration, be it in the form of rents or compensation should be made fairly at market rates

8. Developmental Agenda:

- a. In order to address the real source of J&K's fiscal problem and pave the way for making J&K a fiscally autonomous state, the State Government will work with the central Government to look at modalities for transfer of Dulhasti and Uri hydro power projects to J&K as suggested by the Rangarajan Committee Report and the Round Table reports.
- b. Secure a share in the profits of NHPC emanating from J&K waters to the state government.
- c. Revise all royalty agreements.
- d. Restructure and strengthen the Chenab Valley Power Projects Limited as a holding company for all hydro power projects in the state.
- e. Ensure J&K a share in one of the six Ultra Mega Thermal Power Projects.

In addition of that, some key developmental initiatives will be:

- a. Creating model business villages. For example, to build a Model Basmati Village in Jammu and a Model Apple Village in Kashmir.
- b. Developing two mega cities: Greater Srinagar and Greater Jammu. Along with that develop two satellite cities of New Srinagar and New Jammu.
- c. Upgrade all towns with population size class of 30,000 to 99,999 into cities
- d. Facilitating growth of panchayat economy through promotion of panchayat tourism and commerce of local produce.

Highlights of PDP-BJP Government Agenda in Jammu and Kashmir

The collation government of Jammu and Kashmir has prepared a common minimum programme keeping in mind the people's mandate. The highlights if this CMP are:

1. In order to make the political development of the state it is important for both the collation partners to create an environment of peace, certainty and stability.
2. The government will also extend the benefits to those people who are living on line of control (LOC) and people living on international borders.
3. The government will secure the share of profit of National Hydro Power Project (NHPC) emanating from Jammu and Kashmir's water to the state government.

4. The collation government will reserve all royalty agreement with NHPC.
5. The present government of the state looks the whole economic policy which will support the economic structure of the state.
6. The present government should be transformed in to smart government which would be accountable as well as transparent.
7. It is also the motive of the collation government that J and K should be ethical rather than a corrupt state.
8. As per the current collation government Article 370: the present position will be maintained including the special status.
9. The collation government of the state will examine the need to see the disturbed areas which will as a consequence enable the central government to take the final decision on the continuation of Arms Force Special Power Act in such areas.
10. The collation government will also facilitate the dialogue with the Hurriyat Conference irrespective of their ideological views.
11. The lands that are acquired by the security forces in the state without any lease and licenses under the provision of the Land Acquisition Act will be returned to the rightful legal owners, except in a situation where retaining the lands is absolutely imperative in view of a specific security requirement. In any case, monetary remuneration, be it in the form of rents or compensation should be made fairly at market rates.
12. The collation government will work on the refugees of the Pakistan occupied Kashmir of 1947, 1965 and 1971 respectively and gives one time settlement.
13. The present government must ensure the autonomy of institutions of decency which include the state vigilance commission, accountability commission, and also gives rise to Right to information act.
14. The collation government will also take the inappropriate measures for the livelihood of the western Pakistan refugees.
15. The government should follow the principle of Jamhooriyat, Kashmirit and insanity which was laid by earlier prime minister of National Democratic Alliens (NDA) Atal Bihari Vajpayee. The state government will also make a meaningful dialogue with the internal stakeholders which include political groups irrespective of their ideological views.

Suggestions

The following suggestions should be taken into consideration for agenda of alliance to run the administration smoothly:

1. Right to cost the vote should be on education basis and not on age basis.
2. The alliance agreement should be public before voting.
3. There should be equal share of the alliance partners.
4. There should be no give and take mechanism in alliance formation, but it should only work for the common good.
5. There should be proper check (audit) on the property of the candidate before elections and after completion of their duration as MLA.
6. Once a candidate loses the seat continuously 2-3 times,

his qualification to contest election should be cancelled.

7. A candidate should not contest the elections in a particular constituency more than three times.
8. No portfolio of any department should be allotted to the losing candidate.
9. Candidate involving in corruption or any type of scandal should be disqualified

Conclusion

From the above it is concluded that the present hung government is trying to develop all the three divisions of Jammu and Kashmir by making the common minimum program (CMP), It also lead the political development of the state by creating peace and harmony among the citizens of all the three divisions and also keep eyes to maintain good relation with the Pakistan. The current political alliance might have to settle many more scores as far as the ideology of the two camps is concerned. However what needs to be seen is the simple straightforward fact of how despite the major disagreement of position on some of the major issues, the two associates to the Alliance, by abiding the details of Common Minimum Program (CMP) give stable governance and better development to the people of J&K.

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