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Modi's Mission Failed in Jammu and Kashmir: The Coalition Only Alternative

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Abstract

It was Mission of Bhartiya Janata Party (BJP) led by Narendra Modi to win 44 seats in Jammu and Kashmir to get majority in 87 members legislative Assembly. But due to fractured mandate no party get clear cut majority in the house and finally there was only alternative that was coalition government between People's Democratic Party and Bhartiya Janata Party. Both parties formed coalition government to promote regional balance in the sensitive state of Jammu and Kashmir.

Keywords: Coalition, PDP, BJP, Article 370, AFSPA etc.

Introduction

In 2014 Assembly Elections Modi wave hit Jammu division and failed to achieve the Mission of 44 seats out of 87 in state Legislative Assembly. People's Democratic Party won landslide victory of 28 seats while Bhartiya Janata Party got 25 seats and failed to open an account in valley. Both parties formed fourth Coalition government under the leadership of Mufti Syeed in the state. Mr. Sayeed went against the party tide and forged an alliance with the BJP to promote regional balance because he felt that the BJP was Jammu centric. Another reason of alliance with the BJP was that the state will receive substantial financial assistance from the BJP led NDA Government. After long delay on 1st March 2015 PDP and BJP with its rival manifestos have finally formed the Government in Jammu and Kashmir with PDP patron Mufti Mohammad Sayeed second time as the Chief Minister and BJP leader Dr. Nirmal Singh as the Deputy Chief Minister. PDP pursuing 'Self Rule' as guiding frame work for resolution of Kashmir and also promised to use 'Article 370' of Indian constitution for restoring original special status for Jammu & Kashmir. In Common Minimum Programme both coalition partners agreed to the 'status-quo on Article 370' of the Indian constitution, the revocation of Armed Forces Special Powers Act (AFSPA) and return of Power Projects have been placed back in the domain of Union of India. The coalition agreement also promises one time settlement of Pakistan Occupied Kashmir (POK) refugees of 1947, 1965 and 1971 and also provide means of 'sustenance and livelihood' to the West Pakistan refugees. The coalition agreement calls to constitute the Delimitation Commission for 'delimiting the legislative assemblies' as required by law. The coalition has also promised to take the peace process ahead by further promoting trade and travel across the Line of Control, and hold a sustained dialogue with Pakistan and separatist leaders of Kashmir that is the Hurriyat Conference.

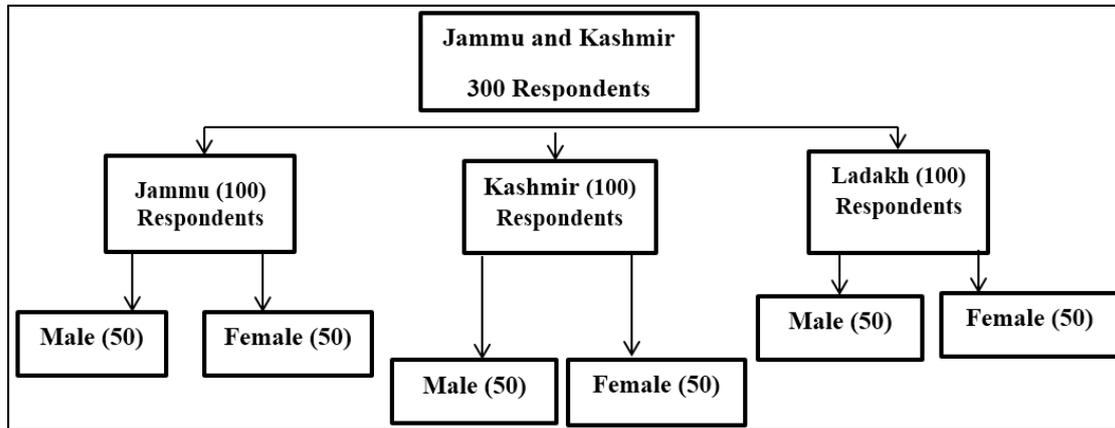
Objective of the study

- ❖ To investigate the PDP-BJP Coalition Government in Jammu and Kashmir

Material and Methods

The present study is based on the both primary as well as secondary data which has been collected from different national and international reputed journals, books, Magazines and Newspapers. The primary source includes survey through interview schedule of three Different divisions of Kashmir, Jammu and Ladakh. The sample size was 300 of educated youth of Jammu and Kashmir which were selected randomly.

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Discussion

The unique diversity of Jammu and Kashmir has been compounded in this century by a major change in the Valley's politics. The rise of the PDP since the party's formation in 1999 ended a long-standing dominance of National Conference. The fracturing of the Valley's political space and the replacement of its unipolar electoral landscape by a strong competitive bipolar one ended the era of single-party governments. It made coalition governments inevitable and opened the door to an enhanced role in the state's politics for the Jammu region. Coalition governments are not a new thing in Jammu & Kashmir in the 21st century. Coalition becomes the norm in the state from the last three Assembly elections continuously which have produced fractured verdicts and hung legislatures. The PDP from its beginning outlined grassroots politics on advocacy of the human rights of common people in the Valley, hence its emphasis on the revocation of Armed Forces Special Powers Act. Its expansive vision of 'self-rule' for J&K goes beyond Article 370 has been effective. While the PDP has gradually improved its tally with each Assembly election held since it was formed-from 16 seats in 2002 to 21 in 2008 and 28 in 2014-this is the first time that the party has decisively emerged as the leading party in the Valley. Although the PDP has worked hard to become desired party in Jammu and Kashmir cutting across regions and communities rather than just a 'Valley' party, it is really a vehicle of Valley grievances and aspirations. Its success in the Valley puts it under great pressure to maintain its platform and not follow the tainted path of the National Conference. The big reason that has accounted for PDP's victory is the failure of National Conference (NC). The floods of 2014 not only devastated the valley but also devastated the National Conference in Assembly elections. The non-performance of NC throughout its tenure especially during the unprecedented floods became a favorable moment for PDP to avail NC's weak governance to its gain. The BJP's sudden emergence as the biggest party in J&K during the Lok Sabha polls and its clearly stated goal of becoming a majority party in J&K with its Mission 44. BJP worked hard to get success in the Kashmir valley to achieve the mission, but failed to open an account. The National Conference-Congress break-up was crucial to the blockade of the Modi wave in Jammu. By splitting up, the National Conference was able to concentrate its efforts in the Valley to stop the PDP's surge, and the Congress was able to slow down the BJP in Jammu. During the campaign, the BJP was blamed of trying to be pro-Hindu in Jammu and "secular" in the Valley.

Before the State Assembly elections of 2014 BJP raised the issue of Article 370 of Indian constitution which gives special status to state of Jammu and Kashmir. During campaigning in Jammu BJP assured the people of Jammu division for abrogation of article 370 which was in interest of people of Jammu only, and got 25 seats. While PDP in Kashmir valley opposed the abrogation of Article 370 which was in interest of people of Kashmir and won 28 seats mainly from Kashmir valley. Both parties gained seats in their respective regions on opposing stands of article 370 of Indian constitution. In Jammu and Kashmir political parties from many years raising the issue of Article 370 during elections to divert the attention of people from the failure of governments, in reality the most discussed and most chanted Article of Indian constitution is used as Political Trump Card by political parties especially by the BJP.

The another main issue which some Kashmir based political parties are often discussing during elections is Armed Forces Special Powers Act (AFSPA) a draconian law which every democracy hesitates to accept is applicable in Kashmir. The Bollywood movie Haider directed by Vishal Bhardwaj also depicts few negligible things of this harsh law which is applicable in Kashmir. Yet no Kashmir based party is able to convince the government of India to revoke the act and give a chance to vehicle of the Indian democracy to cross Banihal Tunnel in to the valley of Kashmir which is called Paradise on Earth.

The appearance of the BJP for the first time in the state had become so pertinent which famed its name as a part of a Hindu extremist organization (RSS) seeks to achieve a Hindu Nation by neglecting other religious minorities. During the last Assembly elections in 2008, BJP had won 11 seats from its Hindu dominated belt Jammu. For the first time in 2014 elections it has reached the number 25 and certainly has used some strategies to make successful the Mission of 44+ but failed miserably.

The PDP-BJP coalition government completed ten months in office under the leadership of Mufti Sayeed, Anti PDP-BJP feelings have begun to go high not only because of the inherent conflicts within the coalition government but essentially because in the given time it has not been able to deliver the promises which it made to people during elections. Right-wing politics has befooled Mufti so much that even PDP legislators and leaders are finding it difficult to shrug off the embarrassment. People believe that the majoritarian politics of the right wing has taken PDP for a ride in Jammu and Kashmir. And it is this majoritarian agenda of BJP that Mufti faced severe credibility crises. The ten months of this government has been a general

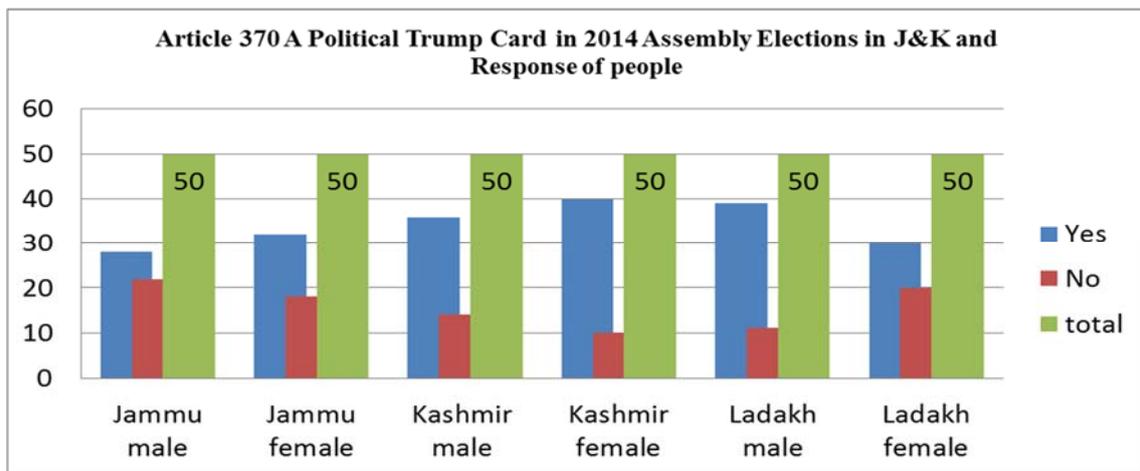
disappointment and both PDP and BJP are losing out in their respective constituencies. The biggest challenge for the coalition government was the rehabilitation of the people affected by the September 2014 floods that devastate the state, both the coalition partners had promised a swift response however, it has received only drips and drabs so far. After completion of ten month journey by PDP-BJP coalition government Mufti Sayeed passed away in New Delhi due to natural death. Now presently PDP under the leadership of Mehbooba Mufti is struggling very hard to form coalition government with BJP once again in state. The long delay in government formation clearly indicates that PDP wants to apply some special conditions which will give some more benefit to people of Kashmir where party has got 28 seats. People of Kashmir have voted PDP to power by opposing the communal politics of BJP and the communal agenda of RSS. In this stage if Mehbooba Mufti decides not to form coalition government with BJP by respecting people's verdict and approach people for new verdict in the

form of elections will not gain the lost credibility. So I think it is better for PDP leader Mehbooba Mufti to form government with BJP to address the core issues which her father late Mufti kept aside during last 10 months government. The issues like Art.370, AFSPA, Return of Power Projects to Sate, Human Rights Violations, Settlement of migrants, Relief to Flood Victims and unemployment should be settled with BJP forever with the assistance of Centre government led by Modi.

The survey based question through interview schedule

what you think about the last concluded state assembly elections of 2014 in which BJP sweep the polls in Jammu division and failed to open an account in valley on the other hand PDP dominated the valley and failed to get number of seats in Jammu, is it was happened due to opposing stands on abrogation of Art. 370 by these two parties in their respective regions?

	Jammu Male	Jammu Female	Kashmir Male	Kashmir Female	Ladakh Male	Ladakh Female	Total
Yes	28 (56%)	32 (64%)	36 (72%)	40 (80%)	39 (78%)	30 (60%)	205 (68.33)
No	22 (44%)	18 (36%)	14 (28%)	10 (20%)	11 (22%)	20 (40%)	95 (31.67)
Total	50	50	50	50	50	50	300



Conclusion

Despite a high voltage campaigning by top leadership of the BJP including Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the saffron party was not able to make inroad in Kashmir valley and also failed to open an account in the Ladakh region. BJP's 'Mission 44-plus' failed to cut much ice in the valley despite Modi's rally in Kashmir, where 33 out of 34 candidates of the BJP lost their deposits. The party president Amit Shah backed by the RSS cadres tried very hard to make the Mission of 44 plus successful in Jammu and Kashmir but it was PDP and NC that speak in a same voice against BJP. Both the parties argued that if the BJP comes to power, it will revoke the Article 370 of Indian constitution which gives special status to Jammu and Kashmir. The RSS Mother Organization of BJP and its other associated units especially Bajrangdal and Vishu Hindu Parishad (VHP) are equally responsible for failure of Modi's Mission in the state which has smartly created a fear and psychosis among Kashmiri people by doing some activities which were against their interests.

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