



## **CHANGING DIMENSIONS OF COALITION POLITICS IN INDIA: A STUDY OF COALITION GOVERNMENT FORMATION AT THE CENTRE**

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### **Abstract**

Following its attainment of freedom, India has been home to the creation of coalition administrations, first on the level of individual states and then on the level of the entire country. There has been a period of alliance administrations at the center of Indian politics for the better part of the past 3 decades, starting in 1989 and lasting until 2021. Before the year 1999, coalition governments in India were prone to instability. However, following the establishment of the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) in the same year, India's political system entered a period in which coalition governments were more reliable. This occurrence in Indian politics calls for our consideration to some solutions to the perplexing issues like why alliance regimes have become obligatory after 1989. Which factors contributed to the success of the NDA and UPA administrations in maintaining a secure political environment after 1999? How did the makeup of alliance administrations in India evolve, and what did they keep the same? This research article examines the dynamics of alliance politics in India, particularly with regard to its changes and continuities, keeping these issues in mind as it does so.

**Keywords:** *Coalition, Governments, NDA, Politics, UPA.*

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## Introduction

"Coalition" is the expressed subjective of "coalescere-" co- meaning "together and alescere" and, consequently, to go or develop together. According to the Advanced American Dictionary, "Coalition" can refer to an ensemble of people who work together to achieve a specific objective or a merger of diverse political groups that allows them to form a governing body or compete for office together. Therefore, a coalition government is either an administration managed by multiple political parties or a process whereby a number of parties or organizations join forces.. (*Advance American Dictionary, 2000, p. 255*).

While the Oxford Advanced Learner Vocabulary describes a coalition as "a brief alliance of distinct political groups typically to create a government," the Webster Dictionary also provides an example of a coalition government (*Hornby, 2001, p. 214*). "A temporary alliance or union for combined action of different powers or states or of political parties or members of parties in order to create an administration where no single party can command a majority," according to the Encyclopedia Americana, is what a coalition is (*Encyclopedia Americana, 1965, p. 165*). A coalition is defined by the Encyclopedia of Social Sciences as "a cooperative arrangement under which different political groups come together to create an administration or cabinet" (*Seligman, 1959, p. 600*).

In other words, coalition refers to the pooling of resources for the achievement of a specific objective and denotes harmony and joining as one entity. Additionally, it refers to the combined action of numerous groups or organisations into a singular administration of different parties as well as the collective use of resources (*Singh, 2009, p. 58*). A alliance "can take place only within the framework of mixed purpose in which both conflict and shared interest have been present concurrently and must rule the course of action selected," according to general consensus (*Sahani, 1971, p. 18*). It refers to the joining of two or more groups, or, as is typically the case, a percentage of parties, who decide to put aside their differences and work together. Thus, a coalition is a conglomeration of political forces or organisations that join forces temporarily to achieve a particular goal.

## Coalition Experience in India

India has experienced the development of

coalition administrations since gaining its freedom, first in the states and then at the national level. India's politics over the past three decades (i.e., 1989–2021) have seen a period of alliance administrations at the national level. Earlier to 1999, coalition governments in India were a volatile occurrence. However, with the advent of the Congress led NDA in 1999, coalition governments in India entered a secure era. This phenomenon in Indian politics compels us to consider some solutions to perplexing issues like why coalition administrations have become necessary since 1989. Why did the NDA and UPA administrations continue to run stable regimes after 1999? What modifications and connections did India's alliance administrations undergo? The current study article concentrates on the dynamics of alliance politics in India, particularly with regard to its changes and continuities, keeping these issues in mind. The scholar used secondary materials for this study, including books, periodicals, newspapers, and webpages.

## End of Congress Supremacy and Emergence of Alliance Politics at the Centre

Defection politics, which is the outcome of power being polarized and fragmented in opposition to the one-party dominant system, includes a study of coalition politics in India. In a legislatorial democracy, coalitions are a byproduct of the political realities that emerge (*Malhotra, 2000, September, p. 392*). One option for properly representing the diversity of interest groups in a country like India is to form a coalition, provided that a sincere effort to advance these sectional interests (*Gehlot, 1998, p. 214*). Because they have little or no opinion, the parties that form coalitions are forced to compromise and downplay their differences in favour of some fundamental principle or claims in order to achieve political stability. They are also forced to face the electorate, which serves as an extremely difficult acid test and must be passed repeatedly by running for office. Five Lok Sabha elections were held in India between 1989 and 1999 as a result of shattered mandates and failure to form a lasting coalition government at the center. As a result, it's important to share power while also looking into the factors that led to the emergence of coalition politics in India as well as the issues that arose regarding political stability and governance. The federalizing character of governance and the significance of local groups and their management at the national scale are therefore

emphasized. India has tried its hand with coalition administrations, first on a state level and subsequently on the federal level. Coalition politics began far sooner at the state level than it did at the national level. After "the Congress System" or "the One Party Dominant System" was overthrown (Kothari, 1964, December, pp. 1161–1173), coalition governments were utilized to establish numerous state governments (Singh, 1975, p. 47).

The 1967 assembly elections marked a turning point in Indian politics after liberation. At the state level, it signaled the culmination of the Congress dominance and the start of a new dawn of alliance politics. Due to its defeat in several states, the Congress had significantly decreased in strength. Opposition parties banded together and established coalition administrations in numerous states, including Bihar, Kerala, Orissa, Punjab, Uttar Pradesh, Haryana, Madhya Pradesh, and West Bengal, in an effort to profit from the Congress's loss. Defection politics also began to develop at the same period, particularly in these coalitional states. As a consequence, the majority of these coalition administrations in these states did not serve their full terms.

Following the 4<sup>th</sup> General Elections, Indian politics entered 2<sup>nd</sup> phase to address the issues associated with the Congress' loss of dominance in favour of a variety of parties (Brass, 1984, p. 97). The integrating potential of Indira Gandhi after 1967 ultimately destroyed the Congress coalition. Later elections make clear the alienation of minorities and the shrinking support base for Congress in rural areas (Gehlot, 1998, p. 210). The reputation trend of the leading party has gradually decreased, with the exception of 1971 and 1984. On the one side, the once-dominant Congress party has begun to steadily lose supporters; on the other hand, we may be witnessing the emergence of local parties in a number of states. India has a multiparty structure, to put it briefly. There will inevitably be some gaps in a multiparty system that some political party will have to cover. Numerous regional groups have arisen as a result of this, according to Naidu (2000, September, p. 386). Indian politics has changed from a system with just one party to a multi-party system, and Lok Sabha now has more political parties. Regionalized participation at the state and national levels has also contributed to coalition politics during the previous 2.5 decades (Ratna, 2007, April-June, p. 337).

The Janata Party administration, led by Morarji Desai as prime minister, established the nation's first coalition government in 1977. Congress (O), Congress for Democracy, and Jan Sangh came together to form the Janata Party administration (1977–1979). Leaders were inspired by Jayaprakesh Narayan to unite under the banner of a movement that included socialists and Charan Singh's Bhartiya Lok Dal. They banded together to oppose Indira Gandhi's authoritarian rule during the emergency (1975–1977), and in 1977 they ran for office using a common manifesto, a shared election symbol (Chander, 2004, p. 30). Specifically speaking, this regime was led by the Janata Party, but due to the unusual political circumstances, it was actually a coalition of various ideological groups. As a result, the experiment initially failed because of leadership personalities and ideological differences.

#### **Indian politics at the Centre (1989–1999) and unstable coalition governments**

Since 1989, or more than three decades ago, there have been some significant changes in the attitudes, goals, and modes of operation of both our national and regional parties. The adjustments are the outcome of what is often known as "the compulsion of coalition politics," which is well acknowledged. As the elections for the 9<sup>th</sup> Lok Sabha were conducted in 1989, a continuous trend of coalition administrations began. This resulted in an odd system of government in India since the splintered factions replaced the simple majority party, the Congress. The Bhartiya Janata Party and the Communist Parties provided assistance to the V.P. Singh-led National Front Government from outside, which allowed it to fake a parliamentary majority. As the Communists, the BJP, and the Janata Dal had diametrically opposing ideologies to one another, the 1989 arrangement was founded on "contradictions" (Bhambhri, 1998, p. 223).

The 1977 Janata Alliance's sequel, the 1989 National Front Coalition, shared the very same social foundation. The Mandal and Kamandal scandals in 1990 caused the government to fall (Tiwana, 1996, p. 9), and Chander Shekhar's coalition administration with Congress Party's unqualified backing only lasted six months. Only at this time did the BJP and the Vishwa Hindu Parishad announce that they will move on with building the Ram Temple and issue a summons to gather in Ayodhya to perform Kaarseva. The Rath Yatra was started by BJP leader L.K. Advani from

Gujarat's Jagannath Temple to Ayodhya. If Advani was detained, the BJP threatened to stop supporting the National Front. This threat did not deter V.P. Singh, and on October 23, Advani was taken into custody by the Bihar administration under the NSA. The BJP withdrew its support for the minority administration of Prime Minister Vishwanath Pratap Singh, which led to the government's downfall on the floor of the house. The BJP had 85 seats. Chandra Shekhar's group of the Congress that broke away took control (Ahmad & Nilofer, 2009, July, p. 755).

Though, elections for the 10<sup>th</sup> Lok Sabha, were conducted in May and June 1991, allowed the country to elect a new administration as a result of the entire political drama. The assassination of Rajiv Gandhi, the former president of the Indian National Congress and prime minister, occurred during the election cycle, which led to a leadership crunch and political unpredictability within the Congress (Swain, 2008, Jan.-March, p. 66). As a result, the May 23 and May 26 elections were moved to June 12 and June 15, in turn. P.V. Narasimha Rao took over as Congress president following Rajiv Gandhi's murder, and on June 21, 1991, he was chosen prime minister. Due to the severe lack of foreign currency, he was forced to implement economic reforms and make concessions to the nation's industrialists, which led to several economic issues. He was forced to obtain loans from various organizations and other nations (Ahmad & Nilofer, 2009, July-Sept., p. 755). Due to the fact that none of the key opposition political parties challenged the administration, Narasimha Rao was able to manipulate a minority government into a majority one in Lok Sabha, allowing him to serve out the remainder of his term (Chaudhari, 2005, April-June, p. 409).

Numerous problems in Indian politics occurred between 1990 and 1996. The primary topics were the Babri-Masjid dispute following its demolition on December 6, 1992, which led to disturbances in the community, and the Ayodhya issue. The Mandal decision, which granted OBCs racial reservations (Vanaik, 1997, p. 320), and the economic changes implemented by Rao's administration via the adoption of the liberalization, privatization, and globalization policies. Mandal, Mandir, and Market were sometimes referred to as the three "Ms" of Indian politics (Yadav, 1999, August, p. 15). The execution of the Mandal report for OBC reservations, the BJP's Rath Yatra that drew worldwide focus to the Babri Masjid controversy,

and these crises that led to the enactment of the first phase of the IMF-sponsored "liberalization" program are examples of recent events that have impacted India and this all occurred almost simultaneously and suddenly, creating an extraordinary opportunity or challenge in terms of stability and governance. All three of them provide the opportunity to forge brand-new divisions that go against the grain of the existing order and so engage in a fresh form of political mobilization. With a splintered mandate, the eleventh Lok Sabha (constituted in May 1996) was formed. This time, the BJP won the most seats, 161, followed by the Congress (I), which received 140 seats. As a result, President S.D. Sharma named BJP leader A.B. Vajpayee as prime minister and tasked him with demonstrating his majority by May 31 of that year. It was the first coalition that the BJP headed.

However, after just 13 days in office, Vajpayee resigned without having to face a vote of confidence in parliament. Under the direction of H.D. Deve Gowda, the United Front administration was established in June 1996. This alliance of the National Front and Left Front included 13 more parties in addition to outside backing from Congress (Dalal, 2005, pp. 131–132). An extremely unfavorable coalition of thirteen partners, the D. Gowda administration, claimed to have reached an agreement on a Common Minimum Programme for the rule of India. (Bhambhri, 1998, p. 223). If Moraji Desai and V. P. Singh couldn't handle the competing objectives of five partners and two significant outside supporters, respectively, and if V. P. Singh couldn't manage the contradictions of two major supporters, respectively. The BJP's removal from office served as the sole justification for the creation of this administration. D.Gowda, a non-ranking politician, was thus sought out after intense efforts and became the first prime minister to come from state politics. People generally had low expectations for this government because it was dependent on outside backing for Congress. When the administration was overthrown on April 11, 1997, this came to pass. Sita Ram Kesari, president of the Congress, made an offer to back the UF Government if the Front replaced its leader since she was fed up with Deve Gowda for personal reasons. Congress opposed the leader but had nothing against the administration or its programs.

Following this offer from the Congress, the United Front once more began looking for a different qualified candidate to fill the position of Prime Minister. Many names were proposed, including



Y.K. Moopnar, Laloo Prasad Yadav, and Mulayam Singh Yadav, but each of them was rejected by powerful organizations and people. In the end, unanimously the name of I.K. Gujral, who served as the departing cabinet of Deve Gowda's external affairs minister. On April 21, 1997, Gujral took the oath of office and, with the assistance of Congress, established a new coalition government at the center (Ratna, 2007, April-June, p. 337). The Congress was aware that if it once more withdrew its support, putting the country into another election in less than two years, the public would be furious. They yet had their own obligations. The Gujral Government was overthrown by Sita Ram Kesari because of the Jain Commission Report 3 and the DMK's suspected involvement (Srivastava, 2005, February, p. 14). Gujral served as interim prime minister until March 1998. After Gujral's resignation on November 28, no party was able to form a government, thus on December 4, 1997; the President dissolved the Lok Sabha and called for a mid-term election, conducted on February 16, 22, 28, and March 7, 1998. The egos of Congress leaders were the only significant factors in the downfall of these two successive governments.

A hung Lok Sabha was created once more as a consequence of the 12th Lok Sabha election. No coalition or party won the majority. The biggest alliance, led by the BJP, won the most seats (264), with the BJP holding the majority of those seats (182). On March 19, 1998, Vajpayee was sworn in to lead a second coalition administration at the center as prime minister. Atal Bihari Vajpayee began to experience the pains of coalition administrations immediately after that. The president's viewpoint had also changed. From the first day, Vajpayee was worried by Jayalalita and kept alert by her for a variety of reasons. (Jai, 1996, p. 275). After 13 months, he lost the majority when his main regional ally, the Jaya Lalitha-led All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (AIADMK), chose to stop supporting him. After Congress was unable to create a new administration, another midterm election was ordered (Ahmad & Nilofer, 2009, July-Sept., p. 757).

The ten years (1989–1999) of political unrest resulted in 5 national elections, which reflect the decentralized nature of Indian politics by placing local political parties and leaders in the spotlight of the country's drama. This is an intriguing phenomenon in Indian politics. Despite increasing voter political knowledge, the change led to political instability. In the midst of political

turbulence and unrest, the factions like sectarianism, religion, caste, money-muscle power, regionalism, Dalit politics, etc. became stronger. With their dedication to the national agenda, the primary participants in this game—the Congress, BJP, and National Front—failed to achieve the objectives of political stability at the center. In a nutshell, the years 1989 to 1999 were marked by extreme instability and a number of crises. Many coalition administrations and hung parliaments were established before they disintegrated. In a decade, from 1989 to 1991, India held the position of Prime Minister for six different individuals during five legislative elections. At both the national and international levels, there were a few unanticipated and unheard-of changes that occurred over these 10 years. The threat of global terrorism and the mounting pressure from neo-liberal economic policies came with the fall of the Soviet Union, the Cold War, the bipolar world order, and racial revolutions in East Europe and rest of the world. The nation-states were compelled by everything to alter their international, diplomatic, and economic relations. The Indian state is now dealing with a variety of issues at home, including the economic downturn and how the ruling class is handling it, as well as a lack of governability, communalism (split between Hindus and Muslims), caste claim, and leadership crisis. It is a daunting challenge to meet voter expectations where representative democracy is the cornerstone to political stability and effective government. One of the alternatives in such a situation was the establishment of a national government. The coalition model might kick off a change to a working paradigm if the national parties develop a coherent platform grounded on unambiguous, crystal clear norms with a shared agenda. According to the voting habits of Indian voters, the first-past-the-post (FPTP) electoral system can give us a stable and workable coalition as long as ideological polarisation and opportunistic power-seeking alliances are discouraged after the elections. Governance must be founded on partnerships based on ideologies and policies (Gehlot, 1998, p. 218).

#### **The beginning of stable coalitions at the Center (Since 1999 – 2014)**

The 3<sup>rd</sup> mid-term election in a span of 4 years was the Thirteenth Lok Sabha Elections of 1999. It turned out to be the diverse opposition parties' political opportunism, reckless behavior, and desire for power on the one hand, and the coalition lead by the BJP's inability to successfully control the floor and rule the country (Swain, 2008, Jan.-

March, p. 67). Since 1996, there has been ample evidence that the era of a single party controlling the legislature has ended and the era of a hung parliament has begun. As a result, the two main contenders for power, the BJP and the Congress, played their cards according to the strategy of coalition politics, the BJP with full force and the Congress with less vigor. The National Democratic Alliance (NDA), an expansive coalition of political parties, was founded on May 15, 1999, by the BJP. The NDA chose Atal Bihari Vajpayee as its leader. 24 major and smaller regional political parties joined together to form the NDA. Thus, a pre-election alliance led by the BJP passed the crucial threshold to form the government for the first time in the 13th Lok Sabha election. Together with the BJP, the NDA won 299 seats and 40.48% of the popular vote. As a consequence, Vajpayee was re-elected as prime minister and the BJP-led NDA government was established. Of course, by successfully finishing its term, the NDA Government demonstrated that it was more stable this time. Led by A.B. Vajpayee, the NDA government suggested dissolving the Lok Sabha eight months before the end of its real term and ran for office in May 2004 with the campaign theme Shining and Rising India. Thus becoming the first alliance administration in the history of the Indian Union, which had earlier been disbanded in an effort to recover control over matters relating to stability and development (Dalal, 2005, p. 133)? The unexpected accomplishments in the history of parliamentary governance were accomplished by Atal Bihari Vajpayee, who successfully led a coalition government to full tenure. He demonstrated that coalition governments may be stable as long as the parties constituting them adhere to coalition culture and keep their activities within the parameters established by the coalition's agenda, often known as the Common Minimum Programme (CMP).

The coalition politics and widespread defection that were in play throughout the General Elections of 1996, 1998, and 1999 were largely present in the General Election of May 2004. Modi's politics of communalism and mannerly language became a disadvantage for the party, as did the BJP's politics of communalism, parochialism, division, dishonesty, and blatant economic elitism. The Congress was compelled to believe and feel that coalition politics were essential for making the government the centre of attention. As a result, it said that it was willing and prepared to join forces to form the United Progressive Alliance (UPA), a coalition, to form the government following the

2004 legislative election. Assisted by regional parties and the Left Front's 59 MPs, which provided outside support, the Congress, which won 145 seats compared to the BJP's 138, was able to create the government (Ashraf, 2004, p. 18). The 19 Congress allies recommended Sonia Gandhi to be the next PM, but she rejected and selected Dr. Man Mohan Singh, a renowned politician, instead. Both the UPA partners and the Congress parliamentary party agreed on this. So, on May 22, 2004, he was sworn in as prime minister to lead the upcoming coalition administration at the center. The political landscape in India was prepared for another coalition government at the capital. Forcing the BJP-led alliance of the NDA out of government definitely looked to be a momentous triumph for the Congress Party, which swept the 2004 general election as the lone party. A multi-party coalition ruling coalition is now an accepted reality of Indian democracy, however, as evidenced by the reality that the Congress had no way to secure an overwhelming majority and needed to court other regional political groups in order to create a national administration.

Because complete concord has been preserved between the de facto (Sonia Gandhi) and Man Mohan Singh centers of authority, this alliance also appears to be stable. This government won't face any significant challenges unless both of them recognize and uphold their respective ground realities. 133) (Dalal, 2005). The Left Parties withdrew their support for the UPA administration with their 59 MPs after major differences over the nuclear accord between the United States of America led to a floor test, i.e., the no-confidence motion in the Lower House, which the UPA successfully managed and won. With the assistance of other parties including the Samajwadi Party (SP), led by Mulayam Singh Yadav, the confidence motion was approved by 275 votes to 256. However, despite its best efforts, the BJP was unable to stop Dr. Man Mohan Singh's motion of confidence (Ahmed & Nilofer, 2009, July-Sept., p. 258). It was once again demonstrated by the United Progressive Alliance (UPA) administration, led by Dr. Man Mohan Singh that a coalition administration in India could last for the entirety of its five-year mandate.

Thus, the 2009 Lok Sabha elections were the fifteenth. The United Progressive Alliance (UPA) has once again won this election, with Congress emerging as the clear winner. However, compared to 2004, the UPA's constituents are slightly less diverse this time around. The Trinamool Congress,

led by Ms. Mamta Banerji, has taken the place of the RJD. The Congress is once again expected to yield to pressure from partners like the Trinamool Congress and the DMK on several issues in this alliance (K., 2009, June, p. 5). Numerous governance difficulties also face the UPA-II administration. The CWG, 2G spectrum, the appointment of CVC, the Aaderh Society in Mumbai, the Lok Pal problem, the Foreign Direct Investment issue, the quota inside a quota (OBC) for minorities (Muslims and Christians), and other scams came to light one after another like metaphorical skeletons falling out of the closet. The Prime Minister remained silent and powerless as all of these stunning revelations were passionately debated in public. Perhaps no prime minister in any nation has ever spoken with the populace so little, not even during dire emergencies. The administration vacillated and hesitated (Giri, 2011, July 3, p. 4). However, because of the strong backing of its coalition allies, this administration also served out its whole term.

#### **Coalition formation and governments at the national level after 2014**

The sixteenth Lok Sabha Elections, held in 2014, abolished the necessity of a coalition administration. Under the leadership of Narendra Modi, the BJP gained 282 seats, making it the first party to win an overwhelming majority in the Lok Sabha in the post-Congress period. As a result of stronger competition in elections, a growing role for regional parties, and a stagnant turnout in Indian politics between 1989 and 2009, it is interesting to note that no single party did not appear to win a majority of seats in the Lok Sabha. As a result, minority governments, plus awkward minority coalitions, were dependent on outside support. The 2014 election shows a startling reversal of all these tendencies. Elections were really less contested than in recent years, fragmentation has taken a backseat, the emergence of local groups has been halted, and turnout has reached a record high.

Additionally, the Indian general election of 2014 was thought to be the most significant election since 1977. It saw the BJP triumph spectacularly, the governing Congress party lost, and an entirely novel presidential campaign approach that violated all political norms. India has an array of partnerships, both successful and failed. Despite holding a substantial majority in the Lok Sabha, the BJP kept its alliance partners, highlighting the importance of coalition-building in this election. The BJP's dependence on its alliance parties in Indian politics is shown by the relevance of pre-

election coalitions in several states, the BJP's poor performance in the Rajya Sabha, and the importance of cooperation partners in assembly elections for the rise of its dominance in the states. (Farooqui & Sridharan, 2014, p. 2). 2019 saw the conclusion of the Modi-led NDA government's term, and the 17th Lok Sabha elections took place in April and May of the same year. The two alliances of the current NDA and the rival UPA, respectively led by the BJP and INC, were the key competitors. With its coalition partners giving the NDA a total of 353 seats, the BJP became the one and only major party in the House after winning 303 seats. Narendra Modi's personal popularity, the NDA's successful voter turnout campaigns, the Pulwama attack's spike in public nationalism, the resurgence of Hindu voters in a multi-caste coalition, and the effective execution of social welfare initiatives during the First Modi government's term were among the factors cited as contributing to the victory (Hindustan Times, May 25). The BJP did not desert its coalition allies after winning this election, and the NDA government was once more formed with Narendra Modi as prime minister. This demonstrates unequivocally that the BJP no longer need coalition administrations after 2014, but the party nevertheless did it with their help because of their importance in the relevant states.

As a result, the nation has had up to eight general elections since 1989, and several coalitions formed up of various parties have held power. There have been various unforeseen repercussions of a government's brief term in office. The importance of the party's ideologies and programs has decreased significantly (Tagi, 2008, July-Sept., p. 621) and it is prepared to join forces with any other party in order to acquire political power, electoral success, or positions in the central government. As was said above, coalition politics in India are therefore dynamic.

#### **India's Coalition Governments: Changes and Continuities**

However, if we look at India's political and electoral tendencies from inception up to this point, we observe that following 1989, coalition politics began to have a big impact on Indian politics. After India gained its independence, the Congress System was implemented, and we subsequently witnessed this system's decline. The main reasons for this decline, according to Achin Vanaik, are as follows: first, prevalent defection after the Nehruvian era; second, the ongoing change of the urban class and professionals who lost their

progressivist tilt as they became more self-absorbed, indulgent, and consumerist with regard to their aspirations; thirdly, a shift in the Congress's leadership; fourthly, increased expectations and expanding electoral fluctuation of the core minorities; and fifth, the shift in the electoral landscape.

Numerous regional parties entered the Indian legislative system after the demise of the Congress system. The political vacuum abandoned by the Congress in the 1990s was filled by a variety of national political parties, including as the BJP, BSP, and SP, as well as several regional political parties, such as the TDP, NLD, DMK, AIADMK, RJD, etc. (Varshney, 2000, February, p. 25). These regional political groups maintained a stronger negotiating position and received a bigger share of power during the creation of coalition administrations, which aided in the process. The people assumed that regional parties getting together may better serve their regional interests, which led to the advent of these regional parties. Second, the development of the idea of regionalism as opposed to "nationalism" in the minds of the general public is a result of their perception that national-level political parties have not done enough to tackle regional issues and satisfy regional aspirations that have grown significantly in recent years. Third, the regional parties' principal goal remained to advance their regional interests even when they teamed up with the national-level parties to create a coalition at the center. This was because the strength and continuation of the regional parties rested on this factor. In the end, corruption and politics came to be seen as two sides of the same coin as they attempted to exert pressure on and take advantage of the central government to further their regional interests (Sinha, 2000, p. 240). The falling popularity of the Congress, which started in the states and then grew to the national level, the emergence of local parties, which usually originate in a single state, and the expansion of the BJP as an opponent both at the state and federal levels are three interrelated trends, argues Sridharan, that have had an impact on the party system.

Defection politics, hunger for power, opportunism, favoritism, bribery, the erosion of moral norms, and a broken intellectual foundation are therefore the key characteristics of coalition administrations in India. Prior to the NDA, the coalition government had devolved into a game played by egotistical, constrictive, opportunistic, and hungry for power politicians just for their own objectives

(Doddamani, 2007, Sept., pp. 15–16). The creation of so many political parties, along with a lack of national identity, statesmanship, and mutual confidence in politicians, has made coalitions necessary. Other elements that have created favorable conditions for the rise of new elements in our political system and the demise of the Congress vote bank include rising intergroup conflict, intergroup riots, and a sense of fear among minorities (Dalal, 2005, p. 135). In the Indian Union, coalition administrations become entrenched and durable after 1999. The two main blocs during this time were the NDA and UPA. India saw various coalition administrations after 2014.

In India, coalition politics has both benefits and drawbacks. The advantages of coalition administrations in India are that they reduce regional inequities more effectively than single-party rule and increase participation in democracy since every minor faction is given representation and a voice in the legislature. As a result, it represents a considerably wider range of popular opinion than single-party rule. Because choices are made with the interests of the majority of the population in mind, it allows for excellent governance. Any policy will be widely discussed within the government before implementation since it involves a broad consensus of view (Pandey, 2010, September, p. 60). In coalition politics, one must give up all of their ideals in order to appease the other, and in the end, you will have no position. The communists, who previously fiercely opposed Congress, are now on their side. Comparing center-state relations under a coalition system to those in a one-party dominating system, they have improved considerably and are now fairly amicable and healthy.

In addition to these benefits, coalition politics also has a number of drawbacks, which India occasionally experiences. First of all, under a coalition government, the Prime Minister (PM) is always subject to consent pressure from the supporting parties and frequently unable to make crucial choices. For instance, the alliance parties frequently exerted pressure on Morarji Desai during the Janata Party administration (1977–79), VP Singh during the National Front administration (1989–90), Deve Gowda and I.K. Gujral during the United Front administration (1996–98), A. B. Vajpayee during the NDA administration (1999–2004), and Manmohan Singh during the UPA administration (2004–2014). In other words, the component parties are important in this situation.



Second, due to the uncertainty in the government, coalition politics also results in an expansion of the bureaucracy's authority and influence. The major flaw is that the government is unstable by nature. In the Indian setting throughout the 1990s, there was a concern of political instability that led to transient governments as well. The UPA faced a no-confidence vote on a few occasions throughout the NDA and UPA administrations, including in 2008, but was able to save the government with help from Mulayam Singh's Samajwadi Party. However, compared to governments created by any one party with a clear ideology and set of guiding principles, coalition governments are less productive, dependable, and independent.

A party's manifestos become obsolete and frequently wildly unrealistic under a coalition administration since it is impossible for them to establish a government on their own. As a result, a coalition government is less open. After the election, actual political program decisions are formed in a covert backroom negotiating process from which the general public is barred. The fact that coalition governments are incapable of adopting a long-term or futuristic perspective is another drawback. Governments occasionally need an ideological compass to guide them over choppy political and economic waters, and coalitions lack such a guiding principle. Additionally, making decisions that are controversial in the near term is sometimes necessary when preparing for the long run. Since temporary disapproval may drive one of the parties to quit in search of a general advantage, such tests regularly end in the collapse of coalitions. Thus, this coalition era has conveyed both positive and negative messages. The best signs should be taken advantage of.

Since the Indian political system is centripetal in character, it is clear from the study above that coalition governments would exist for a considerable amount of time. We must now attempt to establish a sound two-party coalition system due to the need for politics. To make coalitions a fruitful experiment, the Common Minimum Programme will continue to be at the forefront. The coalition experiment in India has enabled many identities to be freely articulated and resulted in a unique combination of tradition and modernity in Indian society. India is a diverse society with room for many viewpoints. In numerous facets of life, Indians display varying degrees of plurality (Appaiah, 2014). As a result, the coalition system is a political process that naturally reflects the variety in terms of language, religion, culture, etc.

## **Conclusion**

In conclusion, one can examine in greater detail how political coalitions and regimes in India have retained a democratic resemblance in the policymaking and governing processes. During the administration of the coalition, federal and pluralistic strategies emerged as priorities for policymaking. Even a post-election arrangement of parties with opposing ideologies can be considered a coalition, as was the case with the United Progressive Alliance–Left (UPA–Left) with assistance from outside sources (from 2004 to July 2008), however, this type of coalition is not likely to result in the stable rule. Despite the BJP's repeated statements on complex issues such as the Ram temple issue, Article 370 of the Constitution issue, as well as the Uniform Civil Code issue, alliance partners appeared less affected than in 1998 and 1999 and continued to support the BJP and the NDA in the 2014 general elections. This was owing to the inevitability of pre-election coalition compulsion. However, circumstances altered during the 2014 general elections. This is because the pre-election coalition imperative has become so unavoidable. The possibility of a coalition administration at the center following the elections in 2014 is not out of the question, but it is optional. However, it is notable that the coalition government has been entrenched in its position in the Indian Union. Additionally, it demonstrates that India is currently in the age of coalition culture. This so-called coalition compulsion is going to be kept on tenterhooks, there is no doubt about it, since the coalition government has had some awful experiences.

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