

The Coalition Government

It appears that the chapter of a single party rule in India has become a matter of past. The most significant development in Indian political scene since 1996 has been the emergence of coalition era in Indian Politics. Till 1989, the stable government at the centre under the leadership of Smt. Indira Gandhi and her son Rajiv Gandhi did well. In 1989, the country was amidst instability as Rajeev Gandhi lost power and V.P Singh had to step down as BJP withdrew its support. Chandra Shekhar assumed power and formed government with congress support from outside. But it was matter of four months that congress also withdrew its support and the President announced fresh polls. Congress came back and stayed in power from 1991 to 1996 the Congress was voted out of power and the United front which mustered support of 14 parties. Formed a unique Coalition Government with Congress once again decided to support from outside Again the coalition failed and election for 13th Lok Sabha held and the Coalition government under the leadership of Atal Bihari Vajpayee took the reign of the country. The present government is also a coalition government under the Prime Minister ship of Dr. Man Mohan Singh, with number of partners supporting either from outside or inside the government.

After initial hiccups coalitions are now less brittle than before and this is bringing in greater amount of political divergence in the process of governance.

Coalition has more merits than demerits. The positive characteristics of coalition are as follows:

1. Coalitions reflect people's verdict more sincerely in a democracy like India where diversity is the hallmark on the basis of caste, class, region, religion and language.
2. This is closely linked to political social stability of a country. If a single party fails to fulfill people's political, social and economical aspirations, coalition parties emerge to fill the gap.
3. A coalition government better reflects the ideas and policies which emerge after enough consultations and deliberations. This is absent in single party government.
4. A coalition at the centre in which regional parties are also a part, proves healthy for decentralization of power and resources which helps to ensure balanced development of the country among the various regions.
5. A coalition ensures less of correction because the coalition partners are vigilant enough to control and check such tendencies of the leading party whose leaders take the prime slots in the government.

Seeing the present political scenario of the country, it should be clear to all that coalition government has come here to stay in India. Taking it as a positive development, parties after election should learn to come together to provide a government for its full term.