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## COALITION GOVERNMENTS IN JAMMU AND KASHMIR: 1986-2002

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**Abstract:**-A Coalition government consists of two or more parties who must compromise on principles and share a mandate. This mostly occurs due to a single party unable to gain majority of seats. Like Indian National Congress (INC), the National Conference in Jammu Kashmir has dominated the whole political system from very beginning. However due to emergence of regional political parties coalition governments were also formed in Jammu and Kashmir. This research paper provides an overview of the functioning of coalition governments in the Jammu and Kashmir during the 1986 and 2002 and also discussed the Rajive-Farooq accord.

**Keywords:**NC, PDP, Coalition Government, regional Parties etc.

### INTRODUCTION:

Political parties are indispensable to any democratic system and play the most important role in the electoral process. Party system becomes a necessary part in a representative form of government and in pluralistic society like India with sharp divisions of beliefs, language, customs creeds and interests. With the existence of multi-party system, a single party may or may not be able to form a government. In such a situation, there are two possible alternatives for the formation of government; either of coalition government or a majority party government, supported by other groups. So coalition is an alliance formed between separate political parties. It is formed when two or more political parties unite to form a majority government in parliament or state legislature. This usually happens when no single party is able to obtain the majority. It is a phenomenon of multi-party government where a number of minority parties join hands for the purpose of running the government, which is otherwise not possible in democracy based on one party system. The term coalition is derived from the Latin word coalition which is the verbal substantive of coalescere, co- together and alescere- to grow up, which means to go or to grow together. So coalition refers to a group of people who come together to achieve some end usually on a temporary basis. In politics, it signifies a parliamentary or political grouping of different parties, interest groups or factions formed for making or influencing policy decisions or securing power. Like other Indian states Jammu and Kashmir as such did not have coalition experience, because of one party dominance of National Conference. But coalition governments emerged as a phenomenon in Jammu and Kashmir at about the same time when we had coalition governments in rest of India. However Jammu and Kashmir had seen governments where outside support by parties was provided as in 1974. So Jammu and Kashmir State has also joined the category of states where coalition governments have been formed. It may take a longer time for the state to evolve what is referred as coalition dharma.

### OBJECTIVES:

1. To study dominance of National Conference in Jammu and Kashmir politics
2. To highlight Rajive- Farooq accord

### MATERIAL AND METHODS:

The study is based on secondary sources like Books, Magazines, Journals, Newspapers, libraries and internet to know fact and reality regarding the coalition governments in Jammu and Kashmir.

### Coalition Government in Jammu and Kashmir: An analysis

Like the Indian National Congress, The National Conference in Jammu and Kashmir had emerged as a dominant political party. It had embarked upon a very revolutionary progressive and radical programme of reforms and national reconstruction as a result of which the party had unhesitatingly fulfilled the promises it had made to the people of the state during the course of its Struggle for freedom from the despotic rule and feudal course. From 1948 to August 1953, national Conference headed by Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah ruled the state. But soon unhappy developments took place which created strained relations between the government of India and Sheikh Abdullah. These developments led to the Sheikh's dismissal on August 9, 1953. He was arrested and put in detention and then extorted and imprisoned. Right from January 1974, a series of discussions began between Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah and his associate Mirza Afzal Beg on the one hand and various members of the Indian government, including Indira Gandhi on the other, over the terms on which the administration to the state of Jammu and Kashmir might be entrusted to a government headed by Sheikh Abdullah. At one stage, Sheikh Abdullah indicated that he would resume office only if the clock were turned back to 1953 (before his dismissal by Pt. Nehru) and if all the subsequent increases in Indian power in the state of Jammu and Kashmir were abandoned. Sheikh Abdullah needed to wield state power to secure political autonomy of Kashmir and realize Kashmir's political aspirations but Sheikh could not achieve the goal without an agreement with Mrs. Gandhi. Finally Sheikh agreed to the minimum Indian requirements. There was prolonged series of detailed negotiations between Mirza Afzal Beg and Indira Gandhi special representative G Parthasarthy was consummated on 13th November 1974 and it was made public by Indira Gandhi on 24th February, 1975 popularly known as "Kashmir accord".

The terms of the Kashmir accord caused much disappointment in Kashmir, particularly in a section of its youth, for it offered much less autonomy to the state than it enjoyed in 1953. Immediately after the accord Sheikh Abdullah took over as Chief Minister on 25th February, 1975. After assuming power Sheikh Abdullah dissolved the plebiscite front on 5th July 1975 and merged it into the newly revived National Conference which in the changed context adopted the pro-accession policy for which the Sheikh had to face accusations of those not reconciled to the 1975 Accord. His detractors even started using the same epithets against him which his associates used against Bakshi Ghulam Mohd., G M Sadiq, Mir Qasim etc by calling them puppets. However Sheikh Abdullah recovered his diminishing hold over the masses during his rule, till his death on September 8, 1982. Sheikh during his chief Minister ship revived, reorganized and reoriented the National Conference. In his regime, he acted ruthlessly to his political interests even at the cost of losing his most trustworthy colleague Mr. Afzal Beg whom he expelled from the party. There after Mr. Beg formed a separate political party called Inqilabi National Conference. This was the first split in the structure of national conference. On 2nd July, 1984 twelve National conference members of state legislative assembly deserted Dr. Farooq and declared loyalty to Khalida (Farooq's sister) and Gul Shah (Farooq's brother in law). They formed a breakaway group and called it National Conference (Khalida). Jagmohan dismissed Dr. Farooq's government and appointed Gul Shah the new chief minister. Jagmohan did not ask Dr. Farooq to prove his majority in the house nor did he dissolve the assembly to conduct fresh elections. Ghulam Mohd Shah proved the confidence of the majority of legislators in his favour on 31st July, 1984, with the help of 26 Congress M L A's. Mr. G M. Shah was installed as Chief Minister of the state by the Congress leadership with the intention that he would not only sabotage Sheikh Abdullah's family traditional hold on Kashmir masses in general and on Kashmir politics in particular, but he will also weaken the All Jammu and Kashmir National Conference (F) by breaking up its cadres. Within four months of G. M. Shah's rule in Jammu and Kashmir, Mrs. Indira Gandhi was assassinated on 29th October 1984 and her son Rajiv Gandhi succeeded her as the next Prime minister of India on October, 1984. After the death of Mrs. Gandhi a struggle for occupying the chief minister ship started between the Mufti Sayeed and G. M. Shah. Taking benefits of the rift between G. M. Shah and Mufti Sayeed Dr. Farooq Abdullah became active and wanted dissolution of the assembly and conducting fresh elections. Besides it, G. M. Shah's faulty policy led to eruption of mal-administration, corruption in the state administration as well as communal violence in the valley. Fear of loosing public credibility, the state Congress leadership not only started criticizing G. M. Shah's government but also started putting pressure on the central leadership of the party to withdraw the party support to G. M. Shah's ministry. Consequently, with the withdrawal of congress support, G. M. Shah's ministry was reduced to minority and was dismissed by state Governor. But this time central government tried all other alternatives to end all issues, conflicts, controversies and tensions. Some of the top Congress (I) leaders still believed that Dr. Farooq was the only person who could contain fundamentalist and present a pro-national front in the valley. After the eight months of pains taking negotiations between the two leaders an accord named Rajiv- Farooq accord was reached on 7th November 1986 which led to the establishment of N C (F) and Congress (I) coalition ministry headed by Farooq Abdullah in the state. On the 23rd March 1987, elections were held in Jammu and Kashmir in the wake of Rajiv- Farooq accord. The national Conference and Congress formed an electoral alliance. On 26th March 1987, Dr. Farooq Abdullah was sworn as head of National Conference/Congress (I) coalition government. Both Rajiv and Farooq announced that the accord would prove useful in fighting out disruption and launching new programmes for removal of poverty, disease, unemployment and provide surplus electricity to the state. But this alliance failed to yield the results which people were expecting. There were also general feelings among the bureaucracy and the intelligence agencies that the Congress/NC resorted large scale rigging in 1987 assembly elections. This coalition government collapsed due to change of government at the centre. National Front –led coalition government appointed Jagmohan, a governor of Jammu and Kashmir without taking the consultation of state government. With the result, both the parties in the coalition tendered resignation as a protest against the decision of centre government. The assembly was placed under suspended animation and subsequently dissolved on 19th February 1990. The

**Coalition Governments In Jammu And Kashmir: 1986-2002**

state remained under presidential rule from July 1990 to 1996. The mandate given to National Conference in 1996 was unprecedented in the parliamentary history of Jammu and Kashmir. For the first time in Jammu and Kashmir it emerged as the single largest party in all the three regions of the state and on 9th October, 1996, Dr. Farooq Abdullah was sworn as Chief Minister of Jammu And Kashmir State. The second time a real coalition government assumed power in the state in 2002 when National Conference was voted out of power and a new coalition government between congress and people's Democratic Party (PDP) was formed on 2nd November 2002. It was announced that the post of chief minister would be held on rotation. PDP leader and veteran politician Mufti Mohd Sayeed served as Chief Minister for three years, after that he was replaced by Gulam Nabi Azad as per the coalition agreement. The Congress/ PDP coalition had agreed to a common minimum programme for the governance of Jammu and Kashmir. Mehbooba Mufti daughter of Mufti Mohd, Sayeed former home minister of India was the main sprit behind the party's victory. She criticized the long record of human right abuse by the security forces in Kashmir and was careful to cultivate her image as peace maker.PDP effectively incorporated into party's election manifesto issues with which the common people identified themselves. Peoples Democratic Party promised a corruption free government, unconditional dialogue with militants, disbanding the special operation group(SOG), providing a healing touch to those affected by militancy. The result was that PDP won all its 16 seats in the Kashmir valley. Congress/PDP Coalition government laid emphasis on healing the physical, psychological and emotional wounds of families affected by militant violence over the past decade and also strength the state human rights commission. The third coalition between Congress and National Conference is in progress and hope it will complete its full term of five years.

POLITICAL PARTY	TOTAL NUMBER OF SEATS		NUMBER OF SEATS WON	
	1987	2002	1987	2002
NATIONAL CONFERENCE	76	87	40	28
CONGRESS	76	87	26	20
MUSLIM UNITED FRONT	76	87	4	-
BHARTIA JANTA PARTY	76	87	2	1
PEOPLES DEMOCRATIC PARTY	76	87	-	16
INDEPENDENTS	76	87	4	15
OTHERS	76	87	-	7

**J&K Elections Results 1987 and 2002**

Conclusion: The Coalition culture is not alien to India.V.P.Singh ex-PM has rightly remarked, "India herself is a coalition". The above analysis of coalition governments in Jammu and Kashmir clearly reflects that the emergence of regional parties in state has given birth to coalition politics. The rise of a regional outfit like PDP has posed challenge to one dominant party system led by National Conference. The ideologies like Autonomy and Healing Touch of both parties NC and PDP were only aiming to wining the hearts and minds of the people. For the better development of the state all political parties have to work according to wishes and aspirations of people of Jammu&Kashmir.

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