



Political parties' position on Kashmir

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Abstract

Political parties have become a must for any modern democratic state. Parties play a crucial role in the political process and they determine the operational character of the system. In fact the functioning of the formal institutions in a parliamentary democracy becomes clearly understandable only through the dynamics of party-system. Like other states of the union of India, Kashmir has its own party system'. It is essential to have a brief historical survey of the origin, growth and development of party system in the state of Jammu and Kashmir especially of the National Conference. Political Parties Existence of the state from Accession to Insurgency. The Indian part through the Instrument of Accession executed of Kashmir.

Keywords: Political, parties, Insurgency, National

Introduction

The Kashmir region forms the Northern boundary while Jammu and Ladakh regions form the southern and eastern boundaries of the state of Jammu and Kashmir respectively. These regions were brought together for the first time under one political, geographical, economical, cultural and ethnic grounds by the Treaty of Amritsar (1846). The treaty was signed between British Government and Gulab Singh on March 16, 1846 (Bose, S. 1997). The state of Jammu and Kashmir is a hilly state having diverse topography. Agriculture is the backbone of the economy of the state of Jammu and Kashmir and about 80 percent of its population is engaged in agriculture and allied sectors. Thirty percent of the state's income is contributed by the agriculture sector. The state has 2.22 lakh square kilometers geographical area^[1]. Political Parties Existence of the state from Accession to Insurgency The state of Jammu and Kashmir became the Indian part through the Instrument of Accession executed on 26 October, 1947 by Maharaja Hari Singh, ruler of the Princely state of Jammu and Kashmir. By executing this legal document, the Indian Independence Act 1947 has been extended over the state of Jammu and Kashmir^[2]. In this regard the various political parties were formed from time to time. The detailed description of these political parties is given below:-

1. Jammu and Kashmir National Conference (JKNC)

The root of the JKNC dates back to the Dogra rule of the state of Jammu and Kashmir. It was founded as the All Jammu and Kashmir Muslim Conference party by the Sheikh Abdullah and Chaudary Ghulam Abbas in 1932. In this regard, it was limited to the Kashmir region only. However, in the year 1939 the party organization has changed and extended to other regions of the state of Jammu and Kashmir. With this extension character, the name of the party was also renamed as the Jammu and Kashmir National Conference^[3]. National conference party supported the Accession of the state with the union of India in 1947.

2. Praja Parishad Jammu and Kashmir

Jammu and Kashmir became the part of India shortly after the independence of India in 1947. Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah became the prime minister of the state of Jammu and Kashmir. The Dogra rulers who were ruling the state since long time came to an end and the political power went to the hands of National Conference. In this regard, the state got the special status under the Constitution of India^[4].

3. The All Jammu and Kashmir Plebiscite Front (PF)

After the Instrument of Accession of the state of Jammu and Kashmir with the Indian union, Jawaharlal Nehru committed the Plebiscite to the state of Jammu and Kashmir.⁵³ The then the senior leader of the National Conference or "a trusted aide of Sheikh Abdllah", 54 Mirza Mohammad Afzal Beg, caught the word plebiscite and played the Muslim card in the state of Jammu and Kashmir^[5]. He founded the Plebiscite Front (PF) on August 9, 1955. However, it was formally launched in the year 1958.

4. Indian National Congress

Indian National congress is a political party of the Republic of India. However, the Jammu and Kashmir wing of the National congress was founded by Syed Mir Qasim. Qasim became the chief minister in 1971. In bye election of the 1963, it lost all three parliamentary seats. In this regard, in the year 1964^[6], the congress party was formally set up in the state during the G. M. Sadiqs tenure (Verma, 1987). In 1965, the congress party of Jammu and Kashmir joined hands with the National Conference.

5. Jammu and Kashmir National Panthers Party

In 1973, Bhim Singh became the president of the Youth Congress in the state of Jammu and Kashmir and later on was chosen the General Secretary of the All India Congress. However, the formation of an alliance of the Congress with the National Conference and mainly "due to political differences between the state Congress and

Singh, over protecting the economic, social and political interests of the people of the state, Singh resigned from the Congress and formed his own party". He founded a party in the year 1982, known as Jammu and Kashmir National Panthers Party with the main intent to stand strong against the National Conference party ^[7].

6. International Democratic Party

R. P. Saraf became the Kashmiri politician in 1952, when he was elected to the constituent Assembly of Jammu and Kashmir. Saraf had served his early years of the politics in the Communist Party of India (Marxist-Leninist). However, Communist Party of India (Marxist-Leninist) had been joined by the Communist Party of India (Marxist) in the state of Jammu and Kashmir. With this event Saraf was chosen for the central committee at the CPM (ML) party in the year 1970 ^[8]. However, after more than a decade, Saraf founded his new party, known as International Democratic Party in the year 1986 in the state of Jammu and Kashmir.

7. Muslim United Front (MUF)

This was a newly emerged Kashmir based political party in the state of Jammu and Kashmir. It contested the election in the year 1987. This election is widely known as "rig election" in the political history of the state of Jammu and Kashmir. In this election the MUF and its alliance won only 4 seats. The party's position was well in winning the fifteen-twenty seats or if rigging would have not taken place the party would have formed the government. It has also been estimated that it would have been the part of some coalition government as the main contender in the state politics ^[9].

Conclusion

An overview of the attitude of major national parties towards Kashmir issue, indicates that almost all political parties have consensus regarding the nature and gravity of problem. The analysis of the views of political parties on Kashmir issue can be put under the rubrics of several issues.

References

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