



TRENDS IN INDIAN POLITICS IN PRESENT SCENARIO

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Abstract

Speaking politically, the Indian party system has its origins in the nationalist movement for freedom from colonial rule in British India, and incremental extension of franchise since the early twentieth century and introduction of universal adult franchise under the Constitution of independent India enforced since 1950. If democratisation has been the primary causal or independent variable producing the party system today, the Indian social structure with its regional and multicultural variations and the nature of the parliamentary federal Constitution under which Indian democracy has operated for over seven decades now are the intervening or intermediating variables that have shaped its party system's patterns and trends. In other words, the primary effects of democratic mobilisation on the party system have been funnelled through the Indian political history and diverse cultural and social setting and the nature of the Indian Constitution. India's socio-cultural and regional diversities provide a fecund ground for a multiparty system, so does the federal component of the Indian Constitution. However, in the initial decades of post-Independence period the tendency towards multiplication of parties were held in check by the unifying force of the anti-colonial nationalist movement during the British Raj and the presence of the towering charismatic leaders of the nationalist movement at the national and state levels. The parliamentary component of the Constitution, as against its federal component which tends to multiply parties, exercised a centralising influence and prompted parties to dualistically configure themselves into the government and the opposition. In a parliamentary-federal system like India's, the effects of the two components of the Constitution are thus somewhat contradictory and cancel each other out.

Keywords: Present, Indian Politics

Introduction

Current Indian politics is marked by communalism castism and annexation of vote bank by political parties. Ancient political thinkers such as Plato and Aristotle looked at politics as something pious and ethical. Politics was regarded as part of ethics. They were not mistaken. After independence till the declaration of emergency in June 1975 Indian politicians cherished values based politics. They were committed to certain ideologies till the end of their life. Declaration of emergency heralded a new era of opportunistic politics. All the opposition parties irrespective of their ideologies got together with the single objective of over-throwing Indira Gandhi's government. They succeeded in their mission under the leadership of Shri. Jai Prakash Narain but as expected they scattered like play cards in less than three years. Janta government fell and the alliance partners got back to their original



destinations. Indira Gandhi regained power. Although stable government followed, but stability was provided not by honest activities, but either by sympathy factor or due to defection. Ethical conduct remained a distant dream. Today the most talked about topic of discussion is the decision of BJP to protect Mr. Narendra Modi as the future Prime Ministerial candidate. Honestly speaking he was initially opposed by Advani camp on his inclusion not only in the central election committee of BJP but also on his making in charge of the election campaign. But Rajnath Singh, the party chief maneuvered his future installation for the top job and Mr. Advani was literally alienated. A pertinent question arises as to what are the factors responsible for Modi's elevation to top position. Akar Patel former Gujarati newspaper editor analyses his strengths. There is clarity of message. The electorate stands informed: vote the BJP and get Modi. There is no clear candidate for the post of Prime Minister in congress- Manmohan Singh ? Sonia Gandhi ? Rahul ? someone else ? The voter does not really know. This confusion remains with the third front and other formations as well. The only candidate at the moment is Modi. Secondly, Modi stands for uncompromising Hindutva and business friendly policies as his record shows. Thirdly, he represents a tough-on-corruption image that broadened his appeal in the middle class. So Akar Patel concludes that Narendra Modi's elevation is more beneficial to the BJP than damaging. But I disagree with this inference. This is true that there is no clarity of candidate for the Prime Minister's post in other parties or formations but as we all know Mr. Modi was indicted not only by citizen tribunal, human rights commission and minority commission but also by the supreme court and the US government for his alleged complicity in post Godhara riot in Gujarat. Promotion of Hindutva is not objectionable but he has been alleged for suppression of a minority community, especially a community which boasts of second largest majority in the country, these can not be justified in a civilized society. A man who claims to lead six and half crore population of Gujarat, is being tried to make Prime Minister of a country with 125 billion people whereas there are so many towering personalities in BJP itself who have distinguished themselves as part of ruling party at centre. The million dollar question is whether Mr. Modi is capable of talking along with every section of the society, the first and foremost qualification of a Prime Minister. This is an open secret that the dissidents in Modi's council of minister in Gujarat have time and again been convinced and persuaded by Mr. L.K. Advani to return to Gandhinagar when they reached New Delhi to protest against his style of functioning. These elements may prove a challenge to his authority during election periods.

The senior, most experienced and more capable leader of the party would not allow an inferior person to grow. Besides, if the decision to project Mr. Modi as future Prime Minister, had been taken at a later stage there would have been less time for maneuvering by the dissidents. But since the general elections are too far the pitch of Modi will have been queered by them. Various editorials of newspapers also support my perspective. Observations of certain leaders in this connection are thought-provoking.

Mohd. Salim, Engineer, National secretary of the Jamiat-e-Islami-Hind opined on general election due in 2014, "This will be referendum on whether India will accept Fascism or



Democracy”. Asaduddin Ovasi, the outspoken M.P. from Hyderabad reacted on Modi’s elevation, “This was expected, but I don’t understand and respect diversity and pluralism. He would not be able to lead this country”. “Neither a person who, because of his personal ambitions, broke his own alliance and created controversy in his own party can keep the nation united, nor will the people ever accept him.”

Leader of the opposition in Gujarat Assembly Shanker Singh Vaghela also slammed Modi stating, “I can understand the pain of BJP patriarch L.K. Advani today. The RSS has imposed modi on the BJP. The party will pay heavily for this misadventure”. Interestingly, Vaghela himself has been a former RSS and BJP leader. Going by the above mentioned observations I would like to conclude two things. One Mr. Advani has been playing Godfather to Modi whenever he was in crisis but he became so blind in his personal ambition that he showed scant respect to his sentiments. A man who is so ungrateful to his Godfather or Mentor, how can he be grateful to the people who would vote him to power? Two, Mr. Advani has no doubt praised Modi the other day not due to his love for him because of his helplessness in such a pathetic situation. Advani trauma may swallow his (Modi’s) career. There is no denying that whichever party is able to win most of the seats in Hindi belt of U.P., Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan & Haryana, that one will rule the centre. If Andhra Pradesh, Kerala & Kashmir (non- Hindi states) are also added to this list, the majority of Muslim voters will be there in these states to decide the fortune of any party, and if polarization happens it will not be a smooth sailing for BJP. If polarization does not take place BJP may gain. No doubt in U.P. Samajvadi party is no more popular, among Muslims as earlier due to eruption of communal riots in Muzaffarnagar and other districts of western U.P. and to laxity on the part of civil and police administration to check these troubles. So third front, if emerged, or congress may gain in general elections herein. In Bihar the alliance between BJP and Janta Dal United has failed.

Since Nitish Kumar has provided strict and clean administration in Bihar and has reinforced his secular image by getting separated from BJP, Muslims may opt for Janta Dal United. If they get united and polarization does not happen Janta Dal United will have upper hand. In Madhya Pradesh anti-incumbency factor and apathy of Muslims from BJP due to advent of Modi, may go against BJP.

In Rajasthan anti –incumbency factor may go against congress and BJP may gain in both the elections- Assembly as well as Parliamentary. In Haryana much depends on Bhupendra Singh Hooda, the congress Chief Minister’s guts and shrewdness to handle the election situation. Central government where congress is a major partner has both good deeds and misdeeds. Whether or not she is able to propagate good deeds and present valid reasons for her misdeeds, time will tell. Mr. Hooda is not much in the news, so the election results in Haryana is very unpredictable. The chances of both congress and BJP alliance are fifty-fifty. The upcoming assembly election result of Madhya Pradesh, Delhi, Mizoram, Rajasthan and Chhattisgarh will prove to be acid test for the political parties and will certainly have repercussions on Parliamentary Elections. To sum up, at the moment situation is fluid and



confusing. Parliamentary election results are highly unpredictable. Since it is not so near, political scenario will witness ups and downs. Advent Modi at the helm of affairs may prove boon for BJP may backfire as well. One thing is crystal clear that if communal situation further deteriorates the country BJP will not gain.

Objectives of Study

1. The study is an analysis that how the demands of Centre-State relations are confronting due to the alignment of political forces have been changed and shifted.
2. The study attempts to find out the backgrounds and causes of some important regional movements in India

EMERGING TRENDS

The Indian political arena has witnessed some new characteristics in the 21st century that are not to be truly democratic.

The growing significance of corporate world in the political arena has made the politics as business entity.

The media is not truly representing the voice of people rather than image of politicians of their vested interest. The media in India does not merely report; it is a player in Indian politics and elections.

Businessmen becomes Politicians and Vice Versa

While there may not be a concerted attempt to stifle voices which are independent, the media does take sides and tends to editorialized news reporting.

The news are manufactured to suit their choice of leaders or party.

Owning a news entity has become a practical necessity for political parties in India.(Times Now, Republic TV, India TV, CNN-IBN, Zee News, News18, Aaj Tak etc. pro BJP news channel, NDTV, India Today, Mirror Now, NewsX, ABP news etc. anti BJP or supporting left, congress, AAP etc. These features are neither of dictatorship nor of totalitarianism rather they depict declining capacity of welfare state.

The effects of globalization on Indian politics has created an imbalance between interests of social classes and corporative interests which compelled the political regimes to adopt certain measures that can be called 'post democracy'.

There has been a sea of changes in nature of partypolitics, agenda setting, policy priorities, role of media and aspirations of people.



The ideology of the well known political parties is swept away by unethical and unholy alliance.

The present article focuses on the features of Indian politics in context of party politics, growing corporate interventions and role of media in the changed scenario of Indian democracy.

Politics of India

Politics of India works within the framework of the country's Constitution. India is a parliamentary democratic republic in which the president of India is the head of state and the prime minister of India is the head of government. It is based on the federal structure of government, although the word is not used in the Constitution itself. India follows the dual polity system, i.e. federal in nature, that consists of the central authority at the centre and states at the periphery. The Constitution defines the organisational powers and limitations of both central and state governments; it is well recognised, fluid (Preamble of the Constitution being rigid and to dictate further amendments to the Constitution) and considered supreme, i.e. the laws of the nation must conform to it.

There is a provision for a bicameral legislature consisting of an upper house, the Rajya Sabha (Council of States), which represents the states of the Indian federation, and a lower house, the Lok Sabha (House of the People), which represents the people of India as a whole. The Constitution provides for an independent judiciary, which is headed by the Supreme Court. The court's mandate is to protect the Constitution, to settle disputes between the central government and the states, to settle inter-state disputes, to nullify any central or state laws that go against the Constitution and to protect the fundamental rights of citizens, issuing writs for their enforcement in cases of violation.^[1]

There are 543 members in the Lok Sabha, who are elected using plurality voting (first past the post) system from 543 single-member constituencies. There are 245 members in the Rajya Sabha, out of which 233 are elected through indirect elections by single transferable vote by the members of the state legislative assemblies; 12 other members are elected/nominated by the President of India. Governments are formed through elections held every five years (unless otherwise specified), by parties that secure a majority of members in their respective lower houses (Lok Sabha in the central government and Vidhan Sabha in states) to which Governments are responsible. India had its first general election in 1951, which was won by the Indian National Congress, a political party that went on to dominate subsequent elections until 1977, when a non-Congress government was formed for the first time in independent India. The 1990s saw the end of single-party domination and the rise of coalition governments. The elections for the 16th Lok Sabha, held from April 2014 to May 2014, once again brought back single-party rule in the country, with the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) being able to claim a majority in the Lok Sabha.^[2]



In recent decades, Indian politics has become a dynastic affair.^[3] Possible reasons for this could be the party stability, absence of party organisations, independent civil society associations that mobilise support for the parties and centralised financing of elections.^[4]

Types of political parties

Every political party in India, whether a national or regional/state party, must have a symbol and must be registered with the Election Commission of India. Symbols are used in the Indian political system to identify political parties in part so that illiterate people can vote by recognizing the party symbols.^[6]

In the current amendment to the Symbols Order, the commission has asserted the following five principles:^[7]

1. A party, national or state, must have a legislative presence.
2. A national party's legislative presence must be in the Lok Sabha. A state party's legislative presence must be in the State Assembly.
3. A party can set up a candidate only from amongst its own members.
4. A party that loses its recognition shall not lose its symbol immediately but shall be allowed to use that symbol for some time to try and retrieve its status. However, the grant of such facility to the party will not mean the extension of other facilities to it, as are available to recognized parties, such as free time on Doordarshan or AIR, free supply of copies of electoral rolls, etc.
5. Recognition should be given to a party only on the basis of its own performance in elections and not because it is a splinter group of some other recognized party.

A political party shall be eligible to be recognized as a national party if:^[7]

1. it secures at least six percent (6%) of the valid votes polled in any four or more states, at a general election to the Lok Sabha or, to the State Legislative Assembly; and
2. in addition, it wins at least four seats in the House of the People from any State or States.
3. or it wins at least two percent (2%) seats in the House of the People (i.e. 11 seats in the existing House having 543 members), and these members are elected from at least three different States.

Likewise, a political party shall be entitled to be recognized as a state party, if:

1. it secures at least six percent (6%) of the valid votes polled in the state at a general election, either to the Lok Sabha or to the Legislative Assembly of the State concerned; and



2. In addition, it wins at least two seats in the Legislative Assembly of the state concerned.
3. Or it wins at least three percent (3%) of the total number of seats in the Legislative Assembly of the state, or at least three seats in the Assembly, whichever is more.

CONCLUSION

Federal system in India tries to make a balance between the centripetal idea of unity and integrity of the nation and the centrifugal idea of linguistic and cultural diversity of regions. Indian federal system does not follow the orthodox pattern of federalism like American constitution or the Australian constitution. India is a vast and divergent country in terms of different languages, dialects and cultures, federation was the only way to coordinate of this diversity. It is true that no other solution of these problems can be more workable as the federalist one, yet historical experience of federal system has shown us that the application of orthodox federalism cannot provide a really satisfactory solution if the basis of federalism is not reconstructed. The existing conditions of India are the consequences of heterogeneous demand of states by means of the federal device. The Britishers supported the federal system to placate the Indians so as to avoid the demand for dominion status. They blended the features of democracy and autocracy in the device federalism. The Princely states supported federalism to protect their position vis-a-vis the Crown and also to thwart the democratic demands of the nationalists. To achieve the unity and integrity of the country the Indian National Congress also wanted federalism. The Muslims supported federalism because they wanted to share power in the Muslim majority areas.

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