



COALITION GOVERNMENTS IN INDIAN PARLIAMENTARY SYSTEM: AN ANALYTICAL STUDY

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KEYWORDS :

The party system and the parties are by-product of the social system of any society. As a social group it represents diverse interests of the society. Extreme pluralism in parties resulted in opportunistic and unprincipled alliances at the centre and at the level of states. India is passing through a transitional period of political instability, irresponsible opposition, criminalization of politics and proliferation of parties are the major problem areas of extreme pluralism. The political culture of the country got fragmented. The loyalty structure is very weak and loyalty towards the party ideology instead of the leader has yet to take deep roots in the political system in our country.

Any political system which gives freedom to its citizens to participate in political activities will comprise of parties. The party system is shaped and colored by the notions and ideas of the society, the system undergo change in response to change of socio-economic and political situations as well as human behavior. Political party is a political as well as social group. As a social group it represents diverse interests of the society. Once the diverse interests are made to coverage within the framework of the party the political process is made much simplified and there emerges order and therefore, stability in it. Political parties thus act as a very effective mediator in setting disagreements in society in a peaceful and institutional manner. In developing societies parties are engaged in the work of radical social transformation.

The political atmosphere of the country depends upon organization, operation and goal of political parties.

All the stable democracies have enjoyed governmental stability to a very marked extent. They have two parties or a polarized multiparty system. On the other hand all the unstable democracies are saddled with a multiparty system. Stability mainly comprises provision of conditions under which a governmental system can discharge its obligations towards its people in a fair and equitable manner to facilitate dilution and diffusion of social tensions and to promote social harmony. In the present context of democratic form of government, existence of sound political party system provides the most critical input to stability. So long as party system remains healthy, based on democratic values and principles it is bound to take good care of stability. However, when degeneration in party system takes place stability becomes a threatened commodity. It triggers a chain reaction, political leaders of stature and vision disappear and instead pigmies take over to promote their survival in power by hook or crook infecting the body politics, with criminalization of politics, vote bank politics, booth capturing, horse trading, and other electoral irregularities.

Why not a two party or a workable multi-party system has emerged in India so far? Norman, D. palmer says that no effective democratic party system in the western sense has emerged anywhere in Asia. In west where the tradition of parties is deep rooted and where literate and economically fortunate people have had long experience with party system it would be futile to expect that parties could be successfully

grafted on the institution of Asian people. So we must expect for India in view of other Asian countries.

Most of the Asian countries were under colonial rule for a long time and got independence after world war II. This situation of theirs also contributes a lot in the shaky party system. As Richard T. park has observed "An independence movement is not the best breeding ground for political parties."

Social and political institutions work in a society and they cannot be understood properly without knowing basic structure of that society. Ours is a heterogeneous society with unparallel example in the world. Caste, community and religion are significant units of social and political actions. Jaiprakash Narain once said "caste is the major party in India. In a transitional society cast remains and bound to remain an important factor in the socio-political life. Caste might socially disintegrating but politically it is growing dominant. Local interests still dominate national interest, and it gives birth to so many regional parties.

Indian society is still characterized by a considerable lack of mobility and by the primacy of local interests over larger considerations. Caste and community still remain part of every day life and political activity at every stage from the panchayat right up to parliament. Mass-illiteracy, social conservatism, geographical distances, extreme localism and a fairly rigid social structure cut off the great majority of the people from effective participation in the political life of the country.

Major Problem Areas of Coalition Government: political instability

The Single greatest problem plaguing Indian polity for a decade is political instability in 17 years after Indira Gandhi assassination. India has had Seven Prime Ministers. However the Vajpayee Government in its third chance almost completed full term. But all earlier coalitions have been fragile enjoying low longevity. In coalition politics such a government always suffers from a survival instinct. It is just pursuing one point agenda, is to somehow remain in power. In such a situation a good governance inheritably becomes impossible. This is a highly worrying aspect in the present phase of governance. Regional parties supporting government are more interested in their regional agenda than the national issues. These unstable governments result in inefficient governance which harms the development need of the country in a big way. A poor country struggling for faster development, can hardly afford costly premature elections.

Typical irresponsible opposition

Extreme pluralism results in unprincipled coalition. It lacks a significant responsible opposition or even a typically irresponsible opposition. An opposition is likely to behave in a responsible and constructive manner if it expects that it may have to respond what it has promised.

An opposition is likely to be less responsible the less it expects to govern. polarized pluralism results in politics of out bidding,

or of over promising politics. Competitive politics is conditioned by a minimum of fair competition below which a political player can hardly perform. A political system characterized by centrifugal forces, irresponsible opposition and unfair competition is hardly a viable system. Immoderate politics is conducive either to sheer paralysis or to a disorderly sequence of ill-calculated reforms that end in failure. Greater the number of parties greater the intricacy of the system. In India a leader Can split a party, merge a group and support a party without making the slight impact on public opinion. Due to all these political trends in contemporary party system in India capacity of political parties to harmonise social conflict, and produce collective interests in deteriorating gradually and they are unable to cope with people's wishes and aspirations.

Increasing Number of Criminal in Politics

In the early years of parliamentary democracy, politics was considered a passion entailing Sacrifice and Suffering with the deterioration of the system, Criminals have been fielded in elections by almost all parties. Increasing incidence of Poll related Violence speaks of the ground realities of our parties. All political parties began more or less mobilizing Such anti Social elements to win the election. Earlier the Criminals preferred acting in the background and were content to support the politicians. Now they declare before national media that they would go to any extent to support their masters. The nexus between crime and politics is well entrenched now.

Proliferation of Parties

Among the easiest accomplishments in India is to form a political party, the moment a politician discovers that his self-interest is not being served, he quickly floats a new outfit, Taking full advantage of the caste lobbies and other parochial affiliations, Even a party having one seat in Lok Sabha is seen to claim a ministership in a coalition government. With a plethora of parties in existence and their ever shifting alliances and loyalties it is not likely to ensure true governance. The present political behaviour is deeply characterized by cynical opportunism unprincipled toppling games, crude pursuit of power, etc, many political parties in India cease to be parties in the real Sense. These are political groups headed by ambitious individuals who have gained power through political maneuverability. There is a crisis of character and values. Among the most disturbing feature of Indian democracy is the rapidly decaying system of political parties. The highly deplorable fall in the caliber and standard of the politicians apart the political parties themselves are showing signs of gross indiscipline and lack of proper and effective organizational set up. What is even more unfortunate, these parties are breaking apart through factionalism splits and groupism.

There is nothing wrong dramatically with the present system, Much of our population is poor and illiterate and the daily grind causes them to overlook the digression of the politician. If the public authorities and the people did not have a will and motivation to operate a parliamentary system, they would not have the will and motivation to operate a presidential system, political socialization through education should be taken on priority basis. Education has long been regarded as an important agent for political socialization. It is a fact that more extensive an individual's education, the more likely he was to be aware of the impact of government to have more information, to possess a wider range of opinions on political matters.

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