

# COLATION POLITICS: SOME THEORITICAL CONSIDERATIONS

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## ABSTRACT

*The Politics of Coalition is not a phenomenon peculiar to India, Such a system prevailed in Weimer Germany and operated in Contemporary France and Italy and some of the countries of Asia and Africa. In India the development of some of the Political Sub System following the end of the One Party System after the general election of 1967 is characterized by Coalition Politics and Government. Some Political analysis and observers conclude on the basis of democratic competitive politics and provide a structure and mechanism for the functioning of political institutions in India. The subject of Coalition in India is therefore receiving increasing attention of Political Scientist and Sociologist. This paper seeks to suggest a few theoretical and behavioral considerations on Coalition Politics and Coalition Government.*

The term 'coalition' is derived from the Latin word '*coalitio*' which is the viral grow substantive of *coalescere* which means to together. However, as actually used, it somewhat belies its nominal meaning, 'for the units or the elements brought into combination by a coalition very seldom grow together in any lateral sense. In general, the term *coalition means temporary combination of groups or individuals formed to pursue specific objectives through joint action.* In its ordinary usage *Coalition refers to a group of people who come together to achieved same end, usually on a temporary basis.* In Politics it signifies a parliamentary and political grouping of different parties, interest groups, or fractions formed for making under influencing policy, decisions or securing power. *Karna Singh* defines it as a *Coalition around one major party with other parties clustering about it.* While *William A Gamson* defines it as *joint use of resources to determine the outcome of decisions in a mixed motive situation involving more than two units.*

## Theories of Coalition Formation

In popular terms Coalition Politics have no any theoretical background, normally people say this is the theory less politics. But our grand Political Theorist *Pr. Raghubeer Singh* has tried to theorizing the Coalition in his own unpublished paper. According to him there are three theories regarding to coalition formation

1. Minimum Resource Theory, 2. Theory of Minimum Power, 3. Anti Competitive Theory

### Minimum Resource Theory:

This theory was first developed by *Gamson and Ricker*, the basic assumption of this theory is that a coalition will form in which the total resources are as small as possible while still being sufficient. In this situation the strength possessed by the candidates in term of their resources before any coalition is formed is really weakness. Since the strongest candidate is excluded from the winning coalition.

### Minimum Power Theory

This theory is based on *L.S. Shapley* method for evaluating the worth of n-person game for any player. This method is part of mathematical game theory and is based on the number of times a player is the pivotal member who turns an insufficient coalition into a winning one. A player's pivotal power is a measure of his initial bargaining power which is distinct from this power possessed in terms of initial resources. In the case of three mans conventions since there are six permutations, each candidate will be pivotal twice. On this assumption the winning coalition will be smallest one possible in terms of the total pivotal power of its members.

### Anti Competitive Theory

The basic assumption of anti competitive theory is that players in the coalition situation do not want to anti compete with each other, on the constraint they are concerned mainly with preserving social relationship within the group follows that coalition in such a group will form along the lines of least resistance. In such situation players who follow the lines of least resistance will avoid hard and skillful bargaining. Playing to win will be playing to lose. Since the more openly a player seeks to get as much as he can, the less likely it is that he will find the partner who will help him to get it. In such coalition sometimes the players who profit most are those who have made least efforts to do so.

### **Coalitional Government**

The practical implementation of coalition politics in Political Systems called Coalitional Government. Coalition governments, which are frequently found in multiparty countries like India, France, Italy and many other countries of the world, are formed when no single party is strong enough to obtain an electoral majority. The resulting government usually distributes political posts to representatives of all coalition members. A Coalition Government might also be created in a time of national difficulty or crisis, for example during wartime, to give a Government the high degree of perceived political legitimacy. Coalition Governments usually does not appear in countries in which the cabinet is chosen by the executive rather than by a lower house, such as in the United States. However, in semi-presidential systems such as France, where the president formally appoints a prime minister but the government itself must still maintain the confidence of the parliament, coalition governments occur quite regularly.

Normally in a parliament we have a single party government with multy party opposition, but in coalitional government it is the just reversed. We have multy party government with single party opposition either malty party opposition too. *Karna Singh* defined it – *Coalition Government is a form of government in which normally there is a coalition around one major party with other parties clubbing around it.* In fact A Coalition Government is a form of government in which an alliance between two are more hitherto separate or even hostile groups or parties formed in order to carry on the government and share the principle offices of the state. In earlier political history Coalitional Government

has been arrangement for postponement of unwanted elections. But in recent it became a mode of Government in which gave representation of maximum ideologies of multicultural Political systems.

### **Types of Coalition Government**

There are two types of Coalition Governments in present Political scenario: Pre Election Coalitional Government & Post Election Coalitional Government. *'Pre Election Coalitional' government is the form of Government in which the Political parties are enter into a coalition before the election.* They are fight election together on common programme and also a common canvassing. In such condition the coalition is working as a party of Parties. The Allie parties cooperating to each other in election. The best example of this type of Coalition of political parties big and small is Ex Government of West Bengal where the CPI (M) has a coalition with likeminded parties like CPI, Farward Block,RSP etc.

*The form of coalition government in which the political parties enter into coalition after the election called 'Post Election Coalition Government'.* This type of coalition is the opportunistic necessity to form the government. In such conditions the allies parties are the parties that were fighting against each others during the elections. They are not contesting elections on common programme or they are not agreeing to support any other candidate or party before election. After election they create a coalition and form the common minimum programme. The government running on this common minimum programme and their own manifestos has no meaning. The best example of this type of government is the Manmohan Singh laid central Government 2004, which coalition is also generated after general elections and the RJD, Lokjanshakti, Congress, Rastravadi Party, etc are the allies.

*Post Election Coalition is also have two types, first is based on outside support just like a government formed under the prime ministry of Sri Charan Singh with the support of Congress party again the government under Sri Chandrasekhar with the support of Congress party also. And second is supported entirely.* Coalition Government receiving support from outside as props have invariably failed. This is more so, when the support come from a major political party or group and the coalition has to depend entirely on that support for its survival. It needs to be noted that all successful European

coalitions have always been between political parties prior to the election and have seldom been post election opportunistic alliances or coalitions. It is only pre election coalition, which has proved to be stable and lasting.

### **Advantage of Coalition Politics**

1. Regional disparity is comparatively addressed more genuinely in case of coalition government as the representatives of people realistically associated with the grass root. The coalition government addresses the regional disparity more than the single party rule. It may not perform at its full throttle but it is always good for inclusive growth of all the regions, of all the people of a country than the high growth of only selected people and region.

2. Coalition government is more democratic, and hence fairer, because it represents a much broader spectrum of public opinion than government by one party alone. In almost all coalitions, a majority of citizens voted for the parties which form the government and so their views and interests are represented in political decision-making.

3. Yet instability apart, coalition governments have been effective in enhancing democratic legitimacy, representativeness, and national unity. Major policy shifts like neo-liberal economic reforms, federal decentralization, and grass roots decentralization, in theory or practice, are largely attributable to the onset of federal coalitional governance. Coalition governments in states and at the centre have also facilitated gradual transition of the Marxist-left and the Hindu-right into the political establishment, and thus contributed to the integration of the party system as well as the nation. The same major national parties that initially rejected the idea of coalition politics have today accepted it and are maturing into skilled and virtuoso performers at the game.

4. In the policy decision making and policy implementation, there is a greater chance of fairness and clarity because of wide spectrum of views are given weightage.

5. Public opinion is more appropriately addressed.

6. Decentralization and decision making are more visible for the betterment of the masses.

7. For the success of the government and policy, there should be an amalgam of old and new faces that can be

seen with coalition government, or the single regime for a longer period, started to show its hegemony.

8. The motto of federalism is more visualized.

9. The concept of compromising and accommodating is firmly stood; result in encompassing broader aspects of nation building.

10. Electorate demands are better reflected and represented.

11. It helps to create more honest and dynamic political system. it also give more freedom to the voters.

Just as the coalition choices are varied and anomalous, their future, their stability functioning qualities are also uncertain. Though the success and story of coalitions is still awaited, there is nearly universal agreement. That coalitions needed in a parliamentary democracy. There should be nothing to deter us from danger of instability or ineffective or temporary combination for a stop-gap arrangement, since the coalitions are a sound test of the effectiveness of a political system and of the parties' ability to connive at specific, clear and meaningful policy. Despite its appetent shortcomings and limitations, the coalitions provide the only feasible and viable alternative in the parliamentary democracy and provide a bulwark And necessary safeguard against the unsung collapse of a democratic set up

### **Constraints of Coalition Government**

1. The first causality of a coalition is the principle of collective responsibility; the Cabinet speaks in many voices, the sense of direction and unity of purpose, very essential for proper functioning of a cabinet get lost in Coalition Government.

2. The second victim of a coalition is the office of the Prime Minister Enjoys a unique position of power, prestige, prerogative and patronage. In the very real sense he leads the government but in a coalition government the prime minister is under constant pressure from even the smallest parties in the coalition. The prime minister cannot select his own team; he cannot even reshuffle the Cabinet without the consent of the constituent parties, Power shifts from cabinet to an extra constitutional authority, like the co ordination or steering committee.

3. The Coalition government is by its very nature a shotgun marriage a weak and stable arrangement which does not last for very long.

4. The most serious consequence of a coalition is that, it creates tensions in political parties at the grassroots level. It affects the moral of rank and file of the parties.

5. Mere participants in a coalition changes party's images during the elections. It does't possible to any party in coalition to claim credit for the coalition achievements and blame other parties for its failures.

To an average man the term coalition government therefore evokes an image of Instability, inductiveness and other attributes of such a negative colors. Finally in *P A Sangma's* words "*If somebody asks me to head a coalition government, I will never accept it, I don't think it is good for the country, it is not healthy for the country but we can still wait and see*". Coalition government is not necessarily bad, we can't say that it can't work, it has been working for many many years even in very developed countries like Italy and our own country Kerla and Bengal, It works, it can work but to run a post election coalition government, it is very difficult, impossible. Politics of coalition has become the ultimate truth of multy cultured and multy party political system these days. No doubt, a coalition gives the chance and pleasure of running a government, but in the course of time, temporal friendships, deceit and blackmailing turn out to be the cause of brutal termination of a coalition government. In most of the cases, a coalition is a principle less, irresponsible and unaccountable alliance of some power-seeking individuals.

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