



THE COALITION GOVERNMENTS IN INDIA: A REVIEW

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Abstract

The political party in a democracy serves very useful purpose. They enable the masses to choose their rulers. The party, whose ideology and programmes secure the approval of the voters in elections, forms the government; secondly, the opposition parties gave timely warning to the ruling group against any wrong policy since independence congress ruled the country till 1977. After March, 1977 a coalition government was formed in centre upto 1998, so may coalition governments formed but none completed its complete tenure the 1999 elections resulted in the formation of the eighth coalition government named as NDA completed its full five year term under the able leadership of Sh. Atal Bihari Vajpayee. After 2004 elections congress formed a new alliance called UPA (united progressive Alliance) with the support of left parties and some regional parties to form coalition government the way the congress led UPA has been handling the country's affairs was shameful rampant corruption criminalization of politics, scandals were common in the regime. Prime Minister was mook spectator.

Again in 2009 elections due to weak opposition congress lead UPA again captured the power at centre, criminalization of politics corruption and scandals increased many fold in this period.

In 2014 elections something strange happened. BJP led NDA (National democratic Alliance) fought the elections in the able leadership of Sh. Narinder Modi and won 336 seats, BJP alone got 282 seats a comfortable majority to form the Govt. but it does not drop its alliance partners and BJP led NDA government formed. It shows the morality and loyalty of BJP towards its coalition partners.

The Framers of the Indian constitution preferred a federal structure with unitary characteristics and adopted the west minister model base on parliamentary democracy keeping in mind the multi linguistic, ethnic, religious, social economic and cultural diversities. Even since the independence a number of political experiments in Parliamentary democratic set up were conducted at different point of time and a state of political stability with marginal changes and developments was maintained since the formation of Indian Republic, two important events took place. The first one is the single party government for 27 years with five successive elections and the second on starting with 1977, experiment with several alternatives resulting in heralding coalitional governments.

In spite of various political experiments like collection of all opposition parties under one umbrella, a clear majority, to a single party government supported from outside, by a single largest party, minority government, hung parliaments and coalitions of several partners, it is hoped that a single party government will emerges somehow, but the political analyst looking at what is happening at the present agree that the India republic has entered an era of coalitional governments Political parties and party systems have been one of the most effective instruments of analyzing the political changes and instability in a democratic polity recent experience in Indian Political system have shown breakdown of consensus, ¹ on fundamental issues in society and the role of Political parties dealing with. The resultant political instability. Various Socio-economic and religious forces have created fragmentation and conflict within the electorate, leading to the breakdown of the single- party system dominant since independence and transition towards a new and evolving multi-party system. As no party has gained majority. Minority governments, hung parliaments from 1990's a series of instable and short lived coalition governments were experienced in the Indian political system effecting Centre-state relation partly. ²

The Indian political party system has been in a process of rise and fall where no stable party system has yet developed at the national level. The various stages of political party development can be distinguished as:

- a) 1952-67 the period of one dominant party.
- b) 1967-77 decline and revival of on party Dominance.
- c) 1977-79 period of Janata Coalition.
- d) 1980-89 re-emergence of one dominant party.
- e) Decline of Congress party and the emergence of coalition governance.

Thus at the present content coalition politics has become the mantra and the viable alternative for political governance. A Coalition government is formed only when no one party is able to secure a majority of seats in the parliament. The goal is to secure a working majority to enable the members of the coalition to form the government. Ever since the political parties have failed to provide or sustain an absolute majority status coupled with a strong dynamic leadership, coalition politics has started to emerged as an alternative to the political governance.³



In the event of the unsatisfactory role played by the congress party, the regional political parties emerges stronger providing the opportunity for coalition government which the national political party failed to live up to the expectation of the people, they are forced to select an alternative political party to deliver goods to them. If the party elected to power on the promise of improving the socio-economic condition of the masses failed to yield the expected result, naturally, paves the way for another party to rule. The congress party faces failure due to corruption and in the proper handling of certain important issues. The above cited reasons provide a valid ground for the emergence of coalition government. In our country since 1977 experimentation with the coalition politics have begun.⁴ The period of the first coalition governments was 24-03-1977 to 28-07-1979 when Morarji Desai was the Prime Minister who ruled for 851 days. This coalition government was then split into two factions by Charan Singh and he made alliance with the Congress (I) to form a Second coalition government. Its period was 28-07-1979 to 14-01-1980 and Charan Singh government was in Power for 137 days. Congress (I) withdrew the support to Charan Singh and defeated the government. Because of the role played by Congress (I), the coalition government could not be there in power for the full term.

The Third coalition government was formed by BJP and Janata Dal with alliances of all opposition parties during 01-12-1989 to 07-11-1990 V.P. Singh was the Prime Minister for the Coalition government named as 'National front Government' and ruled for 341 days BJP withdraw the support on the question of Rath Yatra and Babri Masjid issues and the National Front Government fell. The National front government was split into two groups by the initiative of Congress(I) resulting in yet another coalition Govt.

Fourth Coalition government' the period of which was 10-11-1990 to 21-06-1991 Mr. Chandrasekhar was the Prime Minister of this coalition government who ruled for 224 days. Again Congress (I) withdrew the support on the ground of telephone spying. The Fifth coalition started in 1996 which took the title of 'United Front Government'. This government was formed by all alliance of regional parties which was supported by the national political parties and the Congress-(I) Mr. H.D. Deve Gowda as the Prime Minister ruled for 325 days from 01-06-1996 to 21-04-1997. Again congress (I) opted for change in Prime Ministership, the reason being the Bofor's case. The united Front government changed the Prime minister of the sixth coalition government. After a few months congress (I) withdrew the support by stating that the Jain Commission report should not include the name of DMK in its Charges to which the united front government rejected.

The seventh coalition government was formed in the year 1998 election by BJP with the participation of various regional political parties numbering 13 AIADMK, PMK, MDMK, Tamil Rajiv Congress, Shiv Sena, Trinamul Congress Samata party and so on Sh. Atal Bihari Vajpai became PM and ruled for 395 days. In this case AIADMK with drew the support due to the internal politics and the coalition government faced its defeat.

The 1999 election resulted in the formation of the eighth coalition government named as National Democratic Alliance again Sh. Atal Bihari Vajpai became PM. The Political parties involved in the alliance include BJP, DMK, Trinamul Congress, TDP, Samata Party, Akali Dal, Biju Janta Dal, Shiv Sena, PMK, Tamil Rajiv Congress, Haryana Lok Dal, Haryana, Vikas Party, Lok Shakti etc. In addition, the NDA government at the centre is the only coalition government in Independent India with the Partnership of 24 different Politics parties to complete a full term of 5 years in office. This is the eighth Coalition government in the series which were formed by the non congress parties since 1977.

In 2004 general election has resulted in the formation of the 'Ninth coalition government under the name of united progressive alliance. The country went to the polls in four stages during April and May, 2004 with registered voters of around 672 million. In the absence of single majority party, the coalition government formed by Dr. Manmohan Singh, Indian National Congress was sworn in along with its allies namely DMK, RJD, NCP, PMK, MDMK, Muslim League of Kerala, JMM, and J&K people Democratic Party and many more. Again in 2009 General Elections has resulted in the formation of Tenth Coalition government headed by Dr. Manmohan Singh. The election of 2009 indicates a clean shift to coalition politics.⁵

General election of 2014 was held from 7th April to 12 May 2014, It was the longest election in the history of India. This election creates a history NDA claimed a huge gains across the country, the NDA win 336 seats. This type of victory they had not themselves anticipated BJP got 282 seats a gain of 166.

This is the biggest victory since the 1984 election of Rajiv Gandhi. First time in the history of Indian Elections that a Non-congress government got clear-cut majority by its own and still it does not drop its coalition partners of NDA and formed eleventh coalition government.



Conclusion

From the above details it can be understood that our political system had witnessed ten coalition governments and the present on going eleventh coalition government shows that the coalition politics have emerged inevitable and indispensable at the present Indian political Scenario and become a permanent feature of Indian polity.

References

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