

**COALITION POLITICS IN INDIA:  
A CASE STUDY OF MIZORAM**

**LALLIANCHHUNGA**

**DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE  
MIZORAM UNIVERSITY**

**COALITION POLITICS IN INDIA:**

**A CASE STUDY OF MIZORAM**

**LALLIANCHHUNGA**

**DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE**

**SUBMITTED**

**IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENT OF THE DEGREE  
OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY IN POLITICAL SCIENCE OF MIZORAM  
UNIVERSITY, AIZAWL**

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Above all, God, with His power of love and guidance, made this research work a success.

Date:6<sup>th</sup> May, 2020

Place: Mizoram University

(LALIANCHHUNGA)





## **DECLARATION CERTIFICATE**

Mizoram University

May : 2020

I, Lallianchhunga, hereby declare that the subject matter of this thesis is the record of work done by me, that the contents of this thesis did not form basis of the award of any previous degree to me or to do the best of my knowledge to anybody else, and that the thesis has not been submitted by me for any research degree in any other University/Institute.

This is being submitted to the Mizoram University for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the Department of Political Science.

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Research Scholar

(Prof. J.K.Patnaik)

Head

(Prof.J.K.Patnaik)

Supervisor

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October : 2019

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**CERTIFICATE**

This is to certify that the thesis titled '**Coalition Politics in India: A Case Study of Mizoram**' submitted by Mr. Lallianchhunga, Ph.D scholar bearing Regd. No. MZU/Ph.D/982 of 22.05.2017 is a research work done under my supervision and guidance for the award of degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the Department of Political Science, Mizoram University. In preparing the thesis, Mr. Lallianchhunga has complied with all the requirements as laid down in the UGC Ph. D. Regulations of the University. It is also certified that the scholar has been admitted in the Department through an entrance test, followed by interview as per UGC (Minimum Standards and Procedure for Award of M.Phil/Ph.D Degrees) Regulations, 2016

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Date:28.10.2019  
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Date:28.10.2019  
Place: MZU

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Supervisor





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AKHIL BHARATIYA LOKTANTRIK CONGRESS	ABLTC
ANNA DRAVIDA MUNNETRA KAZHAGAM	ADMK
ALL INDIA ANNA DRAVIDA MUNNETRA KAZHAGAM	AIADMK
ALL INDIA CONGRESS COMMITTEE	AICC
ALL INDIA FORWARD BLOCK	AIFB
ALL INDIA INDIRA CONGRESS (TIWARI)	AIIC (T)
ALL INDIA MAJLIS ITTEHADUL MUSLIMEEN	AIMIM
ALL INDIA TRINAMOOOL CONGRESS	AICT
ALL PARTY HILL LEADERS CONFERENCE	APHLC
ARUNACHAL CONGRESS	AC
ASSAM GANA PARISHAD	AGP
BAHUJAN SAMAJ PARTY	BSP
BHARATIYA JANATA PARTY	BJP
BIJU JANATA DAL	BJD
BODOLAND PEOPLES FRONT	BPF
BODOLAND STATE MOVEMENT COMMITTEE	BSMC
COMMUNIST PARTY OF INDIA	CPI
COMMUNIST PARTY OF INDIA (MARXIST)	CPI(M)
CONGRESS (TIWARI)	CONG (T)
CONGRESS FOR DEMOCRACY	CFD

DEMOCRATIC PARTY	DP
DRAVIDA MUNNETRA KAZHAGAM	DMK
EASTERN INDIA TRIBAL UNION	EITU
HARYANA LOK DAL	HLD
HARYANA LOK DAL( RASHTRIYA)	HLD ®
HARYANA VIKAS PARTY INDIAN NATIONAL CONGRESS	HVP INC
INDIAN NATIONAL LOK DAL	INLD
INDIAN UNION MUSLIM LEAGUE	IUML
INDEPENDENT	IND
JAMMU & KASHMIR PEOPLES DEMOCRATIC PARTY	JKPDP
JAMMU AND KASHMIR NATIONAL CONFERENCE	JKNC
JAN MORCHA	JM
JANATA DAL	JD
JANATA DAL (SECULAR)	JD(S)
JANATA DAL (UNITED)	JD(U)
JANATA PARTY	JP
JHARKHAND MUKHTI MORCHA	JMM
KARNATAKA CONGRESS PARTY	KCP
KERALA CONGRESS (MANI)	KEC (M)
LOK SHAKTI	LS
LOK JANSHAKTI PARTY	LJNSP



LOKTANTRIK CONGRESS PARTY	LCP
MADHYA PRADESH VIKAS CONGRESS	MPVC
MIZO NATIONAL FRONT	MNF
MIZORAM PEOPLE CONFERENCE	MZPC
MIZO SECULAR FRONT	MSF
MIZO UNION	MU
MIZORAM PRADESH CONGRESS COMMITTEE	MPCC
MAHARASHTRA WADI GOMANTAK PARTY	MGP
MANIPUR PEOPLE'S PARTY	MPP
MANIPUR STATE CONGRESS PARTY	MSCP
MUSLIM LEAGUE	MU
MARUMALARCHI DRAVIDA MUNNETRA KAZHAGAM	MDMK
NATIONAL DEMOCRATIC ALLIANCE	NDA
NAGALAND PEOPLES FRONT	NPF
NATIONAL CONFERENCE	NC
NATIONAL LOKTANTRIK PARTY	NLP
NATIONAL PEOPLES' PARTY	NPP
NATIONALIST CONGRESS PARTY	NCP
NEW LAND USE POLICY	NLUP
PATTALI MAKKAL KATCHI	PMK
PEASANTS & WORKERS PARTY	PWP

PEOPLE'S CONFERENCE	PPC
RASHTRIYA JANATA PARTY	RJP
RASHTRIYA LOK DAL	RLD
RASHTRIYA LOKTANTRIK MORCHA	RLM
RASTRIYA JANATA DAL	RJD
REPUBLICAN PARTY OF INDIA	RPI
REPUBLICAN PARTY OF INDIA (ATHAWALE)	RPI (A)
REVOLUTIONARY SOCIALIST PARTY	RSP
SAMAJAWADI JANATA PARTY	SJP
SAMAJAWADI JANATA PARTY (RASHTRIYA)	SJP ®
SAMAJAWADI PARTY	SP
SAMATA PARTY	SAP
SHIROMANI AKALI DAL	SAD
SHIV SENA	SHS
SIKKIM DEMOCRATIC FRONT	SDF
UNITED MIZO FREEDOM ORGANISATION	UMFO
UNITED PROGRESSIVE ALLIANCE	UPA
TAMIL MAANILA CONGRESS (MOOPANAR)	TMC (M)
TELEGU DESAM PARTY	TDP
TELENGANA RASHTRA SAMITHI	TRS
TRINAMOOOL CONGRESS PARTY	TCP
UNITED DEMOCRATIC ALLIANCE	UDA

ZORAM KUTHNATHAWKTU PAWL	ZKP
ZORAM NATIONALIST PARTY	ZNP
ZORAM PEOPLE'S MOVEMENT	ZPM

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## CHAPTER - I

### INTRODUCTION

Coalition politics constitute an indispensable part of the political process in Indian parliamentary system. Coalition can be defined as any combination of separate players (such as political parties) to win a voting game.<sup>1</sup> The need of coalition arises “where legislation requires a majority to pass, but no one party controls as many as half of the seats in the legislature.”<sup>2</sup> Coalition politics is usually visible in a country, which adopts parliamentary democratic form of government where various political parties compete with one another in order to win majority seats to run the government. Coalition politics is possible because of the existence of multi-party system in a democratic set-up. It is in fact a phenomenon of a multi-party government where a number of minority parties join hands for running the government, which is otherwise not possible in a democracy where there is a truncated mandate from the people in the election.<sup>3</sup> Thus, a coalition is formed when many splinter groups in the House (Legislature) agree to join hands in a common platform by sinking their broad differences and cobble a majority in the House.<sup>4</sup>

Since the independence of India on August 15, 1947, India has adopted the parliamentary form of government. However, the actual working of the parliamentary democracy in India during the last seven decades has witnessed many important developments. Probably, the most significant among them has been the emergence of phenomenon of coalition politics, initially in some states but lately at

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<sup>1</sup> Iain McLean, ‘Coalition’ in *Concise Dictionary of Politics*, OUP 1996), p. 78.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid

<sup>3</sup> Babulal Fadia, *State Politics in India Vol I*, (Radiant Publishers, New Delhi, 1984) p.401

<sup>4</sup> Ibid

the centre too. This has resulted in intense political instability with its concomitant negative fallout on the pace of development, so much so that it has put a question mark on the very suitability of Westminster model for India.

### **1.1: Statement of Problem**

It is true that for three decades the Indian National Congress remained in power without any serious challenge to its position. Reasons that led to this monopoly of power were many. For one thing, the party basked on the glory of national movement, which it had spearheaded.<sup>5</sup> In its struggle against the colonial rule, it had acquired an all-Indian national image.<sup>6</sup> The other political parties such as All India Hindu Mahashaba, Shriromani Akali Dal, The Communist Party of India, The Justice Party, and The Jana Sangh were parochial in their appeal, communal, regional, class-based, and racial and casteist and their influence was limited only to specific region. Secondly, the charismatic personality of Nehru has provided him the image of an untiring freedom fighter, heir of the Mahatma and a secular liberal democrat with a marked socialist based.<sup>7</sup> Thus Nehru and Patel could co-exist and work in perfect harmony despite each having faction at various levels in the party quietly. Even P.S. Tandon, the president of the party quietly resigned when he could not pull on with Nehru. This cohesiveness of Indian National Congress (INC) continued even in the post-Nehru era for a while. However, when the Congress party vertically split in 1969 and some Congress members of the Lok Sabha, who joined Congress (O) decided to withdraw their support from the group headed by Prime

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<sup>5</sup>A.S Narang, *Indian Government and Politics*, (Gitanjali Publishing House, New Delhi 1998 reprint) Pp. 392-395

<sup>6</sup> K.L.Kamal, *Democratic Politics in India*, (Wiley Eastern Limited, 1984 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition) p-84

<sup>7</sup> Ibid P-95



Minister, Mrs. Gandhi, the government was reduced to minority.<sup>8</sup> It was for the first time that the ruling party had to depend for its survival on some regional parties, mainly the DMK and the Akali Dal with the support of some leftist parties.<sup>9</sup> However, Mrs. Gandhi was able to repair the badly mutilated party by winning the hearts of some powerful politicians through her charisma, her bold measure like bank nationalization, abolition of privy purses, her challenges to the big business houses and her slogan of Garibi Hatao, which helped her keep the party electorally on top.<sup>10</sup>

However, the period since 1977 can be termed as an era of intermittent coalitions. There have been so many coalitions of different lives in a span of four decades, viz Janata Party rule (1977 – 79), Janata Dal National front rule (1989 – 91), Third Front (National Front & Left Front) (1996 – 98), BJP led -NDA Government (1998-2004) and Congress led-UPA (2004-2014) and the BJP-led NDA (2014-till date). Each of these coalitions constitutes a category both qualitatively (in terms of the ideological basis of coalition partners) and quantitatively (in terms of the number of coalition partners). These coalitions also show different patterns. The 1977 - 1979 coalition was unique in itself as far as several coalition partners merged their individual identities and united under one banner. Thus, for the first time in the thirty years the Congress Party was functioning as a party of the opposition at the centre.<sup>11</sup> The Janata Party was born on May 1, 1977. The major constituents of Janata Party were the Congress (O) led by Morarji Desai, Lok Dal led by Charan Singh, Jana Sangh led by A.B. Vajpayee, Socialist party led by Madhu Dandavate and

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<sup>8</sup> Hans Raj, *Indian Political System*, (Surjeet Publications, Delhi, 1996) PP 130-177

<sup>9</sup> K.L.Kamal OpCit p.118

<sup>10</sup> K.L. Sharma op. cit. Pp.147-159

<sup>11</sup> L.S.Rathore “The Sixth Lok Sabha Election Politics in India: A Panoramic Study” in V.Grover, Ranjana Arora’s *Multi-Party System of Government in India* (Deep & Deep Publications, New Delhi 1995) p.215

George Fernandes, Congress for Democracy led by Jagjivan Ram, Bahuguna Young Turks led by Chandra Shekhar, Krishnan Kant and Ram Dhan and Swatantra party component led by Pilloo Modi. Interestingly, however, none of the left parties joined the coalition, though a section of them supported the government from outside. The success of the Janata Party and the defeat of the Congress (I) in the sixth general election of 1977 were mainly due to the reaction against the excesses committed during the National Emergency imposed by Indira Gandhi between 1975 and 1977.<sup>12</sup> Thus, the formation of the Janata Party had created a viable alternative to the Congress party. But this experiment in coalition politics proved a disaster and soon the Janata Party split in 1979 on the question of communalism and double loyalty of one of its constituents, which paved the way for the congress (I) party to power with a clear majority (353/542). Thus, one party rule was restored in 1980, which continued even after 1984 general elections where the Congress (I) led Rajiv Gandhi won a record victory (415/542)

The 1989 coalition experiment was somewhat different. V.P. Singh who resigned from the Rajiv Gandhi's cabinet on the issue of corruption led this coalition. He launched a new party named Jan Morcha, which became the nucleus for the unity of all non-congress parties. It culminated in the birth of Janata Dal in October 1988. The Janata Dal consisted of Janata Party, Jan Morcha and Lok Dal. Earlier on 19 Sept 1988, a National Front consisting of seven parties (T.D.P., A.G.P, DMK, Cong(S), JP, Jan Morcha and Lok Dal (D) had been formed. In the 1989 General Election, no single party got clear majority. Though Congress (I) was the largest

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<sup>12</sup> Verinder Grover "The Defeat of Both of Totalitarianism and The Coalition Experiment" in Verinder Grover, Ranjana Arora's *Multi-Party System of Government in India: Defeat of Totalitarianism and Coalition Development* (Deep & Deep Publications, New Delhi, 1995) Pp. 739-740

single party (197 seats) it failed to get enough support to be able to form the government. Consequently, a JD-NDF (142) was formed which was supported from outside by BJP on the one hand and the Communist on the other.<sup>13</sup> However, shortly V.P. Singh's government was reduced to a minority in a short span due to factional fights. Samajwadi Janata Party led by Chandra Shekhar and Devi Lal constituted a minority government, which was assured outside support by the Congress (I). It also went away when Congress (I) withdrew its support after a few months. In the ensuing general election held in 1991 the Congress (I) improved the position (232) even though it was 40 short of majority. It, however, formed the government and survived the full term with the support of some smaller parties; it was virtually one-party rule.

The verdict in 1996 General Election was fractured again. The BJP, being the largest party (161) formed the government but lasted only 13 days. The fall of BJP government paved way the for the emergence of what came to be known as the Third Front which consisted of non-BJP and non-Congress (i) political parties and groups. The CPI (M) was a part of their UF-LF but it did not join the government. The UF-LF government was supported from outside by the Congress (I), but later withdrew its support and the coalition fell through. As in 1996, the verdict in 1998 again created a hung parliament. The BJP not only retained its position as a largest single party but also improved its tally to 182.<sup>14</sup> Unlike 1996, several regional communal parties joined hands with the BJP to form a coalition government under the banner of National Democratic Alliance based on a common minimum programme and

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<sup>13</sup> C.P.Bhambhri, *Politics in India 1991-92* (Shipra, Delhi 1992) Pp. 15-16

<sup>14</sup> M.L. Ahuja, *Electoral Politics and General Elections in India (1952-1998)* (Mittal Publications, New Delhi 1998) Pp. 227-229

policies. Thus, BJP led NDA government enjoyed full term of government in spite of the withdrawal of some regional parties due to difference in some critical policies.

The result of General Election of 2004 is quite different from the previous one. The 2004 General Election saw, for the first time, a contest at the national level between two serious coalitions, the National Democratic Alliance led by BJP and the United Progressive Alliance led by Congress, though the latter was named only after the elections. The Congress party for the first time put together a broad pre-election coalition covering several major states to take on the NDA coalition.<sup>15</sup> It is a coalition of 19 different political parties with leftist support from outside.<sup>16</sup>

The General Election to the 15<sup>th</sup> Lok Sabha in 2009 again witnessed the victory of United Progressive Alliance (UPA) led by Indian National Congress (INC) by obtaining the majority of seats from states such as Andhra Pradesh, Kerala, Maharashtra, Rajasthan, West Bengal, Tamil Nadu and Uttar Pradesh. Fortunately this time, the UPA was able to put together a comfortable majority with support from 322 members out of 543 members of the House. Though this was less than the 335 members who supported the UPA in the last Parliament, UPA alone had a plurality of over 260 seats as opposed to 218 seats in the 14th Lok Sabha. Hence, the government appeared to be more stable than the previous one. Besides, the UPA Ministry was extended external support by the Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP), Samajwadi Party (SP), Janata Dal (Secular) (JD(S)), Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD) and other minor parties.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> E Sridharan "Electoral Coalitions in 2004 General Elections: Theory and Evidence" in *Economic and Political Weekly* December 18-24,2004 Vol XXXIX No 51 p. 5418

<sup>16</sup> Ibid p.5419

<sup>17</sup> "Smooth sailing for UPA, parties scramble to support". CNN-IBN. 19 May 2009. (Retrieved on 4.08.2016)

The General Election to the 16<sup>th</sup> Lok Sabha in 2014 was remarkable in several ways. The United Progressive Alliance (UPA) was voted out of power with a thumping majority by the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) led by Bharatya Janata Party (BJP). The sweeping victory of the NDA had almost decimated the Indian National Congress (INC) which succeeded to win only 44 Lok Sabha seats across India. This Lok Sabha election was also notable for the transformation of Gujarat Chief Minister, Narendra Modi into the Prime Minister of India. Another interesting point is that although the Bharatya Janata Party (BJP) managed to form a government on its own by winning as many as 282 Lok Sabha seats, but it decided to respect the pre-poll alliance and formed a coalition government under the umbrella of National Democratic Alliance (NDA) with several regional political parties.

The 17<sup>th</sup> General Election in 2019 to the Lok Sabha repeated same results as it did in the previous election in 2014. The BJP rather improved its tally by bagging 303 seats by itself. Further, it secured 353 seats in total for the coalition. It currently has 18 parties as partners in the coalition.

Based on above account some aspects of coalition politics in India need to be noted. First, the number of partners in the ruling coalition has been steadily rising. If in 1997 it was 6; in 1989 it rose to 7; in 1996 to 11, 1998 to 16 and in 1999 to 23 which was later reduced to 20 different political partners and currently 18 parties in 2019. In the case of United Progressive Alliance led by the Congress, it was more than two dozen parties forming the coalition. Secondly, each coalition had different ideological mix and different set of crutches on whose support it survived. While in 1977 it was an amalgamation of parties of right, center and some elements of left directed against Congress (I); in 1989 it consisted of centrist and leftists constituting

the main opposition and in 1998 and 1999 the coalition comprised of rightists, communal and regional outfits including some fringe progressive groups. On the other side were the parties of the left and the center. Thirdly, as one moves from 1977 to 1989 to 1966 and to 2004 and then to 2014 and even 2019, the nature of ruling coalition became more and more complex and one begins to lose track of who went with whom and for how long and why. However, the 2014 and 2019 coalition experiment is only for formalities sake as the BJP has by itself acquired the majority strength in Parliament.

### **1.2: The Case of Mizoram**

Although the era of single party dominance may seem to be over at the national level, but the political process in Mizoram is quite different. While Indians were struggling hard to drive out British from the sub-continent, the Mizo were firmly under the British administration having a limited political consciousness. The then British rulers in the Lushai Hills tried to suppress political consciousness, as they feared that the politically conscious people might understand the nature of their dictatorial rule. In spite of this, the few Mizo who were conscious of the independence movement in India felt the need to form and establish a political organization that could unite all Mizo in order to push forth their demands for the future cause of Mizoram. Then, with the permission of Lushai Hills Superintendent, Ramsay Mac Donald, Shri. R. Vanlawma formed Lushai Commoners' Union on 9 April 1946, which later changed its name into Mizo Union. There was no looking back since then, and different political parties sprung up in the tiny society of Mizoram.

The term 'Coalition' has not been common in Mizoram until the State Legislative Assembly Elections of 1989. Earlier, the Mizo Union Party had dominated the political scene of Mizoram till it merged itself with the state Congress Party in 1974.<sup>18</sup> All the opposition parties put together were no match for the organizational and political abilities of the Mizo Union. Even when it ceased its separate political identity on 24 January 1974 the merger with the Congress party did not affect the then existing Mizo Union- led ministry headed by Ch. Chhunga, excepting the induction of two congress MLAs, Lalsangzuala and Zalawma into the ministry.<sup>19</sup>

However, an era of coalition governance in Mizoram began first on the 18<sup>th</sup> August, 1986. The Congress (I)- MNF coalition Interim Government was formed under the Chief Ministership of Laldenga and Lalthanhawla (Cong) as Deputy Chief Minister along with seven other ministers- five from the Congress (I) and three from the MNF.<sup>20</sup> When the Third election to the Mizoram State Legislative Assembly was held on the 30<sup>th</sup> November, 1993, no party secured majority in the legislature. After exploring various possibilities, the Congress (I) and Mizoram Janata Dal (MJD) formed the coalition government with the Congress (I) President Lalthanhawla as Chief Minister. This was the first full-fledged coalition government in Mizoram. In the subsequent year, however, the Congress (I) managed to cause a split in the MJD and formed its own-party ministry by inducting some splinters from MJD into the ministry that lasted its full term.<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> Lalchungnunga, *Mizoram: Politics of Regionalism and National Integration* (Reliance Publishing House, New Delhi 1994) Pp. 73-78

<sup>19</sup> Ibid

<sup>20</sup> Chitta Ranjan Nag Op. Cit p. 104

<sup>21</sup> Ibid. p. 117

In the 1998 Assembly Election, both the MNF and MPC worked out a pre-poll alliance based on seat adjustment and captured majority of seats in the 40 members Legislative Assembly.<sup>22</sup> The 12 members of MPC were, however, dropped from the ministry in 1999, as the MNF was able to form its own government due to the addition of one seat in the 1999 bye -election of Khawbung constituency held in 1999.<sup>23</sup> Again, in the Legislative Assembly election held in October 2003 the two regional parties – ZNP and MPC formed a pre- poll alliance with seats adjustment in order to run a coalition government in Mizoram. Although they did not work out the details of the plan, but it was established that, the electoral adjustment between the two parties posed a problem to the Congress and the ruling party.

In the light of the above discussions of coalition politics both at the centre and the state levels, it will be interesting to examine the following questions:

1. Whether coalition politics facilitates the process of federal system?
2. Whether unstable coalition politics, in general, contributes to poor economic growth?
3. Is coalition government responsible for weakening the administrative and political structure of the system?
4. Is the emergence of regionalism and regional political parties responsible for the rise of coalition politics in India?

### **1.3: Review of Existing Literatures**

Works have been carried out by several scholars to study the process of coalition politics in different parts of the world; however, the literature on coalition

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<sup>22</sup> P. Lalnithanga IAS (Retd), *Emergence of Mizoram* (Mizoram Publication Board,2005) p.221

<sup>23</sup> P. Lalnithanga IAS (Retd) Op. Cit p.222



was over loaded with historical facts. W.H.Riker attempted construction of coalitional theory.<sup>24</sup> He is more or less associated with the office-seeking strand of coalition theory, and he focuses on the strategies adopted by parties when they try to gain admission to any coalition that may form. He predicts that players will try to create coalitions that are only as large as they believe will ensure winning, in order to maximize the payoffs to each coalition members, which he calls ‘minimum winning coalition’.<sup>25</sup>

William Gamson, in his *A Theory of Coalition Formation* argues that parties are intent on entering the ‘cheapest winning’ coalition.<sup>26</sup> He further opined that parties prefer to be in a relatively large partner in a small coalition than a junior partner in a bigger coalition, even when the benefits of doing so are broadly comparable.

In his work *Coalition in Parliamentary Government*, Lawrence C. Dodd has dealt with formation, durability and problems of coalition governments in multi-party parliaments.<sup>27</sup>

In *Conflict of Interest: A Theory of divergent Goals with Applications to Politics* (1970) Robert Axelrod builds upon office-seeking models and introduces a policy dimension.<sup>28</sup> He builds it as a secondary formation criterion. According to him, the office-seeking remains the central strategic goal of all players. Successful

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<sup>24</sup>W.H.Riker, *The Politics of Coalition*, (New Haven, Yale University Press, 1962)

<sup>25</sup> Ibid.

<sup>26</sup> William Gamson, *A Theory of Coalition Formation*, American Sociological Review 26, 1961 Pp. 373-382

<sup>27</sup> Lawrence C. Dodd, *Coalition in Parliamentary Government* (Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1976)

<sup>28</sup> Robert Axelrod, *Conflict of Interest: A Theory of Divergent Goals With Applications to Politics*, (Chicago:Markham, 1970)

coalition, Axelrod argues, will ideally adjacent to one another along a single Left-Right ideological continuum, which will minimize conflicts of interest. This model of ideological adjacency may be workable under certain conditions. It has, however, no conception of the ideological distance between parties and cannot pick up the nuances of ideological conflicts.

*Democracy: Patterns of Majoritarian and Consensus Government in Twenty one Countries* is a valuable literature on coalition politics. In this book, A Lijphart has described large difference between the durability of minimal winning one party cabinets and oversized cabinets. He has also discussed the types of legislative processes in democratic states.<sup>29</sup>

Barbara Hinckley, in her work *Coalition and Politics*, has presented a different angle to study coalition by making an appreciable attempt to distinguish game theory and coalition theory.<sup>30</sup>

In *Coalition Theories and Cabinet Formation: A Study of Formal Theories of Coalition Formation Applied to Nine European Parliament after 1918*, Abram de Swaan sets out constructing what he calls the ‘closed minimum range’ of cabinet formation.<sup>31</sup> He predicts that the winning parties will comprise the minimal connected winning coalition with the smallest ideological range. De Swaan’s theory is often referred to as the ‘median legislator’ or ‘median party’ model. This is because it is based on the assumption that the party that controls the median

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<sup>29</sup> A. Lijphart, *Democracy: Patterns of Majoritarian and Consensus Government in Twenty One Countries* (New Haven and London, Yale University Press,1984)

<sup>30</sup> Barbara Hinckley, *Coalition and Politics* (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1981)

<sup>31</sup> Abram de Swaan, *Coalition Theories and Cabinet Formation: A Study of Formal Theories of Coalition Applied to Nine European Parliaments after 1918*, (Amsterdam and London:Elsevier,and San Francisco,Jossey Bass,1973)

legislator in any potential coalition is decisive because it blocks the axis along which any connected winning coalition must form. However, his theory is confronted with a tradeoff between coalition size and ideological range.

Moving on to the political scenario in India, many works have been also undertaken by several scholars. Kishalay Banerjee, in *Regional Political Parties in India* stated that the rise of powerful regional parties in different states challenged the phenomenon of one-party dominance in India and created the field for the flowering of pluralism in its political culture.<sup>32</sup>

In the book, *Strategy, Risk and Personality in Coalition Politics: The Case of India*, Bruce Bueno De Mesquita has studied the formulation of various theories of coalition. Behaviour in coalition has a direct bearing on the participants future influence and future access to new coalition. The work also provides a critical and insight analysis of coalition politics at the State level in India.<sup>33</sup>

In *Governmental Instability in Indian States*, Subrata K. Mitra has focused attention on the application of factional model and variables like lust for power, opportunism, defections, factionalism etc for explaining coalition behaviour and party competition. He has applied ideological framework for understanding the coalition politics in terms of polarization, ideology and policy differences amongst parties.<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>32</sup> Dr Kishalay Banerjee, *Regional Political parties in India*, (B.R. Publishing Corporation, Delhi-110052, 1984)

<sup>33</sup> Bruce Bueno De Mesquita, *Strategy Risk and Personality in Coalition Politics: The Case of India*, (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1975)

<sup>34</sup> Subrata K. Mitra, *Governmental Instability in Indian States: West Bengal, Bihar, Uttar Pradesh and Punjab*, (Delhi, Ajanta Publishers, 1978)

In *Multi-party System of Government in India: Defeat of Totalitarianism and Coalition Development*, Verinder Grover traced the reason for the rise of Coalition government in 1977 to the Emergency excesses of Mrs. Indira Gandhi.<sup>35</sup> However, he further opined that the fall of Janata Coalition was due to the internal squabbles within the party.

Balveer Arora in his essay entitled *Political Parties and the Party System: The Emergence of New Coalition* is of the view that with the dawn of coalition politics in India, State parties are to stay demanding “more participation in national governance”.<sup>36</sup>

In *The National Parties and the Regional Allies: A Study in the Socio-Political Dynamics*, Pradeep Kumar analyses the interactions of both national and regional allies at national level from the socio-political perspectives.<sup>37</sup> However, most of the works on coalition politics in India seem to ignore the process of political development in Mizoram and the rise of coalition politics in the state.

Dasarathi Bhuyan and Simanchal Muni, in their work *Dynamics of Coalition Politics*, have described that the coalition politics has become an essential feature of Indian democracy and in present state of affairs there can hardly be any escape from coalition governments.<sup>38</sup>

In their work *Coalition Politics and Hindu Nationalism*, Katharine Adeney and Lawrence Saez (ed.) have explained the emergence of the BJP and the way in

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<sup>35</sup> Verinder Grover, Op. Cit.

<sup>36</sup> Zoya Hasan (Ed), *Parties and Party Politics in India*, (OUP, 2002) Pp. 504-532

<sup>37</sup> Ajay K. Mehra et al (Eds), *Political Parties and Party System*, (Sage Publications, New Delhi, 2003)

<sup>38</sup> Dasarathi Bhuyan, Simanchal Muni, *Dynamics of Coalition Politics* (New Delhi, Abhijeet Publication, 2010)

which its Hindu nationalist agenda has been affected by the constraints of being a dominant member of coalition government, the party's full term in power presiding over the diverse forces of the governing the NDA coalition, and the 2004 elections, BJP's performance in relation to its stated goals, and more specifically how it has fared in a range of policy fields such as Centre - State relations, foreign policy, defense policies, the second generation of economic reforms, initiatives to curb corruption and the fate of minorities.<sup>39</sup>

The edited work of M.P. Singh , *Coalition Politics in India: Problems and Prospects* is a collection of a number of articles presented by various scholars in a Seminar on Coalition Politics in India organized by Rajendra Prasad Academy. The book focuses on the working of Coalition Governments of Union and States, various structures of the Polity and Society and their relationship with Coalition Government. The book also deals with the process of Policy making in Coalition Government.<sup>40</sup>

In his work *Twilight or Dawn: The Political Change in India*, Iqbal Narain has compared different types of coalition governments within parliamentary framework and federal structure. He treats the change as culmination of the process of polarization of political forces both in quantitative and qualitative terms.<sup>41</sup>

In his work *Coalition Politics: The Indian Experience*, N. Jose Chander has explained coalition politics at the National level which highlights Janata Party

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<sup>39</sup> Katharine Adeney, Lawrence Saez (ed.), *Coalition Politics and Hindu Nationalism* (New York, Routledge, 2006)

<sup>40</sup> M.P. Singh (ed.), *Coalition Politics in India Problems and Prospects* (New Delhi, Manohar Publishers, 2004)

<sup>41</sup> Iqbal Narain, *Twilight or Dawn: The Political Change in India*, (New Delhi, Rawat Publication, 1994)

experiment in 1977, National Front Government, United Front Government formation and its working, BJP led coalition Government formation in 1998 with alliance partners, election results, formation of Cabinet and Coalition management, its instability and the government defeat. It also explained the BJP-led second coalition in 1999, and formation of the NDA.<sup>42</sup>

*Coalition government and Politics in India* is a collection of essays on coalition politics in India edited by Subhash. C. Kashyap. This voluminous work highlights most recent political developments following the electoral verdict, emergence of a 'hung parliament' and formation of minority governments; separate articles are devoted to models of coalition politics at the state level as also to the experience of other countries is very useful to this study.<sup>43</sup>

In his work *Indian Politics: 2001-2004, Political Process and Change of Government*, C.P. Bhambhri has focused on the NDA and the UPA Government at the centre. The facts of Indian politics from 2001 to 2004 have been expressed, and the major events of politics and activities of the parties in government and in opposition have also been explained.<sup>44</sup>

C.P. Bhambhri's work on *Coalition Experiments: The marriage of Inconvenience* has focused on coalition governments, naming them as an unfortunate and destructive 'Marriage of Inconvenience'. The main villain, according to him, is the BJP-led coalition government, which extended the agenda of aggressive

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<sup>42</sup> N. Jose Chander, *Coalition Politics The Indian Experience*, (New Delhi, Concept Publishing Company, 2004)

<sup>43</sup> C. Subhash Kashyap (ed.) *Coalition Government and politics in India*, (Uppal Publishing House, New Delhi, 1997)

<sup>44</sup> C.P.Bhambhari, *Indian Politics 2001-2004 Political Process and Change of Government* (Delhi, Shipra Publication, 2005)

Hindutva. The leading parties and its so called secular communal allies as, he believes, were fully responsible for the communalization of the state and society.<sup>45</sup>

Again, C.P. Bhambhri, in his book *Coalition Politics in India*, has focused on description of multiple issues faced by coalition government in power at the Centre where in many questions regarding the actual functioning of parties, institutions and actual role played by the leaders of coalition have been raised and answered.<sup>46</sup>

Several scholars from outside and inside Mizoram have also authored a good number of books. Amimesh Ray's book entitled *Mizoram: Dynamics of Change* is an account of the state's distinctive features and the customs and occupations of the people of Mizoram.<sup>47</sup>

*Mizoram Society and Polity* written by C.Nunthara deals with the interreaction of society and polity in Mizoram from the perspective of ethnic identity consolidation in Mizoram and the rise of demand for independence by the MNF.<sup>48</sup>

C.Lalkima in his book *Social Welfare Administration in a Tribal State: A Case Study of Mizoram* attempts to trace the historical background of the region and touched upon the formation of village council.<sup>49</sup>

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<sup>45</sup> C.P. Bhambri, "Coalition Experiments: The Marriage of Inconvenience," in: M.P. Singh (ed.), *Coalition Politics in India: Problems and Prospects*, (New Delhi, Manohar Publishers, 2004)

<sup>46</sup> C.P. Bhambhri, *Coalition Politics in India*, (New Delhi, Shipra Publication, 2010)

<sup>47</sup> Amimesh Ray, *Mizoram Dynamics of Change*, (Pearl Publishers, Calcutta, 1982)

<sup>48</sup> C.Nunthara, *Mizoram Society and Polity*, (Indus Publishing Company, New Delhi, 1996)

<sup>49</sup> C.Lalkima, *Social Welfare Administration in a Tribal state: A Case Study of Mizoram*, (Spectrum Publication, Guwahati, 1997)

R.N.Prasad's edited book titled *Autonomy Movements in Mizoram*<sup>50</sup> deals with the concept of autonomy movement, its genesis and its impact on socio-cultural and eco-political transformation in Mizoram.

R.N.Prasad and A.K.Agarwal, in their book *Political and Economic Development of Mizoram*, have discussed the trends and issues related with the political, administrative, and economic development of Mizoram.<sup>51</sup>

C.G.Verghese and R.L.Thanzawna in *A History of the Mizos*, Volume I and II, had discussed the important political development along with social and cultural in and around the area that now forms the state of Mizoram.<sup>52</sup>

Lalchungnunga's work on *Mizoram: Politics of Regionalism and National Integration* is a study of the causes for the emergence of regionalism and of the question of national integration in Mizoram.<sup>53</sup>

In *Post-Colonial Mizo Politics 1947-1998*, Chitta Ranjan Nag describes political development and movements as well as evolution of administration that had taken place in Mizoram territory, which now forms the state of Mizoram from 1947-1998.<sup>54</sup>

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<sup>50</sup> R.N. Prasad (Ed) *Autonomy Movement in Mizoram*,(Vikas Publishing House Pvt Ltd, New Delhi,1994)

<sup>51</sup> R.N. Prasad & A.K. Agarwal, *Political and Economic Development of Mizoram*, (Mittal Publications, New Delhi,1991)

<sup>52</sup> C.G. Verghese & R.L. Thanzawna, *A History of the Mizos, Vol I & II*, (Vikas Publishing House Pvt Ltd, New Delhi-110014,1997)

<sup>53</sup> Lalchungnunga, *Mizoram: Politics of Regionalism and National Integration*, (Reliance Publishing House New Delhi,1994)

<sup>54</sup> Chitta Ranjan Nag, *Post-Colonial Mizo Politics 1947-1998*, (Vikas Publishing House Pvt Ltd,New Delhi,1999)



K.M.Zakhuma in his book *Political Development in Mizoram From 1946 to 1989* narrates discusses the evolution of political parties in Mizoram.<sup>55</sup>

R.N.Prasad's book *Government and Politics in Mizoram*, perhaps the first work on the politics of South Mizoram, deals with the politics of Mizoram under the British administration and thereafter, with special reference to minority politics in the state.<sup>56</sup>

Mention may be made here in this connection that these books had been written to develop a clear picture of the theoretical problems of coalition politics and of the rise of coalition governments in India. Although several studies relating to politics in Mizoram had also been conducted, but no work has yet been done directly dealing with the phenomenon of coalition politics in the state. So, the proposed study will attempt to address the emergence of regional political parties and its impact on the national politics which in turn led to the rise of coalition politics in India. It will also examine the consequences of coalition governments on the economic development in the country. For this purpose, a case study of Mizoram is proposed.

Thus, it is hoped that a study of coalition politics in India with special reference to Mizoram will help us in getting a clear picture of the phenomenon of coalition politics in India and Mizoram. It is also hoped that the existing gap in literature, particularly in the case of Mizoram can be filled up by providing a new insight into the process of the emergence of coalition politics in Mizoram.

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<sup>55</sup> K.M. Zakhuma, *Political Development in Mizoram from 1946 to 1989*, (J.R.Bros' Offset Printer & Paper work, Aizawl, 2001)

<sup>56</sup> R.N.Prasad, *Government and Politics in Mizoram*, (Northern Book Center, New Delhi, 1987)

#### **1.4: Objectives of the Study**

The following objectives have been taken into consideration while studying coalition government both at the national and state levels:

1. To conduct an in depth study of the conceptual and operational dimensions of coalition politics.
2. To examine the nature and trends of coalition politics of Indian Politics in general and Mizoram in particular, especially in the context of the emergence of regional parties in India.
3. To examine the level of political participation in the electoral politics of Mizoram.
4. To make a critical and objective study of the working of political coalition in Mizoram since beginning.
5. As coalition is a reality now, the objective is to propose various typologies of coalition in the context of Mizoram.

#### **1.5: Hypotheses**

The proposed study has been based on the following hypotheses:

1. Emergence of regional parties has contributed to the rise of coalition politics in India.
2. Coalition politics renders ideology redundant.
3. Political power is the chief motivation for political parties to form coalition governments.

4. The coalition arrangement in Mizoram is in consonance with the national trends in Indian politics.
5. Personality in coalition politics sustains or hinders the coalition.

### **1.6: Methodology**

The methodology adopted for the study is descriptive and analytical. For the purpose of data collection empirical method has been used. The study relies mainly on both primary and secondary data. Primary data has been collected through interviews, questionnaires and schedules. The secondary and tertiary data have been collected by the use of content analysis of newspapers, journals and documents. Since the methodology used for the purpose is historical and empirical, emphasis has been given on intensive analysis of the above sources.

As the universe of the proposed study is Mizoram, closed and open-ended interviewing techniques have been adopted to find the perspective from the political actors in the coalition formation, and attempts have been made to interview 5 (Five) political leaders from each political party. Attempts have also been made to elicit information from the leading elite as well as numerous organizations of Mizo civil society. Wherever necessary secondary resources such as Mizo books will be consulted to reconstruct the background of coalition formation in Mizoram.

### **1.7: Tentative Chapterisations**

**Chapter – I: INTRODUCTION:** This chapter deals with literature review, objective of the study, hypotheses and methodology.

**Chapter – II : MEANING AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK:** This chapter attempts to arrive at a working definition of coalition politics; it also tries to point out as to why coalition politics are inherent in parliamentary democracy. This is examined in the context of the working of the coalition governments in India.

**Chapter - III: COALITION POLITICS IN INDIAN STATES: A HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT:** This chapter attempts to identify the nature, problem, prospects of coalition politics in various states of India which experienced coalition politics before it even penetrated deep into the national level.. It analyzes the unstable and stable coalition government in various states of India.

**Chapter - IV: POLITICAL DEVELOPMENT IN MIZORAM:** This chapter attempts to study the emergence of state of Mizoram in the historical perspective. The process of political development, the growth of political parties and the electoral process till to date.

**Chapter - V: COALITION POLITICS IN MIZORAM:** This chapter attempts to analyse the factors responsible for the emergence of coalition politics in the state. It also examines as to why coalition governments in the state were unstable or temporary in nature.

**Chapter - VI: SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION:** This chapter summarises the previous chapters and offers concluding remarks on coalition politics in the state of Mizoram.

## CHAPTER - I

### INTRODUCTION

Coalition politics constitute an indispensable part of the political process in Indian parliamentary system. Coalition can be defined as any combination of separate players (such as political parties) to win a voting game.<sup>1</sup> The need of coalition arises “where legislation requires a majority to pass, but no one party controls as many as half of the seats in the legislature.”<sup>2</sup> Coalition politics is usually visible in a country, which adopts parliamentary democratic form of government where various political parties compete with one another in order to win majority seats to run the government. Coalition politics is possible because of the existence of multi-party system in a democratic set-up. It is in fact a phenomenon of a multi-party government where a number of minority parties join hands for running the government, which is otherwise not possible in a democracy where there is a truncated mandate from the people in the election.<sup>3</sup> Thus, a coalition is formed when many splinter groups in the House (Legislature) agree to join hands in a common platform by sinking their broad differences and cobble a majority in the House.<sup>4</sup>

Since the independence of India on August 15, 1947, India has adopted the parliamentary form of government. However, the actual working of the parliamentary democracy in India during the last seven decades has witnessed many important developments. Probably, the most significant among them has been the emergence of phenomenon of coalition politics, initially in some states but lately at

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<sup>1</sup> Iain McLean, ‘Coalition’ in *Concise Dictionary of Politics*, OUP 1996), p. 78.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid

<sup>3</sup> Babulal Fadia, *State Politics in India Vol I*, (Radiant Publishers, New Delhi, 1984) p.401

<sup>4</sup> Ibid

the centre too. This has resulted in intense political instability with its concomitant negative fallout on the pace of development, so much so that it has put a question mark on the very suitability of Westminster model for India.

### **1.1: Statement of Problem**

It is true that for three decades the Indian National Congress remained in power without any serious challenge to its position. Reasons that led to this monopoly of power were many. For one thing, the party basked on the glory of national movement, which it had spearheaded.<sup>5</sup> In its struggle against the colonial rule, it had acquired an all-Indian national image.<sup>6</sup> The other political parties such as All India Hindu Mahashaba, Shriromani Akali Dal, The Communist Party of India, The Justice Party, and The Jana Sangh were parochial in their appeal, communal, regional, class-based, and racial and casteist and their influence was limited only to specific region. Secondly, the charismatic personality of Nehru has provided him the image of an untiring freedom fighter, heir of the Mahatma and a secular liberal democrat with a marked socialist based.<sup>7</sup> Thus Nehru and Patel could co-exist and work in perfect harmony despite each having faction at various levels in the party quietly. Even P.S. Tandon, the president of the party quietly resigned when he could not pull on with Nehru. This cohesiveness of Indian National Congress (INC) continued even in the post-Nehru era for a while. However, when the Congress party vertically split in 1969 and some Congress members of the Lok Sabha, who joined Congress (O) decided to withdraw their support from the group headed by Prime

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<sup>5</sup>A.S Narang, *Indian Government and Politics*, (Gitanjali Publishing House, New Delhi 1998 reprint) Pp. 392-395

<sup>6</sup> K.L.Kamal, *Democratic Politics in India*, (Wiley Eastern Limited, 1984 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition) p-84

<sup>7</sup> Ibid P-95

Minister, Mrs. Gandhi, the government was reduced to minority.<sup>8</sup> It was for the first time that the ruling party had to depend for its survival on some regional parties, mainly the DMK and the Akali Dal with the support of some leftist parties.<sup>9</sup> However, Mrs. Gandhi was able to repair the badly mutilated party by winning the hearts of some powerful politicians through her charisma, her bold measure like bank nationalization, abolition of privy purses, her challenges to the big business houses and her slogan of Garibi Hatao, which helped her keep the party electorally on top.<sup>10</sup>

However, the period since 1977 can be termed as an era of intermittent coalitions. There have been so many coalitions of different lives in a span of four decades, viz Janata Party rule (1977 – 79), Janata Dal National front rule (1989 – 91), Third Front (National Front & Left Front) (1996 – 98), BJP led -NDA Government (1998-2004) and Congress led-UPA (2004-2014) and the BJP-led NDA (2014-till date). Each of these coalitions constitutes a category both qualitatively (in terms of the ideological basis of coalition partners) and quantitatively (in terms of the number of coalition partners). These coalitions also show different patterns. The 1977 - 1979 coalition was unique in itself as far as several coalition partners merged their individual identities and united under one banner. Thus, for the first time in the thirty years the Congress Party was functioning as a party of the opposition at the centre.<sup>11</sup> The Janata Party was born on May 1, 1977. The major constituents of Janata Party were the Congress (O) led by Morarji Desai, Lok Dal led by Charan Singh, Jana Sangh led by A.B. Vajpayee, Socialist party led by Madhu Dandavate and

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<sup>8</sup> Hans Raj, *Indian Political System*, (Surjeet Publications, Delhi, 1996) PP 130-177

<sup>9</sup> K.L.Kamal OpCit p.118

<sup>10</sup> K.L. Sharma op. cit. Pp.147-159

<sup>11</sup> L.S.Rathore "The Sixth Lok Sabha Election Politics in India: A Panoramic Study" in V.Grover, Ranjana Arora's *Multi-Party System of Government in India* (Deep & Deep Publications, New Delhi 1995) p.215

George Fernandes, Congress for Democracy led by Jagjivan Ram, Bahuguna Young Turks led by Chandra Shekhar, Krishnan Kant and Ram Dhan and Swatantra party component led by Pilloo Modi. Interestingly, however, none of the left parties joined the coalition, though a section of them supported the government from outside. The success of the Janata Party and the defeat of the Congress (I) in the sixth general election of 1977 were mainly due to the reaction against the excesses committed during the National Emergency imposed by Indira Gandhi between 1975 and 1977.<sup>12</sup> Thus, the formation of the Janata Party had created a viable alternative to the Congress party. But this experiment in coalition politics proved a disaster and soon the Janata Party split in 1979 on the question of communalism and double loyalty of one of its constituents, which paved the way for the congress (I) party to power with a clear majority (353/542). Thus, one party rule was restored in 1980, which continued even after 1984 general elections where the Congress (I) led Rajiv Gandhi won a record victory (415/542)

The 1989 coalition experiment was somewhat different. V.P. Singh who resigned from the Rajiv Gandhi's cabinet on the issue of corruption led this coalition. He launched a new party named Jan Morcha, which became the nucleus for the unity of all non-congress parties. It culminated in the birth of Janata Dal in October 1988. The Janata Dal consisted of Janata Party, Jan Morcha and Lok Dal. Earlier on 19 Sept 1988, a National Front consisting of seven parties (T.D.P., A.G.P, DMK, Cong(S), JP, Jan Morcha and Lok Dal (D) had been formed. In the 1989 General Election, no single party got clear majority. Though Congress (I) was the largest

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<sup>12</sup> Verinder Grover "The Defeat of Both of Totalitarianism and The Coalition Experiment" in Verinder Grover, Ranjana Arora's *Multi-Party System of Government in India: Defeat of Totalitarianism and Coalition Development* (Deep & Deep Publications, New Delhi, 1995) Pp. 739-740



single party (197 seats) it failed to get enough support to be able to form the government. Consequently, a JD-NDF (142) was formed which was supported from outside by BJP on the one hand and the Communist on the other.<sup>13</sup> However, shortly V.P. Singh's government was reduced to a minority in a short span due to factional fights. Samajwadi Janata Party led by Chandra Shekhar and Devi Lal constituted a minority government, which was assured outside support by the Congress (I). It also went away when Congress (I) withdrew its support after a few months. In the ensuing general election held in 1991 the Congress (I) improved the position (232) even though it was 40 short of majority. It, however, formed the government and survived the full term with the support of some smaller parties; it was virtually one-party rule.

The verdict in 1996 General Election was fractured again. The BJP, being the largest party (161) formed the government but lasted only 13 days. The fall of BJP government paved way the for the emergence of what came to be known as the Third Front which consisted of non-BJP and non-Congress (i) political parties and groups. The CPI (M) was a part of their UF-LF but it did not join the government. The UF-LF government was supported from outside by the Congress (I), but later withdrew its support and the coalition fell through. As in 1996, the verdict in 1998 again created a hung parliament. The BJP not only retained its position as a largest single party but also improved its tally to 182.<sup>14</sup> Unlike 1996, several regional communal parties joined hands with the BJP to form a coalition government under the banner of National Democratic Alliance based on a common minimum programme and

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<sup>13</sup> C.P.Bhambhri, *Politics in India 1991-92* (Shipra, Delhi 1992) Pp. 15-16

<sup>14</sup> M.L. Ahuja, *Electoral Politics and General Elections in India (1952-1998)* (Mittal Publications, New Delhi 1998) Pp. 227-229

policies. Thus, BJP led NDA government enjoyed full term of government in spite of the withdrawal of some regional parties due to difference in some critical policies.

The result of General Election of 2004 is quite different from the previous one. The 2004 General Election saw, for the first time, a contest at the national level between two serious coalitions, the National Democratic Alliance led by BJP and the United Progressive Alliance led by Congress, though the latter was named only after the elections. The Congress party for the first time put together a broad pre-election coalition covering several major states to take on the NDA coalition.<sup>15</sup> It is a coalition of 19 different political parties with leftist support from outside.<sup>16</sup>

The General Election to the 15<sup>th</sup> Lok Sabha in 2009 again witnessed the victory of United Progressive Alliance (UPA) led by Indian National Congress (INC) by obtaining the majority of seats from states such as Andhra Pradesh, Kerala, Maharashtra, Rajasthan, West Bengal, Tamil Nadu and Uttar Pradesh. Fortunately this time, the UPA was able to put together a comfortable majority with support from 322 members out of 543 members of the House. Though this was less than the 335 members who supported the UPA in the last Parliament, UPA alone had a plurality of over 260 seats as opposed to 218 seats in the 14th Lok Sabha. Hence, the government appeared to be more stable than the previous one. Besides, the UPA Ministry was extended external support by the Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP), Samajwadi Party (SP), Janata Dal (Secular) (JD(S)), Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD) and other minor parties.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> E Sridharan "Electoral Coalitions in 2004 General Elections: Theory and Evidence" in *Economic and Political Weekly* December 18-24,2004 Vol XXXIX No 51 p. 5418

<sup>16</sup> Ibid p.5419

<sup>17</sup> "Smooth sailing for UPA, parties scramble to support". CNN-IBN. 19 May 2009. (Retrieved on 4.08.2016)

The General Election to the 16<sup>th</sup> Lok Sabha in 2014 was remarkable in several ways. The United Progressive Alliance (UPA) was voted out of power with a thumping majority by the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) led by Bharatya Janata Party (BJP). The sweeping victory of the NDA had almost decimated the Indian National Congress (INC) which succeeded to win only 44 Lok Sabha seats across India. This Lok Sabha election was also notable for the transformation of Gujarat Chief Minister, Narendra Modi into the Prime Minister of India. Another interesting point is that although the Bharatya Janata Party (BJP) managed to form a government on its own by winning as many as 282 Lok Sabha seats, but it decided to respect the pre-poll alliance and formed a coalition government under the umbrella of National Democratic Alliance (NDA) with several regional political parties.

The 17<sup>th</sup> General Election in 2019 to the Lok Sabha repeated same results as it did in the previous election in 2014. The BJP rather improved its tally by bagging 303 seats by itself. Further, it secured 353 seats in total for the coalition. It currently has 18 parties as partners in the coalition.

Based on above account some aspects of coalition politics in India need to be noted. First, the number of partners in the ruling coalition has been steadily rising. If in 1997 it was 6; in 1989 it rose to 7; in 1996 to 11, 1998 to 16 and in 1999 to 23 which was later reduced to 20 different political partners and currently 17 parties in 2019. In the case of United Progressive Alliance led by the Congress, it was more than two dozen parties forming the coalition. Secondly, each coalition had different ideological mix and different set of crutches on whose support it survived. While in 1977 it was an amalgamation of parties of right, center and some elements of left directed against Congress (I); in 1989 it consisted of centrist and leftists constituting

the main opposition and in 1998 and 1999 the coalition comprised of rightists, communal and regional outfits including some fringe progressive groups. On the other side were the parties of the left and the center. Thirdly, as one moves from 1977 to 1989 to 1966 and to 2004 and then to 2014 and even 2019, the nature of ruling coalition became more and more complex and one begins to lose track of who went with whom and for how long and why. However, the 2014 and 2019 coalition experiment is only for formalities sake as the BJP has by itself acquired the majority strength in Parliament.

### **1.2: The Case of Mizoram**

Although the era of single party dominance may seem to be over at the national level, but the political process in Mizoram is quite different. While Indians were struggling hard to drive out British from the sub-continent, the Mizo were firmly under the British administration having a limited political consciousness. The then British rulers in the Lushai Hills tried to suppress political consciousness, as they feared that the politically conscious people might understand the nature of their dictatorial rule. In spite of this, the few Mizo who were conscious of the independence movement in India felt the need to form and establish a political organization that could unite all Mizo in order to push forth their demands for the future cause of Mizoram. Then, with the permission of Lushai Hills Superintendent, Ramsay Mac Donald, Shri. R. Vanlawma formed Lushai Commoners' Union on 9 April 1946, which later changed its name into Mizo Union. There was no looking back since then, and different political parties sprung up in the tiny society of Mizoram.

The term 'Coalition' has not been common in Mizoram until the State Legislative Assembly Elections of 1989. Earlier, the Mizo Union Party had dominated the political scene of Mizoram till it merged itself with the state Congress Party in 1974.<sup>18</sup> All the opposition parties put together were no match for the organizational and political abilities of the Mizo Union. Even when it ceased its separate political identity on 24 January 1974 the merger with the Congress party did not affect the then existing Mizo Union- led ministry headed by Ch. Chhunga, excepting the induction of two congress MLAs, Lalsangzuala and Zalawma into the ministry.<sup>19</sup>

However, an era of coalition governance in Mizoram began first on the 18<sup>th</sup> August, 1986. The Congress (I)- MNF coalition Interim Government was formed under the Chief Ministership of Laldenga and Lalthanhawla (Cong) as Deputy Chief Minister along with seven other ministers- five from the Congress (I) and three from the MNF.<sup>20</sup> When the Third election to the Mizoram State Legislative Assembly was held on the 30<sup>th</sup> November, 1993, no party secured majority in the legislature. After exploring various possibilities, the Congress (I) and Mizoram Janata Dal (MJD) formed the coalition government with the Congress (I) President Lalthanhawla as Chief Minister. This was the first full-fledged coalition government in Mizoram. In the subsequent year, however, the Congress (I) managed to cause a split in the MJD and formed its own-party ministry by inducting some splinters from MJD into the ministry that lasted its full term.<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> Lalchungnunga, *Mizoram: Politics of Regionalism and National Integration* (Reliance Publishing House, New Delhi 1994) Pp. 73-78

<sup>19</sup> Ibid

<sup>20</sup> Chitta Ranjan Nag Op. Cit p. 104

<sup>21</sup> Ibid. p. 117

In the 1998 Assembly Election, both the MNF and MPC worked out a pre-poll alliance based on seat adjustment and captured majority of seats in the 40 members Legislative Assembly.<sup>22</sup> The 12 members of MPC were, however, dropped from the ministry in 1999, as the MNF was able to form its own government due to the addition of one seat in the 1999 bye -election of Khawbung constituency held in 1999.<sup>23</sup> Again, in the Legislative Assembly election held in October 2003 the two regional parties – ZNP and MPC formed a pre- poll alliance with seats adjustment in order to run a coalition government in Mizoram. Although they did not work out the details of the plan, but it was established that, the electoral adjustment between the two parties posed a problem to the Congress and the ruling party.

In the light of the above discussions of coalition politics both at the centre and the state levels, it will be interesting to examine the following questions:

1. Whether coalition politics facilitates the process of federal system?
2. Whether unstable coalition politics, in general, contributes to poor economic growth?
3. Is coalition government responsible for weakening the administrative and political structure of the system?
4. Is the emergence of regionalism and regional political parties responsible for the rise of coalition politics in India?

### **1.3: Review of Existing Literatures**

Works have been carried out by several scholars to study the process of coalition politics in different parts of the world; however, the literature on coalition

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<sup>22</sup> P. Lalnithanga IAS (Retd), *Emergence of Mizoram* (Mizoram Publication Board,2005) p.221

<sup>23</sup> P. Lalnithanga IAS (Retd) Op. Cit p.222

was over loaded with historical facts. W.H.Riker attempted construction of coalitional theory.<sup>24</sup> He is more or less associated with the office-seeking strand of coalition theory, and he focuses on the strategies adopted by parties when they try to gain admission to any coalition that may form. He predicts that players will try to create coalitions that are only as large as they believe will ensure winning, in order to maximize the payoffs to each coalition members, which he calls ‘minimum winning coalition’.<sup>25</sup>

William Gamson, in his *A Theory of Coalition Formation* argues that parties are intent on entering the ‘cheapest winning’ coalition.<sup>26</sup> He further opined that parties prefer to be in a relatively large partner in a small coalition than a junior partner in a bigger coalition, even when the benefits of doing so are broadly comparable.

In his work *Coalition in Parliamentary Government*, Lawrence C. Dodd has dealt with formation, durability and problems of coalition governments in multi-party parliaments.<sup>27</sup>

In *Conflict of Interest: A Theory of divergent Goals with Applications to Politics* (1970) Robert Axelrod builds upon office-seeking models and introduces a policy dimension.<sup>28</sup> He builds it as a secondary formation criterion. According to him, the office-seeking remains the central strategic goal of all players. Successful

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<sup>24</sup>W.H.Riker, *The Politics of Coalition*, (New Haven, Yale University Press, 1962)

<sup>25</sup> Ibid.

<sup>26</sup> William Gamson, *A Theory of Coalition Formation*, American Sociological Review 26, 1961 Pp. 373-382

<sup>27</sup> Lawrence C. Dodd, *Coalition in Parliamentary Government* (Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1976)

<sup>28</sup> Robert Axelrod, *Conflict of Interest: A Theory of Divergent Goals With Applications to Politics*, (Chicago:Markham, 1970)

coalition, Axelrod argues, will ideally adjacent to one another along a single Left-Right ideological continuum, which will minimize conflicts of interest. This model of ideological adjacency may be workable under certain conditions. It has, however, no conception of the ideological distance between parties and cannot pick up the nuances of ideological conflicts.

*Democracy: Patterns of Majoritarian and Consensus Government in Twenty one Countries* is a valuable literature on coalition politics. In this book, A Lijphart has described large difference between the durability of minimal winning one party cabinets and oversized cabinets. He has also discussed the types of legislative processes in democratic states.<sup>29</sup>

Barbara Hinckley, in her work *Coalition and Politics*, has presented a different angle to study coalition by making an appreciable attempt to distinguish game theory and coalition theory.<sup>30</sup>

In *Coalition Theories and Cabinet Formation: A Study of Formal Theories of Coalition Formation Applied to Nine European Parliament after 1918*, Abram de Swaan sets out constructing what he calls the ‘closed minimum range’ of cabinet formation.<sup>31</sup> He predicts that the winning parties will comprise the minimal connected winning coalition with the smallest ideological range. De Swaan’s theory is often referred to as the ‘median legislator’ or ‘median party’ model. This is because it is based on the assumption that the party that controls the median

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<sup>29</sup> A. Lijphart, *Democracy: Patterns of Majoritarian and Consensus Government in Twenty One Countries* (New Haven and London, Yale University Press,1984)

<sup>30</sup> Barbara Hinckley, *Coalition and Politics* (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1981)

<sup>31</sup> Abram de Swaan, *Coalition Theories and Cabinet Formation: A Study of Formal Theories of Coalition Applied to Nine European Parliaments after 1918*, (Amsterdam and London:Elsevier,and San Francisco,Jossey Bass,1973)



legislator in any potential coalition is decisive because it blocks the axis along which any connected winning coalition must form. However, his theory is confronted with a tradeoff between coalition size and ideological range.

Moving on to the political scenario in India, many works have been also undertaken by several scholars. Kishalay Banerjee, in *Regional Political Parties in India* stated that the rise of powerful regional parties in different states challenged the phenomenon of one-party dominance in India and created the field for the flowering of pluralism in its political culture.<sup>32</sup>

In the book, *Strategy, Risk and Personality in Coalition Politics: The Case of India*, Bruce Bueno De Mesquita has studied the formulation of various theories of coalition. Behaviour in coalition has a direct bearing on the participants future influence and future access to new coalition. The work also provides a critical and insight analysis of coalition politics at the State level in India.<sup>33</sup>

In *Governmental Instability in Indian States*, Subrata K. Mitra has focused attention on the application of factional model and variables like lust for power, opportunism, defections, factionalism etc for explaining coalition behaviour and party competition. He has applied ideological framework for understanding the coalition politics in terms of polarization, ideology and policy differences amongst parties.<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>32</sup> Dr Kishalay Banerjee, *Regional Political parties in India*, (B.R. Publishing Corporation, Delhi-110052, 1984)

<sup>33</sup> Bruce Bueno De Mesquita, *Strategy Risk and Personality in Coalition Politics: The Case of India*, (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1975)

<sup>34</sup> Subrata K. Mitra, *Governmental Instability in Indian States: West Bengal, Bihar, Uttar Pradesh and Punjab*, (Delhi, Ajanta Publishers, 1978)

In *Multi-party System of Government in India: Defeat of Totalitarianism and Coalition Development*, Verinder Grover traced the reason for the rise of Coalition government in 1977 to the Emergency excesses of Mrs. Indira Gandhi.<sup>35</sup> However, he further opined that the fall of Janata Coalition was due to the internal squabbles within the party.

Balveer Arora in his essay entitled *Political Parties and the Party System: The Emergence of New Coalition* is of the view that with the dawn of coalition politics in India, State parties are to stay demanding “more participation in national governance”.<sup>36</sup>

In *The National Parties and the Regional Allies: A Study in the Socio-Political Dynamics*, Pradeep Kumar analyses the interactions of both national and regional allies at national level from the socio-political perspectives.<sup>37</sup> However, most of the works on coalition politics in India seem to ignore the process of political development in Mizoram and the rise of coalition politics in the state.

Dasarathi Bhuyan and Simanchal Muni, in their work *Dynamics of Coalition Politics*, have described that the coalition politics has become an essential feature of Indian democracy and in present state of affairs there can hardly be any escape from coalition governments.<sup>38</sup>

In their work *Coalition Politics and Hindu Nationalism*, Katharine Adeney and Lawrence Saez (ed.) have explained the emergence of the BJP and the way in

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<sup>35</sup> Verinder Grover, Op. Cit.

<sup>36</sup> Zoya Hasan (Ed), *Parties and Party Politics in India*, (OUP, 2002) Pp. 504-532

<sup>37</sup> Ajay K. Mehra et al (Eds), *Political Parties and Party System*, (Sage Publications, New Delhi, 2003)

<sup>38</sup> Dasarathi Bhuyan, Simanchal Muni, *Dynamics of Coalition Politics* (New Delhi, Abhijeet Publication, 2010)

which its Hindu nationalist agenda has been affected by the constraints of being a dominant member of coalition government, the party's full term in power presiding over the diverse forces of the governing the NDA coalition, and the 2004 elections, BJP's performance in relation to its stated goals, and more specifically how it has fared in a range of policy fields such as Centre - State relations, foreign policy, defense policies, the second generation of economic reforms, initiatives to curb corruption and the fate of minorities.<sup>39</sup>

The edited work of M.P. Singh , *Coalition Politics in India: Problems and Prospects* is a collection of a number of articles presented by various scholars in a Seminar on Coalition Politics in India organized by Rajendra Prasad Academy. The book focuses on the working of Coalition Governments of Union and States, various structures of the Polity and Society and their relationship with Coalition Government. The book also deals with the process of Policy making in Coalition Government.<sup>40</sup>

In his work *Twilight or Dawn: The Political Change in India*, Iqbal Narain has compared different types of coalition governments within parliamentary framework and federal structure. He treats the change as culmination of the process of polarization of political forces both in quantitative and qualitative terms.<sup>41</sup>

In his work *Coalition Politics: The Indian Experience*, N. Jose Chander has explained coalition politics at the National level which highlights Janata Party

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<sup>39</sup> Katharine Adeney, Lawrence Saez (ed.), *Coalition Politics and Hindu Nationalism* (New York, Routledge, 2006)

<sup>40</sup> M.P. Singh (ed.), *Coalition Politics in India Problems and Prospects* (New Delhi, Manohar Publishers, 2004)

<sup>41</sup> Iqbal Narain, *Twilight or Dawn: The Political Change in India*, (New Delhi, Rawat Publication, 1994)

experiment in 1977, National Front Government, United Front Government formation and its working, BJP led coalition Government formation in 1998 with alliance partners, election results, formation of Cabinet and Coalition management, its instability and the government defeat. It also explained the BJP-led second coalition in 1999, and formation of the NDA.<sup>42</sup>

*Coalition government and Politics in India* is a collection of essays on coalition politics in India edited by Subhash. C. Kashyap. This voluminous work highlights most recent political developments following the electoral verdict, emergence of a 'hung parliament' and formation of minority governments; separate articles are devoted to models of coalition politics at the state level as also to the experience of other countries is very useful to this study.<sup>43</sup>

In his work *Indian Politics: 2001-2004, Political Process and Change of Government*, C.P. Bhambhri has focused on the NDA and the UPA Government at the centre. The facts of Indian politics from 2001 to 2004 have been expressed, and the major events of politics and activities of the parties in government and in opposition have also been explained.<sup>44</sup>

C.P. Bhambhri's work on *Coalition Experiments: The marriage of Inconvenience* has focused on coalition governments, naming them as an unfortunate and destructive 'Marriage of Inconvenience'. The main villain, according to him, is the BJP-led coalition government, which extended the agenda of aggressive

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<sup>42</sup> N. Jose Chander, *Coalition Politics The Indian Experience*, (New Delhi, Concept Publishing Company, 2004)

<sup>43</sup> C. Subhash Kashyap (ed.) *Coalition Government and politics in India*, (Uppal Publishing House, New Delhi, 1997)

<sup>44</sup> C.P.Bhambhari, *Indian Politics 2001-2004 Political Process and Change of Government* (Delhi, Shipra Publication, 2005)

Hindutva. The leading parties and its so called secular communal allies as, he believes, were fully responsible for the communalization of the state and society.<sup>45</sup>

Again, C.P. Bhambhri, in his book *Coalition Politics in India*, has focused on description of multiple issues faced by coalition government in power at the Centre where in many questions regarding the actual functioning of parties, institutions and actual role played by the leaders of coalition have been raised and answered.<sup>46</sup>

Several scholars from outside and inside Mizoram have also authored a good number of books. Amimesh Ray's book entitled *Mizoram: Dynamics of Change* is an account of the state's distinctive features and the customs and occupations of the people of Mizoram.<sup>47</sup>

*Mizoram Society and Polity* written by C.Nunthara deals with the interreaction of society and polity in Mizoram from the perspective of ethnic identity consolidation in Mizoram and the rise of demand for independence by the MNF.<sup>48</sup>

C.Lalkima in his book *Social Welfare Administration in a Tribal State: A Case Study of Mizoram* attempts to trace the historical background of the region and touched upon the formation of village council.<sup>49</sup>

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<sup>45</sup> C.P. Bhambri, "Coalition Experiments: The Marriage of Inconvenience," in: M.P. Singh (ed.), *Coalition Politics in India: Problems and Prospects*, (New Delhi, Manohar Publishers, 2004)

<sup>46</sup> C.P. Bhambhari, *Coalition Politics in India*, (New Delhi, Shipra Publication, 2010)

<sup>47</sup> Amimesh Ray, *Mizoram Dynamics of Change*, (Pearl Publishers, Calcutta, 1982)

<sup>48</sup> C.Nunthara, *Mizoram Society and Polity*, (Indus Publishing Company, New Delhi, 1996)

<sup>49</sup> C.Lalkima, *Social Welfare Administration in a Tribal state: A Case Study of Mizoram*, (Spectrum Publication, Guwahati, 1997)

R.N.Prasad's edited book titled *Autonomy Movements in Mizoram*<sup>50</sup> deals with the concept of autonomy movement, its genesis and its impact on socio-cultural and eco-political transformation in Mizoram.

R.N.Prasad and A.K.Agarwal, in their book *Political and Economic Development of Mizoram*, have discussed the trends and issues related with the political, administrative, and economic development of Mizoram.<sup>51</sup>

C.G.Verghese and R.L.Thanzawna in *A History of the Mizos*, Volume I and II, had discussed the important political development along with social and cultural in and around the area that now forms the state of Mizoram.<sup>52</sup>

Lalchungnunga's work on *Mizoram: Politics of Regionalism and National Integration* is a study of the causes for the emergence of regionalism and of the question of national integration in Mizoram.<sup>53</sup>

In *Post-Colonial Mizo Politics 1947-1998*, Chitta Ranjan Nag describes political development and movements as well as evolution of administration that had taken place in Mizoram territory, which now forms the state of Mizoram from 1947-1998.<sup>54</sup>

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<sup>50</sup> R.N. Prasad (Ed) *Autonomy Movement in Mizoram*,(Vikas Publishing House Pvt Ltd, New Delhi,1994)

<sup>51</sup> R.N. Prasad & A.K. Agarwal, *Political and Economic Development of Mizoram*, (Mittal Publications, New Delhi,1991)

<sup>52</sup> C.G. Verghese & R.L. Thanzawna, *A History of the Mizos, Vol I & II*, (Vikas Publishing House Pvt Ltd, New Delhi-110014,1997)

<sup>53</sup> Lalchungnunga, *Mizoram: Politics of Regionalism and National Integration*, (Reliance Publishing House New Delhi,1994)

<sup>54</sup> Chitta Ranjan Nag, *Post-Colonial Mizo Politics 1947-1998*, (Vikas Publishing House Pvt Ltd,New Delhi,1999)

K.M.Zakhuma in his book *Political Development in Mizoram From 1946 to 1989* narrates discusses the evolution of political parties in Mizoram.<sup>55</sup>

R.N.Prasad's book *Government and Politics in Mizoram*, perhaps the first work on the politics of South Mizoram, deals with the politics of Mizoram under the British administration and thereafter, with special reference to minority politics in the state.<sup>56</sup>

Mention may be made here in this connection that these books had been written to develop a clear picture of the theoretical problems of coalition politics and of the rise of coalition governments in India. Although several studies relating to politics in Mizoram had also been conducted, but no work has yet been done directly dealing with the phenomenon of coalition politics in the state. So, the proposed study will attempt to address the emergence of regional political parties and its impact on the national politics which in turn led to the rise of coalition politics in India. It will also examine the consequences of coalition governments on the economic development in the country. For this purpose, a case study of Mizoram is proposed.

Thus, it is hoped that a study of coalition politics in India with special reference to Mizoram will help us in getting a clear picture of the phenomenon of coalition politics in India and Mizoram. It is also hoped that the existing gap in literature, particularly in the case of Mizoram can be filled up by providing a new insight into the process of the emergence of coalition politics in Mizoram.

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<sup>55</sup> K.M. Zakhuma, *Political Development in Mizoram from 1946 to 1989*, (J.R.Bros' Offset Printer & Paper work, Aizawl, 2001)

<sup>56</sup> R.N.Prasad, *Government and Politics in Mizoram*, (Northern Book Center, New Delhi, 1987)

#### **1.4: Objectives of the Study**

The following objectives have been taken into consideration while studying coalition government both at the national and state levels:

1. To conduct an in depth study of the conceptual and operational dimensions of coalition politics.
2. To examine the nature and trends of coalition politics of Indian Politics in general and Mizoram in particular, especially in the context of the emergence of regional parties in India.
3. To examine the level of political participation in the electoral politics of Mizoram.
4. To make a critical and objective study of the working of political coalition in Mizoram since beginning.
5. As coalition is a reality now, the objective is to propose various typologies of coalition in the context of Mizoram.

#### **1.5: Hypotheses**

The proposed study has been based on the following hypotheses:

1. Emergence of regional parties has contributed to the rise of coalition politics in India.
2. Coalition politics renders ideology redundant.
3. Political power is the chief motivation for political parties to form coalition governments.



4. The coalition arrangement in Mizoram is in consonance with the national trends in Indian politics.
5. Personality in coalition politics sustains or hinders the coalition.

### **1.6: Methodology**

The methodology adopted for the study is descriptive and analytical. For the purpose of data collection empirical method has been used. The study relies mainly on both primary and secondary data. Primary data has been collected through interviews, questionnaires and schedules. The secondary and tertiary data have been collected by the use of content analysis of newspapers, journals and documents. Since the methodology used for the purpose is historical and empirical, emphasis has been given on intensive analysis of the above sources.

As the universe of the proposed study is Mizoram, closed and open-ended interviewing techniques have been adopted to find the perspective from the political actors in the coalition formation, and attempts have been made to interview 5 (Five) political leaders from each political party. Attempts have also been made to elicit information from the leading elite as well as numerous organizations of Mizo civil society. Wherever necessary secondary resources such as Mizo books will be consulted to reconstruct the background of coalition formation in Mizoram.

### **1.7: Tentative Chapterisations**

**Chapter – I: INTRODUCTION:** This chapter deals with literature review, objective of the study, hypotheses and methodology.

**Chapter – II : MEANING AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK:** This chapter attempts to arrive at a working definition of coalition politics; it also tries to point out as to why coalition politics are inherent in parliamentary democracy. This is examined in the context of the working of the coalition governments in India.

**Chapter - III: COALITION POLITICS IN INDIAN STATES: A HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT:** This chapter attempts to identify the nature, problem, prospects of coalition politics in various states of India which experienced coalition politics before it even penetrated deep into the national level.. It analyzes the unstable and stable coalition government in various states of India.

**Chapter - IV: POLITICAL DEVELOPMENT IN MIZORAM:** This chapter attempts to study the emergence of state of Mizoram in the historical perspective. The process of political development, the growth of political parties and the electoral process till to date.

**Chapter - V: COALITION POLITICS IN MIZORAM:** This chapter attempts to analyse the factors responsible for the emergence of coalition politics in the state. It also examines as to why coalition governments in the state were unstable or temporary in nature.

**Chapter - VI: SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION:** This chapter summarises the previous chapters and offers concluding remarks on coalition politics in the state of Mizoram.

## CHAPTER - II

### MEANING AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Coalition politics is not a new phenomenon in those countries where multiparty system is working. Political instability usually prevails in the countries, when no single political party is able to get majority to form the government. In this situation, some like-minded political parties join together and form a coalition to provide a workable majority and form the government. Thus, a coalition involves an alliance or temporary union between various groups for the exercise or control of political power.

The term 'Coalition' has been derived from the Latin word 'coalitio', which is the verbal substantive of the word 'coalescere', which means to grow together<sup>1</sup>. Coalition is combination of a body or parts into one whole. In the political sense, the term "coalition" is used for an alliance or temporary union between various political parties for the exercise or control of political power<sup>2</sup>.

Chambers Dictionary defines coalition as "a combination or alliance short of union especially of states or political parties". Advanced American Dictionary also defines the term coalition as "a group of people who join together to achieve a particular purpose or a union of separate political parties that allows them to form a government or fight elections together." Hence, coalition government is a government that is run by

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<sup>1</sup> Jitendra Narayan, "Coalition Politics in Bihar", *South Asia Politics*, April 2004, Vol.2, Issue 12, p.40

<sup>2</sup> Dr. D. Sunder Ram, *Coalition Experiment in India: Search For Political Stability* (Jaipur: National Publishing House 2000) p. 104.

different political parties working together or a process in which two or more political parties or groups join together.

Oxford Advanced Learner Dictionary defines coalition as "a temporary union of separate political parties, usually to form a government". Encyclopaedia Americana, International Edition, also defines the term coalition as "a temporary alliance or union for joint action of various powers or states, or of political parties or members of parties in order to form a government when no single party can command a majority." McMillan English dictionary for Advanced Learners defines coalition as "a temporary union of different political parties that has agreed to form a government together." Thus, coalition further means an alliance or temporary union for joint action. It also refers to a government formed by different political parties.

So a coalition is an alliance or temporary union between various groups for the exercise of control of political power. Before entering into a coalition, the partners are expected to give up their rigid stand and make compromises in a spirit of mutual give and take. The partners in a coalition do not lose their identity. They can withdraw from the coalition any time while some other parties/groups may newly join the coalition.

In politics, coalition signifies a parliamentary or political grouping of different parties, interest groups or factions formed for making or influencing policy-decisions or securing power. Thus, the term 'Coalition' as it is generally used in political science is a direct descendent of the exigencies of a multiparty government where a number of

minority parties join hands for the purpose of running the government which is otherwise not possible in a democracy based on two party system<sup>3</sup>.

A coalition is an alliance of parties formed for the purpose of contesting elections jointly and/or forming a government and managing the governance by a process of sharing power.

Coalition Government is generally described as “a cooperative arrangement under which distinct political parties or at all events members of such parties came together to form a government or ministry”.<sup>4</sup> It is also “a parliamentary or political grouping less permanent than a party or a faction or an interest group”.<sup>5</sup> The need of coalition arises ‘where legislation requires a majority to pass, but no one party controls as many as half of the seats’<sup>6</sup> in the legislature. Thus, coalition government is an offshoot of competitive multi-party politics in the event of the inability of any single party ‘to form a ministry commanding a working majority’<sup>7</sup> in the legislature. Coalition Government is usually visible in a country which adopts parliamentary democratic form of government where various political parties compete with one another in order to win majority of seats to run the government. Coalition Government is possible because of the existence of multi-party system in a democratic set up. It is, in fact, a phenomenon of

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<sup>3</sup> M.G. Chitkara and B.R. Sharma, *Indian Republic: Issues and Perspective*, (New Delhi: APH Publishing Corporation, 1997) p. 205.

<sup>4</sup> Frederick A. Ogg. “Coalition”, *Encyclopaedia of Social Sciences*, Vol. III, (New York, Macmillan, 1963) p. 600

<sup>5</sup> William H. Riker, “The Study of Coalition”, *International Encyclopaedia of Social Sciences, Vol.II*, (New York, Macmillan Press, 1968) p. 527

<sup>6</sup> Iain Mclean, ‘Coalition’, *Concise Dictionary of Politics*, (OUP, 1996) p.78

<sup>7</sup> Ogg. Op.Cit., p.600

a multi-party government where a number of political parties join hands for running the government, which is otherwise not possible in a parliamentary democracy where there is a truncated mandate from the people in the election.<sup>8</sup> Thus, coalition government is formed when many splinter groups in the legislature agree to join hands in a common platform by sinking their broad differences and cobble a majority in the Lower House.<sup>9</sup>

In simple words, it can be stated that coalition government means a system of governance by a group of political parties or by several political parties. When several political parties collaborate to form a government and exercise the political power on the basis of a common agreed programme/ agenda, we can describe such a system as coalition politics or coalition government.

It was Riker's<sup>10</sup> work which set the trend in a fruitful analysis of coalition behaviour. He emphasized that coalition needs more than two groups. David Apter argued that coalition behaviour has a universal significance in the process of political modernization; it is through forming and maintaining coalitions that primordial loyalties are overcome, and constitutional orders are established. Many factors are involved in a coalition situation including the style of leadership, the nature of party system, electoral laws and rewards.

Three main reasons for formation of coalition in the different countries are:

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<sup>8</sup> Babulal Fadia, *State Politics in India*, Vol. I, (Radiant Publishers, New Delhi, 1984) P.401

<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

<sup>10</sup> William H. Riker, *The Theory of Political Coalitions* (London, Yale University Press, 1962).

1. No single political party is able to secure a working majority in the popular house on account of the presence of multi-party system. Under such circumstances, a number of like-minded parties form the coalition to provide a workable majority and run the government. France provides a typical example of this type of coalition.

2. Secondly, in a bi-party system, a deadlock may be created due to even balances between two political parties. This may lead to one of the two parties allying itself with a minor group such as neutrals or defectors to tilt the majority in its favour.

3. Thirdly, a coalition may be necessitated by national crisis when the various political groups may suspend their political strife and collaborate in the general cause of protecting and promoting their national interests. In Britain, coalition government was formed to deal with the abnormal conditions during the first world war. The various political parties sunk their differences to give a united fight to the enemies of Britain.

There are four essential ingredients of a coalition, namely, (i) more than one actor; (ii) a desire to coordinate the behaviour of each other; (iii) a common objectives and (iv) a well-defined method to be adopted by them for the achievement of the objectives.

## **2.1: Typology**

Broadly speaking, coalition governments are of three kinds, such as Grand coalition, Stable coalition and Unstable multi-party coalition government. 'Grand

Coalition'<sup>11</sup> existed in Britain during the First and Second World Wars, in Austria from 1945 to 1966 and in West Germany particularly from December 1966 to 1969. 'Stable Coalition'<sup>12</sup> can be found in Scandinavian countries, Holland and Belgium, Ceylon and also sometimes in India, especially from 1999 to 2004 and during 2014-2019 and even at present under National Democratic Alliance. A third variety of coalitions, that is Multi-party coalition government, is frequently found in France (under the Third and the Fourth Republic), Italy and now in India.

Besides, another three types of coalition government have been brought out by Lane and Ersson depending on how large the parliamentary support is.<sup>13</sup> These are: (I) Minority or less than 50 percent support; (II) Small minority or more than 50 per cent and less than 60 per cent support; (III) Grand coalition or over-sized governments with more than 60 per cent support. The minority model tends to prevail in the Scandinavian countries, whereas grand coalitions are to be found in the so-called consociational countries in Central Europe on the one hand and in the new democracies in Eastern Europe on the other.<sup>14</sup> Minority coalition governments have existed in India as well both

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<sup>11</sup> See R.B.Tilford, "The Coalition Discussion: Some European Experiences", *Parliament Affairs*, Vol.XXI. No.I. Winter, 1967-68,P.28. He defines 'grand coalition' as 'all party government or government restricting opposition to a numerically insignificant role'. This comes to be termed 'National Government' in Britain.

<sup>12</sup> By 'Stable Coalition' I meant a government which has demonstrated considerable stability, a capacity to survive without frequent changes in pattern or compositions.

<sup>13</sup> Lane & Ersson, *European Politics: An Introduction*, (Sage, NewDelhi,1996) P.138

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.* P.149



at the centre and in some states, but majority coalition governments have been the rule rather than the exception.<sup>15</sup>

It is generally accepted that coalition governments, by their very nature, are bound to be transient. In *Coalitions in Parliamentary Government*, Lawrence C. Dodd presents the arguments of eminent scholars who have opined that coalition governments are bound to be unstable.<sup>16</sup> In his *Governments and Parties in Continental Europe* (1896), A. Lawrence Lowell argued that parliamentary system tends to produce a strong and efficient government only if the majority consists of a single party. His argument has been re-affirmed subsequently by several political scholars in their work. Lord Bryce, in his *Modern Democracies* (1921) opined that a government formed by a conglomerate of parties is bound to be weak because of the unstable and conflicting character of the compromise involved. In *Parliamentary Government in England* (1938), Harold J. Laski was of the opinion that stable government requires a majority party system. He further argued that the multi-party system either results in a coalition with its “inherent erosion of principles” or provides a minority government which is likely to be weak. Maurice Duverger, in his *Political Parties* (1951) asserts that multi-partyism weakens the government in a parliamentary system. This, according to him, is because the absence of a majority party necessitates the creation of heterogeneous cabinet with “limited objectives” and “lukewarm measures”. Jean Blondel says that the duration of cabinet governments is always influenced by the type of party system prevailing in the

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<sup>15</sup> N. Jose Chander, *Coalition Politics: The Indian Experience*, Concept publishing Company (New Delhi, 2004) p.3

<sup>16</sup> Lawrence C. Dodd, *Coalitions in Parliamentary Government*, Princeton University Press (New jersey, 1976) p.7

country and that one-party government is the most important factor for the stability of governments.<sup>17</sup> He also argued that coalition government, howsoever small or large, appears directly antagonistic to constancy.

The fact here is that every government is faced with a set of problems but when it is a single party government, decision-making is easier and less controversial. It is also a proven fact that stability in a single-party government is undoubtedly greater than under a coalition of parties. Conflicts cannot, however, be ruled out even within a single-party government. While discussing the conditions of political instability, Myron Weiner aptly points out that “stability in a government.....is a condition not of the degree of conflict within the system, but rather of the relationship of the conflicting groups”.<sup>18</sup> Dodd himself studied the politics of seventeen European countries from 1919 to 1974 and observed that while some multi-party parliaments produce stable cabinets, other multi-party parliaments produce transient cabinets. This automatically brings to light the importance of a variety of factors that played their part in the durability of a cabinet. These factors are what constitute the political culture of a country. “So whether a coalition government will be durable in a multi-party system or depends on the political culture of the country concerned”.<sup>19</sup>

## **2.2: Models of Coalition**

As coalition implies co-operation between two or more political parties, this cooperation is usually established at one or more of three different levels—electoral,

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<sup>17</sup> Ibid. p.9.

<sup>18</sup> Myron Weiner, *State Politics in India*, Princeton University Press (New Jersey, 1968) p.52

<sup>19</sup> N.Jose Chander, Op. Cit. p.5

parliamentary and governmental.<sup>20</sup> Electoral coalition occurs when two or more parties agree to fight the elections jointly against a common enemy. This may range from electoral alliance between national parties and state level parties or between two or more state parties against national parties. Electoral coalition need not last beyond the elections after which the parties may consider themselves free to make new alliance to form the government with another party. The existence and nature of such coalitions will depend upon the character of the electoral system.<sup>21</sup> Certain electoral systems favour a coalition formation phase before elections rather than after the election, a matter that has a fundamental impact on the politics of coalition.<sup>22</sup>

Parliamentary coalition is formed when no single party gains a majority and the party asked to form the government prefers to rule as a minority government on an understanding with another party for external support. The United Progressive Alliance government at the centre under Congress (I) was banking on the support of Communist Party of India (Marxist) between 2004 - 2009 and hence parliamentary coalition. Such an arrangement may be for a long period or for a limited period with a definite date of termination as with the Liberal-Labour pact in Great Britain in 1977-1978. It is also possible when a government seeks support from different parties for different items of legislation – a method much used in Denmark where it is known as government by ‘jumping majorities’. A minority government might also survive without support on the basis of toleration by the opposition parties which do not vote it out of power for tactical

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<sup>20</sup> N. Jose Chander Op.Cit. Pp. 5-6

<sup>21</sup> Vernon Bogdanor (Ed.), *Coalition Government in Western Europe*, Heinemann (London, 1983), p.7

<sup>22</sup> Michael Laver and Norman Schofield, *Multi-party Government – The Politics of Coalition in Europe*, OUP (New York, 1990), p.202

reasons. This was in general the situation of the three Labour minority governments in Britain in 1924, 1929-31 and 1974. In Belgium, the Netherlands and Germany majority coalition rather than minority government is the invariable rule. In Denmark and to a lesser extent in the other Scandinavian countries, minorities may result from the process of government formation. In Italy also single-party governments have been formed and sustained by support from outside. Nevertheless in both Scandinavia and Italy majority coalition is almost always the preferred type. Japan too has experimented with coalition government since 1993 and in spite of frequent changes of government majority coalition has been the order.<sup>23</sup> In India the governments led by Charan Singh, Chandrasekhar and Deve Gowda had been sustained by Congress support from outside and that of V.P.Singh supported by BJP. In these cases the support had been issue-based as they claimed.

The governmental coalition is a “power sharing” coalition and it takes place when two or more parties, none of which is able to win a majority of its own, combine to form a majority government. The parties forming such coalitions need not join together in an electoral pact; they may continue to fight elections at different levels with their own coalition partners. This sort of power sharing coalitions is generally familiar to continental Europe, but comparatively unknown to British politics.<sup>24</sup> In fact, power sharing is the end of all coalitions and, therefore, it is the ultimate stage to be achieved in the election process. Any arrangement that stops short of the ultimate stage lacks

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<sup>23</sup> Bradley Richardson, *Japanese Democracy*, Yale University Press (New Haven, 1997), p.88

<sup>24</sup> Lane & Ersson, Op.Cit. Pp.135-136

commitment. Finally, there are what may be called 'integral' coalitions that link parties through the election process, parliamentary performance and governance. Continuous collaboration and cohesion of allies through the above stages of the political process make them constitute stable coalitions while preserving separate identity of the parties.

Stanley Henig and John Pinder in their work *European Political Parties* have also worked out three models of coalition based on European party system such as bipolar, unipolar and multipolar. They have defined the three models as follows: "In bipolar systems the legislature and government are dominated by two parties. Neither can dominate to the exclusion of the other, although one may enjoy long periods of being the governing party. Nonetheless, government will be dominated either by the two parties singly with at least the possibility of alternation, or by both together in a 'big coalition! In a unipolar system, on the other hand, there is one large party which can be considered dominant. Occasionally, all its smaller rivals may coalesce to produce a temporary alternative government. However, the norm is for one party to be easily the largest legislative group and to dominate the executive. In multipolar systems, neither one nor two parties are dominant even to the extent of always emerging the stringest from succeeding elections. The legislature will contain more than two sizable parties, with at least the mathematical possibility of a number of different government combinations".<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>25</sup> Stanley Henig and John Pinder (Eds.) *European Political Parties*, (George Allen, London, 1969) p.502

Coalitions can also be classified as (1) Office Seeking Model of Coalition, (2) Minimum Winning Model, (3) Policy Pursuit Model, and (4) Large Size model based on strategy. W.H.Riker is more or less associated with the office-seeking strand of coalition, and he focuses on the strategy adopted by parties when they try to gain admission to any coalition that may form. He predicts that players will try to create a coalition as small as is strictly necessary for winning a simple majority to form a government in order to maximize the payoffs to each coalition members. He calls this model a 'minimum winning coalition'. A minimum winning coalition stands on the assumption that the total gains won by the party coalition can be distributed in large shares for each coalition partner participating in the coalition. William Gamson also argues that parties are interested on entering the 'cheapest winning' coalition. He further opines that parties prefer to be in a relatively large partner in a small coalition than a junior partner in a bigger coalition, even when the benefits of doing so are broadly comparable. Robert Axelrod builds upon office-seeking model and introduces a policy dimension. He asserts that parties regard formation of coalition as a secondary formation criterion. According to him, since office-seeking remains the central strategic goal of all players, parties of the left and right can ideally adjust to one another unmindful of their ideological differences, by minimizing their conflicts of interest. In other words, a coalition which combines both leftist parties and rightist parties appears to be a complicated proposition. But, on certain occasions parties and individual legislators may be interested in the pursuit of power or office in total disregard of ideological

considerations. This is mainly because of power which is an effective instrument for pursuing policies. Power is what matter most in politics.

The office-seeking, minimum winning coalition model is more theoretical and practical, and it distance itself from political reality or circumstances. In a country where factors like ethnicity, cultural, communal or other divisions play an important role and existence of parties representing them, grand or large sized coalitions appear to be more pragmatic. In India, for instance, both at the centre and in the states, the tendency is to make coalitions large and broad based and therefore the leading parties try to accommodate into their fold even fringe parties that are not sure of their post-electoral survival. This, according to N.Jose Chander, is necessitated by three factors: one, the leading parties want to ensure such a large majority as to be representative of vast sections of people in the country. Two, the lack of discipline and cohesion among party legislators fail to ensure the continuance of a minimum winning coalition. Thirdly, the factional character of all parties, including the major parties, does not rule out the possibility of defection of members in spite of anti-defection laws that may exist in the country.

Standard coalition theories define the main political actors as disciplined party organizations. Parties enter coalitions to satisfy three principle interests: to win office for their members, influence policy agendas that serve their constituencies or secure votes in order to achieve the preceding two objectives. Most conventional accounts cast these purposes in mutually exclusive terms and see them as the clearly defined, fixed and

exogenous goals of fully rational agents. In other words, parties are completely aware of what they want to achieve before entering coalition negotiations. What determines the action of parties beyond these interests and their relative strength in the legislature are formal political institutions, which generate particular incentives to attract considerable scholarly attention, the rules of the electoral regime, which affect the degree of polarization and number of parties in this system, and constitutional provisions regulating the investiture and termination of governments. The rules, procedures and structures that comprise these institutions set the terms for what kinds of coalitions are likely to form, how much difficulty they are expected to meet and whether they can last. Two findings emerge: parties that share convergent policy goals are most likely to form coalitions; and large diverse coalitions that fail to devise explicit pacts to accommodate their differences are most vulnerable to the impact of sudden critical events that trigger their demise. Hence, the greater the number of parties within a coalition or in Parliament, and the wider the degree of polarization between their interests, the greater the probability that parties will encounter difficulties in forming and sustaining coalitions.

These conventional accounts suggest interesting perspectives and raise important concerns. The desire for office, control over policy and search for votes capture the interests of most parties and comprise significant incentives in actual coalition bargaining. In addition, particular institutional arrangements shape collective outcome and influence political agent strategies in critical ways. Standard Coalition Theories primarily analyse western coalition experience. Yet they reflect many concerns that



inform the debate in India. For these reasons, considerable recent scholarship on India's coalition politics critically engages with the existing scholarly genre. Many of the inferences drawn by their formal theoretical models are mundane, however, claiming that large diverse coalitions are harder to govern than small coherent alliances and saying that the former are prone to collapse, does not require much theoretical reflection. Indeed, these findings have a tautological quality. Moreover, by over determining outcomes, standard theoretical models fail to explain why apparently unwise coalition survives.

Basically, there are two classes of coalition theory. The first, power maximization theories and the second, policy based theories of coalition formation and behaviour. Power maximization theories stress the maximization of pay offs, that is, power and derivatives as the key factor in coalition formation, ignoring ideological and policy affinities as factors. Policy based theories, on the other hand, consider such affinities the key to the formation of coalitions. Power maximization theories, accordingly, predict minimum winning coalitions, defined as a coalition in which each party is indispensable to the coalition's winning a simple majority of seats because in such coalitions, each member's share of the pay off is maximized.

Policy Based Theories predict minimum connected winning coalitions. That is, coalition that are composed of member parties adjacent on the ideological scale and at least not incompatible on major issues, thus minimizing the ideological range, and within this limiting condition the minimum number of parties needed for a majority.

Empirical evidence from the comparative literature on coalition politics tends to support policy based theories and hence the importance of compatibility for coalition formation and even more for coalition longevity. About two third of majority coalitions in developed countries in the post war period have been ideologically connected. This is so especially in most European polities and in Israel where there are clear ideological and social divisions and where parties identified with particular ideological position and social constituencies have fairly stable support bases. However, within these constraints pay off maximization plays a powerful behavioural role.

Thus, coalition can be defined as the temporary combination for special ends between parties that retain destructive principles. A coalition government is a combination of two or more different political parties in order to achieve same goal that is mutually shared. A coalition government is formed only when no one party is able to secure a majority of seat in the legislature. The goal is to secure a working majority to enable the members of the coalition to form the governance.

### **2.3: Parliamentary System and Coalition Government in India: Theoretical Perspective**

The Indian Constitution adopted parliamentary form of government in India both at the centre and states. The reasons for the introduction of parliamentary system are as follows:-

First, Indians were quite familiar with its working when they gained independence because the British had introduced this system in India through the

Government of India Acts of 1909, 1919, and 1935. The Congress had also formed Ministry in 1937 but resigned in 1939 in the wake of 2<sup>nd</sup> World War as a matter of protest because the then British Viceroy, Lord Linlithgow had declared that India had joined the war without consulting the representatives of the Indian people.

Secondly, the framers of the Constitution opted for parliamentary system because in it there was emphasis on daily as well as periodic responsibility while in the presidential system of government there was emphasis on periodic responsibility only when elections were held after a number of years. In the presidential system of government the executive is not accountable to the Parliament as is evident in United States. The President of U.S.A. is elected by an electoral college and is not responsible to the Congress (Parliament) while in India not the President but the cabinet is the repository of all powers and is responsible to Parliament for the daily acts of administration.

Thirdly, all the political parties in India before independence had demanded rights from the British Government in terms of Parliamentary government. M.N. Roy, Moti Lal Nehru Committee Report, the Socialist Party, the Congress and the Hindu Mahasabha were demanding the introduction of full responsible or Parliamentary government in India before independence. After independence also the stand of all the

political parties was in favour of Parliamentary form of government and not a single party demanded Presidential system of government.<sup>26</sup>

Fourthly, the practical considerations also influenced the framers of the Constitution. They thought that it was better to introduce the Parliamentary government in the states as well as the Centre because the head of the government would be removable in this type of government by means of no-confidence motion while it would not be possible in the Presidential type of government.

It is worth noting that while adopting the British system of government, the framers of the Indian Constitution did not adopt it wholesale, rather they made many changes in it. For example, unlike the British Constitution, the Indian Constitution did not provide for a hereditary monarchy, rather it provided for an elected President. The framers of the Indian Constitution did not provide even for the election of the President on the type of France or United States. While the President of France is elected for five years directly by the voters<sup>27</sup>, the President of the U.S.A. is elected by an electoral college which is elected by the voters. On the other hand, Indian President is elected by an electoral college consisting of the Parliament and elected Legislative Assembly members of the states.

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<sup>26</sup> Ramashray Roy, *The Uncertain Verdict: A Study of the 1969 Elections in Four Indian States*, (Orient Longman, New Delhi 1973), p.5

<sup>27</sup> In 2000, a referendum shortened the term of the President of France from seven years to five years. A maximum of two consecutive terms was imposed after the 2008 constitutional reform. See [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/President\\_of\\_France](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/President_of_France) for details. (Retrieved on 25.10.2019)

Secondly, the Indian Constitution also deviated from the British practice of the sovereignty of the Parliament and provide for a limited government with federal set-up and a written constitution. All the organs of the government whether in the Centre or State derive their powers from the Constitution while the Constitution itself derives powers from the sovereignty of the people. This has been stated clearly in the Constitution of India.

At the time of the introduction of parliamentary democracy, doubts were expressed whether it would succeed in India. It was pointed out by some scholars that there were many hindrances in the way of successful working of democracy, but inspite of them, India continues to be the largest democracy in the world.

#### **2.4: Role of Political Parties in Indian Parliamentary Democracy**

It may be pointed out here that at the time of framing of the constitution much attention was not paid to the question of the development of a political party system in the country. As the British political ideas and the British political system had shaped the thinking of most of the political activists at that time it was wishfully hoped that Indian democracy will also throw up a party system on the British model and conventions. The fact of the situation, however, is that there are important differences between the British and Indian conditions. Britain is small, compact island country. India is a vast land with very great diversities. Britain is very near to a homogeneous country. In India there are large differences of religions, sects, of linguistics blocks, ethnic groups, castes, subcastes and tribes. Then British is an industrial developed country, while India was to and has to

develop. There still continues a mix of feudal agricultural, emerging developed agricultural and developing industrial economy. There continues to be regional, personal and sectorial imbalances, and lack of well articulated politically conscious middle class.<sup>28</sup>

As a consequence of these factors party system is unique in India. It does not fit into generally prescribed types of one-party, two-party, multi-party systems etc. Since independence the system has passed through various stages of growth:

- (i) 1952-64: the epoch of national consensus-the Nehru Era;
- (ii) 1964 – 69: the uneasy transition marked by the emergence of a multi-party situation;
- (iii) 1969-75: the period of new consensus and of increasing inter-party conflict;
- (iv) 1975-77: The Emergency authoritarian period
- (v) 1977~80: the Janata phase of coalitional politics
- (vi) 1980-89: the phase of tussle between the Congress in the centre and the regional parties in the states;
- (vii) since 1989 --Multi party system and end of Congress hegemony and emergence of BJP as an alternative to Congress.

In addition to system based on number of parties in India with regard to party system are also important the geographical spreads, ideological or programmatic stands and social bases. Understanding and analysis of Indian party system, therefore, calls for an

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<sup>28</sup> Rasheeduddin Khan, "A Perspective Paper on the Party System in India". Paper presented at Seminar on Party System in India at International Centre, New Delhi, February 24, 1990.

attention to all these aspects. To begin with, we can have a look at the process of development of coalition governments through various phases of political parties in India.

#### **2.4.1: Development of Coalition Politics: One Party Dominance Phase**

In view of the fragmented nature of Indian society and widespread ideological differences with regard to future of India rights after independence in the country there were a number of political parties ranging from Communists to communalists and from laissez-faire to socialist camps. However, for quite some years the Congress remained the chief party representing a historical consensus and enjoying a continuing basis of support and thrust. In specific Indian conditions after independence although the Indian National Congress became a party, it was still entirely different from an ordinary party uniting members who believe in the same ideals and have the same objectives. The party retained the character of the nationalist movement in seeking to balance and accommodate social and ideological diversity within an all-embracing, representative structure - claiming sole legitimacy as the national party, the Congress sought to resolve or avoid internal conflict, balance interest, and blur ideological distinctions in its search for consensus. Moreover, in consolidating its "power after independence it sought to achieve a national consensus through the accommodation and absorption of dominant

social elements that had kept aloof from the nationalist movement”.<sup>29</sup> Traditional caste and village leaders, landlords and business men made their way into the Congress.

Thus the Congress which functioned as broad-based national movement before independence, transformed itself into the dominant political party of the nation. Although a number of parties came into existence, the first four general elections were held and fought in the framework of an established and stable party system characterised by political analysts like Morris Jones as a one-party dominance system or the Congress system as it was named by Rajni Kothari.

This so-called one-party dominance or Congress system, was no doubt, a competitive party system. But in this the competing parties played rather dissimilar roles. According to Rajni Kothari, it consisted of a party of consensus and parties of pressure. The latter functioned on the margin and indeed, the concept of a margin of pressure was of great importance in that system. Inside the margin were various factions within the party of consensus. Outside the margin were several opposition groups and parties, dissident groups from the ruling party, and other interest groups and important individuals. These groups outside the margin did not constitute alternatives to the ruling party. Their role was to constantly pressurise, criticise, censure and influence it by influencing threat that if the ruling group strays away too far from the balance of effective public opinion, and if the factional system within it is not mobilised to restore the balance, it will be displaced from power by the opposition groups. Both the idea of

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<sup>29</sup> Rajni Kothari, “Continuity and Change in the Party System” in D.L.Sheth (Ed.) *Citizen and Parties* (Allied Publishing House, Delhi, 1975) Pp.231-245



an inbuilt corrective through factionalism within the ruling party, and the idea of a latent threat from outside the margin of pressure were necessary parts of one party dominance system.

Congress system was a coalition that not only reflected the complex nature of the Indian social reality but in fact mediated that reality through an array of institutional structures and procedures. As Atul Kohli points out the Congress forged patronage links with regional and local influentials, thus creating chain of authority that stretched from the capital city to villages.<sup>30</sup>

In extraordinary elections of 1977 after the emergency the united opposition under the Janata banner cornered a record 43 per cent votes pushing Congress back to 34.5 per cent. In 1980 Congress again got 42.7 per cent votes. In December 1984 Congress got the highest ever percentage of 49.17. In 1989 elections Congress got 41.6 per cent votes. This percentage got declined further in 1991 when Congress received only 39.8 per cent votes and reached the lowest of in 1996.

The commentators who have tried to analyse the party system particularly down to state and local level, like Paul Brass opine that the Congress system was never a single one-party systems in which the Congress was dominant. Each multi-party system has its own distinctive features, despite a common pattern of Congress dominance. This became particularly clear in Fourth General Elections in 1967.

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<sup>30</sup> Atul Kohli, "Centralisation and Powerlessness: India's Democracy in a Comparative Perspective" in Joels, Midgal, Atul Kohli and Vivenedhue (Eds.) *State Power and Social Forces*, (Cambridge University Press, 1994) p.89

Although the 1967 elections marked the beginning of the decline of one-party dominance, both in terms of percentage of votes and seats which the Congress Party lost, the nature of electoral support the Congress received in 1967 was still characteristic of a dominant national party. While it lost in quantity, qualitatively the support for the Congress in 1967 came almost evenly from all the regions and from various demographic, socio-economic and ethnic categories in the population. Further Indira Gandhi, by splitting the Congress Party, establishing her supremacy both in the Party and the government and deciding to go directly to the people thereby receiving fresh mandate in 1971 mid-term polls pre-empted the development of a multiparty system. It also prevented the politics of coalition building at the national level.

But at the same time, this strategy brought to an end the first phase of the Indian Party system, the Congress system and along with it was destroyed the historical organisation of the Congress Party. Instead the strategy resulted in establishing hegemony as distinct from dominance of the Congress party at the Centre, based on populist and plebiscitary elections.<sup>31</sup> However, in fact it was a decay of the democratic party system paving the way for the ascendancy of the centralised bureaucratic apparatus on the one hand and opportunistic radicals given to the populist slogan mongering on the other and ultimately establishment of an authoritarian regime.<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>31</sup> D.L.Sheth "Crisis of Representation" *Seminar* No.385, September 1991, p.16

<sup>32</sup> L.P.Singh "Political Development or Political Decay in India". *Pacific Affairs*, 44(1) 1971. Pp.76-77

#### **2.4.2:Towards Institutionalisation**

Lok Sabha elections in 1977 provided a major step towards party institutionalisation and possibilities of emergence of a two-party system. In these elections there was a substantial reduction in the number of candidates despite the increase in number of seats (There were 2439 candidates for 542 seats compared to 2784 for 518 seats in 1971) There was significant increase in the number of straight contests. The number of clear straight contests wa 101. But if one does not count for 1 or 2 independents seeking elections in a constituency, besides the candidates of the rival parties, the number of virtual straight contests was 279. Within this another noteworthy trend was the clear rejection of independent candidates. Though the number of independent candidates was highest in 1977, the number of those who won was the lowest (7 out of 1,222). Finally 75.8 per cent of the votes were cast in favour of only two parties namely Janata and the Congress.

As a result of this and victory of a non-Congress party at the Centre for the first time many scholars and observers opined that parliamentary democracy in India had matured and a two party system or close to it was in the process. The hope, however was short lived. The election results of 1977, in fact, were not in response to party alignments or party building process. The backdrop of these elections was unusual. The political circumstances under which it was held, the issues it posed, the functions it performed and the hopes and fears it gave rise to, vested it with special significance. More than the question of emergency, which undoubtedly dominated the minds of the

people and the electoral campaigns the issue of a deeper importance was the survival of the democratic institutions themselves.

In this background the Janata Party by nature, was primarily a coalition formed together, for the very survival of non-Congress parties. Unfortunately having attained that goal the party's leadership did not make serious efforts for a long term party building process. Result was that internal bickerings and factionalism in the party continued and tarnished its overall reputation. It ultimately led to an atmosphere that proved conducive to its disintegration and disillusionment of the voters.

#### **2.4.3: The Hegemonic Dominance**

On the basis of 1980 elections, one may say that the Indian party system was again back to one-party dominant system. While in terms of Congress (i)'s victory in Parliamentary elections it was so but it was sociologically and contextually different not only from the early party system of Nehru era but also from that of the latter part of the pre-emergency Indira years.<sup>33</sup> First thing was that the dominant party now was identified with the name of the leader (Indira) who had established an authoritarian command over the party.

The attitude of the ruling Congress to the opposition parties also underwent a marked change. So long as the Congress was a dominant party and the only national force in the country, the opposition, excepting the extreme parties, were treated with respect and it was able to emerge as force to reckon with at state and local levels. But

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<sup>33</sup> Sheth, Op.Cit. p.18

after the successful Janata challenge in 1977 and the split in the Congress, the top leadership of the Congress had started feeling increasingly insecure and the party became intolerant and exclusivist, unwilling to share power with other parties. This, in turn, induced the opposition parties to play the politics of survival taking away a significant part of their political grit and assertion. In addition, the state of power that many of the opposition parties had in the late seventies seemed to have deprived them of their capacity to oppose the Congress in a sustained and effective manner. During Rajiv Gandhi's regime (1985-89) particularly there was almost complete absence of a dialectical interaction between government and opposition. The ruling party distrusted the opposition and its motives. Opposition parties on the other hand, appeared to be interested more in pushing the government leaders into a bad light than in presenting a better alternative. In this unlike the one party dominance phase in which the organisational structure of the party which sought to represent different interests and identities within the society, in the hegemonic phase the party had become dependent on the leader as a hegemon.<sup>34</sup>

#### **2.4.4: Multi-Party System and Coalition Era**

The Parliamentary elections held in December 1989 clearly inaugurated a multi-party system at the centre: The states component of the system, in aggregate terms had already become a multi-partisan one at any rate by 1987 when nearly half of the states had come to be ruled by non-Congress parties of various varieties and vintage. These

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<sup>34</sup> Sheth Op.Cit.p.22

elections, according to M.P. Singh transformed the scene at the centre in two unprecedented ways:

- (i) It catapulted to power a coalition government at the Centre for the first time, at least in a formal sense, for even of the Janata Party government in the late 1970s was substantially a coalition government, its constituents had hurriedly merged into a single party on the eve of elections in 1977.
- (ii) Again for the first time the party system at the Centre truly acquired a multi-party character for more than two parties became of consequential relevance, in the ninth Lok Sabha. The outcome of the 1991 mid term polls further strengthened this situation and showed a clear trend of decline of Congress hegemony and emergence of multiparty system and a coalitionist phase. This got consolidated in 1996 elections.

What was different, indeed, unique, about the 1991 and 1996 elections was that there were not two but three main contenders for power. Until now, opponents of the Congress had to cluster together to mount an effective challenge to Congress supremacy. Both the de facto coalition that was the 1977-79 Janata Party and the Janata Dal National Front minority government, backed by the CPM and the BJP were possible because of opposition electoral aggregation. In 1991 opposed to the Congress was not only the Janata Dal National Front tie up, but also BJP and, however, presumably the Samajwadi Janata Party. Effectively, though, the battle was among the Congress, the JD-NF and the BJP. They were seen to offer widely different political prescriptions, hence the talk of

polarisation. Finally the election results did prove the potential of each of the three main contenders for each of them got substantial number of seats and votes while none was able to secure a clear majority.

But it does not mean that this multi-party character is there sure to stay or a polarisation process is on. Polarisation implies the appeal by political parties with sharply defined ideologies to no less clearly identifiable stance. In our case, the ideologies are not so sharply defined or why should the BJP try to wear “nationalist” non-sectarian clothes, the Congress lend qualified support to Mandal and be ambivalent on Ayodhya, and the JD-NF court the non-OBC poor? Likewise, the appeal is blurred so as to focus on specific constituencies or the exclusion of other.

The elections since 1989 onwards have brought out another important factor also. There was, so far, a general belief that more opposition disunity meant higher prospect of Congress victory simply because Congress had a secure base varying from a quarter to a third of the electorate. If this gets knocked off then the absence of opposition unity obviously can not be of advantage to the Congress (I). On the other hand, the division of votes among various parties, would equally work in favour of any political party or combination which is assured of, by whatever recombination of dispensing blocks of this minimum base within the electorate. It is because of this that in 1991 BJP in UP with less than a third of votes polled, could garner the lion’s share of seats whereas in Karnataka, with a slightly less percentage of voters, it could get only five of the 28 seats. Likewise, with around 40% of the votes, the JD and its allies in Bihar ended

up with three-fourth of the seat. In 1996 with just 22 per cent votes the BJP emerged the single largest party winning 161 seats.

The new system, at least for the time being, has thrown up a dynamism in which major parties or party-like formations the Congress, the Janata Dal and its National Front allies, the BJP and its allies - seem to be almost equally poised for competition. The left and regional Parties may play a balancing role. In this multi-polarity it also seems that Indian politics has entered a coalition phase at least for the near future. However, in general, the nature of party system remains yet non-institutionalised, with ideological lines blurred and social support basis non-definitive.<sup>35</sup>

#### **2.4.5: Coalition Politics and Nature of Party System of India**

From the above discussion of evolution and growth of party system in India, it becomes clear that if the history of Indian political parties is suggestive of any pattern, it is a pattern of steady fragmentation and fragmentation of political forces reflecting social fragmentation and regional division of the country. For a long time many political observers, political scientist and party leaders have been critical of this growth in number of parties and have been enamoured of the concept of a two-party system. This psychological fixation about the two party system, Sachidanand Sinha points out, is essentially a legacy of the imperial rule which planted in our mind a sense of sanctity about many of the institutions of Great Britain, and in that country a two party system has endured. But if we unchain ourselves from that particular perspective and look

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<sup>35</sup> A.S.Abraham, "Contenders For Power", *The Times of India*, April 22,1991



around, we find that there are many thriving democracies in the world, with a multiplicity of parties and succession of coalition governments. As far as the interrelationship between democracy and the party system is concerned, it would be asserted with some justice that the appropriate party system does gradually and inevitably evolve if the ideals of a democratic system with basic freedoms and representative institutions are pursued and reserved. This latter condition, of course, depends very much on several economic and social conditions. In this context Sinha points out that a dominant feature of our political system appears to be a multiplicity of foci around which people are seeking to articulate their demands. These are the ethnic, the religious, the linguistic and the caste issues, which in many areas coalesce with economic interests and social statuses of the people. India is vast and each of these issues assumes a distinctive nuance for a particular region. As such the same slogans do not mean the same thing to people in different parts of the country. This is at the root of the growing regionalisation of our politics. It means, that bringing all shades of public opinion within the framework of two rigidly defined party platforms is difficult.

Therefore the crisis of party system in India is not that of absence of two-party system or presence of parties of various types and ideologies. It is the crisis of building a party system with a democratic value system and attitudes. Consequence is that the parties lack structural, organisational and pragmatic priorities. Thus the characteristics that have emerged in the party system are not conducive to the development of a democratic political culture.

These characteristics, to begin with, suggest that most parties have turned out to be coalitions of elites loosely tied together by personal interests and short-term goals rather than by ideological or programmatic commitment or long-range objectives. One consequence of this is that the basic principle of party organisation -with the exception of Communists and to a lesser degree BJP is either personality or region, not policies. The national centrist parties (and for that matter the regional ones) do not differ on substantial issues. This also explains why party loyalties have been so fluid in our country. Shashi Tharoor suggests that there is scarcely a mainstream politician in India today who has not served under more than one party label. Politicians in India have proved time and again that power is personal objective; the party or manifesto under which they seek power is a matter of convenience, not conviction.<sup>36</sup>

Another consequence of this is that nearly all parties have been beset with factionalism and internal dissensions leading many a times to splits. The Congress has had three major splits (1969, 1980 and 1995) and at several different times small groups have seceded from it. The Janata Party (formed in 1977 and Janata Dal (1989) followed this trend right from the day of their formations. Various socialist parties have been breaking up continuously. The CPI also split and led to the formation of CPI (M). Later CPI (M) itself gave way to CPI (ML). Parties based on the ideal of protecting lower castes interests earlier Republican Party and latter Bahujan Samaj Party also have faced splits arising out of factionalism. Much appreciated for its discipline BJP is also no more free from dissensions. Gujarat in a major way and some other state units in minor in

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<sup>36</sup> Shashi Tharoor, "The Case for a Presidential System", *Sunday Observer*, January 6-12, 1991

1995-96 brought it out clearly. Even the regional parties are not free from this fissionability.

Arising out of this is also the fact that there is hardly any party that is not under the control of an autocratic leader. The constitutions of most of the parties are presidential and the committees are nominated by the president. Adhocism is the norm everywhere. No party has evolved reliable mechanism and workable procedures for managing internal conflicts. If the Congress, with long experience in the art of political management and institutional patterns of behaviour, has been unable to channel diverse social forces unleashed by the process of modernisation, then the inescapable conclusion is that proliferation rather than polarisation is likely to be the dominant feature of Indian political scene.

It can thus be said that party system in India has not yet reached that stage of development where ideologies are strong, parties are able to structure meaningful electoral issues and parliamentary opposition successfully channelise popular opposition. The overwhelming importance of personal and ascriptive factors rather than secular and rational factors have contributed to the absence of ideological boundaries between most of the parties and a blurring of them. This also prevents any ideological polarisation to take place at the mass level of the polity and increase the role of cast and religion in elections. In those pockets of polity where the parties have approached the masses with distinct ideologies and not with a limited concern of immediate power, this vicious circle has been broken. It suggests that Indian democracy has suffered not

because of the lack of enthusiasm on the part of the people but because of the failure of political parties to work harmoniously and with a sense of history.<sup>37</sup>

## **2.5: Rise of Coalition Government at the National Level**

In pre-Independent India, the Indian Government under the Prime Ministership of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru in 1946 was the first formal coalition consisting of the Congress, the Muslim League, the Hindu Mahasabha, etc. After Independence, the credit for having first ever coalition under the present Constitution goes to what was then the PEPSU State<sup>38</sup>. As no party could get a majority in the State Assembly in the first election of 1952, a coalition of non-Congress parties was formed in April 1952.

After Independence, the Indian National Congress (INC) had fought the first five elections (1952, 1957, 1962, 1967, 1971) under the dominating influence of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and Indira Gandhi. Their charismatic leadership always contributed to the success of the Congress party. However, the Sixth Lok Sabha elections in India was historic and unique. It is without parallel and is undoubtedly a watershed in India's post Independence history. In one stroke the Indian electorate brought to an end thirty years of Congress party's dominant rule, eleven years of government under the Prime Ministership of Indira Gandhi, and twenty months of an emergency that has set India on a course of authoritarian government. Thus, for the first time in Indian parliamentary

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<sup>37</sup> Gopal Krishna, "One Party Dominance" in Rajni Kothari (Ed.) *Party System and Election Studies*, (Alied, Bombay, 1967)

<sup>38</sup> A conglomerate of eight princely states formed a state known as Patiala and East Punjab States Union (PEPSU) from 1946 till the first State Reorganisation Act of 1956 that led to reorganisation of states.

history, the Indian Congress party was recognised as a main opposition party in Lok Sabha.

In 1977, the first coalition was established at the centre under the leadership of Morarji Desai as the leader of the Janata Party. This has marked the closure of the Nehru-Indira Congress regime, and the beginning of the Janata rule. Thus, for the first time in Indian parliamentary history, a non-Congress Government was installed at the centre. This was the first occasion since Independence when the Congress party was not in a position to form the government. Unfortunately, the Janata Party leaders could not make a proper use of the golden opportunity given to them by the people of India after their success to capture of government power at the centre. The intense power-struggle among the top three leaders, Morarji Desai, Charan Singh and Jagjivan Ram proved ultimately a death-knell to the Janata Government. Thus, the first non-Congress Government formed at the Centre on 24<sup>th</sup> March, 1977 with Morarji Desai as Prime Minister went out of office after an existence of 2 years, 3 months and 22 days stumbling from crisis to crisis primarily because of internal bickerings and dissensions, although the formation of the government was welcomed all over the country as the dawn of a new era.<sup>39</sup>

The second coalition government was formed by the Janata (S) Party leader Chowdhary Charan Singh on 28th July, 1979 with an outside support of the Congress (I) party. But Charan Singh could not face the Lok Sabha when the Congress (I) had

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<sup>39</sup> C.P.Bhambri, *The Janata Party: A Profile*, (National, Delhi,1983) p.15

withdrawn its support to his government before the latter sought the Vote of Confidence from the Lok Sabha. Subsequently, the Sixth Lok Sabha was dissolved on 22<sup>nd</sup> August, 1979 and Charan Singh was asked to continue till the elections. The Janata Party experiment-beginning with its victory in 1977 and ending in its collapse in 1979 turned out to be a momentary phase in modern Indian political history. In 1980 mid-term poll, Indira Gandhi had staged a come back with tremendous majority of her party Congress (I), after her electoral debacle of 1977. Thus, the second coalition government at the Centre headed by Charan Singh was short lived.

The third coalition government was established by V.P. Singh on 2<sup>nd</sup> December, 1989. This coalition was called the National Front-consisting of Janata Dal, Telugu Desam Party (TDP), Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK) and the Assam Gana Parishad (AGP). The BJP and Left parties supported the National Front Government. Even though, the National Front Government was better organised than the coalition government of the Janata Party, it suffered from the same inherent weaknesses. V.P. Singh government could not complete even a year in office. The egoistic personality clashes within the Janata Dal, the implementation of Mandal Commission recommendations for Central Government jobs, halting the Rath Yatra of L.K. Advani and coupled with other issues created a serious blow to the survival of National Front Government. Following the withdrawal of support by the BJP, the National Front Government headed by V.P. Singh had lost majority support in the Lok Sabha. However, he refused to resign and instead offered to prove his majority on the floor of the House. When put to vote the Motion of Confidence was defeated by 356 to 151 votes

with 6 members abstaining. Thus, for the second time in Independent nation's history, a non-Congress experiment at the centre had collapsed, imploding with terrible and all-consuming conspiratorial intensity. Sabotage, back scattering, horse-tracking reminiscent of the fall of the Janata Government in 1979 were once again on vulgar display.

The split up group of the Janata Dal headed by Chandra Sekhar with 54 members in the Lok Sabha formed the fourth coalition government at the centre on 10<sup>th</sup> November, 1990 with an outside support of the Congress (I) party. But it was also unstable and short-lived coalition which lasted only a few months. In view of the surveillance at the residence of the Congress president Rajiv Gandhi by Haryana police, the Congress withdrew its support in March, 1991 and Chandra Sekhar was ousted. With this, experiment of minority governments run with outside support having flopped, the country was back at square one facing another general election within less than two years. Thus, the Janata Dal has failed to emerge as left-of-centre national political formation and it is confined to only two states of north India and the elections of June 1991 again brought back the Congress party to power at the Centre headed by P.V. Narasimha Rao.<sup>40</sup>

After the 1996 Lok Sabha poll, Atal Behari Vajpayee, the leader of the single largest party, was invited by the President of India to form the government at the centre, and was directed to seek vote of confidence in the Lok Sabha. Following an invitation,

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<sup>40</sup> Mohit Sen, "Political Regrouping: Anti-Congress Centreism is Doomed", *The Times of India*, November 27, 1995.

A.B. Vajpayee formed the fifth coalition government on 16<sup>th</sup> May, 1996 and asked to prove his majority on the floor of the House by 31<sup>st</sup> May, 1996. After the President's address to the Joint Parliament Session on 23<sup>rd</sup> May, 1996, the opposition moved one-line motion of confidence. The debate on the motion of confidence was held on 27<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> May, 1996. But, the BJP failed to get the required support and A.B. Vajpayee resigned from Prime Ministership without facing a vote of his motion. Atal Behari Vajpayee was the second Prime Minister to submit his resignation without seeking the vote of confidence from Lok Sabha on 28<sup>th</sup> May, 1996. Earlier, Charan Singh Government also resigned without seeking the confidence in Lok Sabha, following the withdrawal of support by the Congress (I) party on 20<sup>th</sup> August, 1979. Indeed, since Independence, the BJP-led coalition government was the first short-lived government at the centre with only 13 days tenure.

The sixth coalition government of 13 parties was established on 1<sup>st</sup> June, 1996 headed by H.D. Deve Gowda. The most distinguishing feature of this coalition is that it is supported by the Congress party and all the constituent parties have come together in opposition to the BJP. The BJP secured the largest number of seats in the 1996 election and the parties forming the coalition had the main motive of keeping the BJP out of power. This was a post-election coalition and the participating parties had even fought the election against each other. This was the first time that a coalition was not established against the Congress party. The BJP was singled out as a non-secular party and the member of parties of the coalition clearly denounced the BJP as a communal party which has to be kept out of power. Thus, the first coalition with the Congress party



in support has been formed against the BJP. Before the United Front Government led by Deve Gowda, however, like the Sword of Damocles, a question mark was hanging. In a dramatic development, the Congress (I) party withdrew its support to the United Front Government on 30<sup>th</sup> March, 1997 and has also staked its claim to form the alternative government. While the Congress (I) party does not have the arithmetic on its side to form the government, the then President Dr. Shankar Dayal Sharma thought it proper to ask H.D. Deve Gowda for a vote of confidence in the Lok Sabha. As expected, he resigned as Prime Minister, following the defeat of confidence vote in Lok Sabha on 11<sup>th</sup> April, 1997. With this, an 11-month old United Front Government was collapsed in the context of coalition era.

After making efforts to avert the dissolution of the Lok Sabha, the Congress (I) leadership chose to continue with the earlier support partner under a new Prime Minister I.K. Gujral. The second spell of United Front Government was formed on 21<sup>st</sup> April, 1997 headed by I.K. Gujral. This was the seventh coalition government in India since 1977. But within months he started imposing conditions and backing them up with threats to bring down the United Front Government led by I.K. Gujral on a variety of grounds, include on the question of the DMK members in the context of the Jain Commission Report. The United Front had, however, refused to expelled the DMK ministers from the Union Cabinet. Consequently, the Congress (I) had pushed the country to another precipice in just 8 months by announcing the withdrawal of support to the Gujral Government. The Prime Minister I.K. Gujral chose to resign instead of seeking vote of confidence as was done by H.D. Deve Gowda. Thus, the experiment of

seventh coalition Government led by I.K.Gujral came to an end in 18 months. As predicted, none of the three political parties-the BJP, the United Front and the Congress (I)-was in a position to form a government on its own and no two of them were prepared to join hands, the Cabinet met and formally recommended to the President of India that the 11<sup>th</sup> Lok Sabha be dissolved. Later the President by a Presidential Order under Sub-Clause (b) of Clause 2 of Article 85 of the Constitution of India dissolved eleventh Lok Sabha and directed the Constitution of the new Lok Sabha by the 15<sup>th</sup> March, 1998.

The elections held in 1998 also produced a truncated Lok Sabha and eighth coalition led by BJP's A.B. Vajpayee came into power on 19<sup>th</sup> March, 1998, with the support of 18 political parties. Unfortunately, from the beginning, the multi-party at coalition, which was hailed as the first such democratic experiment at the national level, ran into difficulties in the number game and threats from parties with sizeable members within the coalition partners, particularly the AIADMK, Trinamul Congress and Samata Party. Since the formation of the BJP-led coalition, the AIDMK supremo Jayalalitha remained a constant headache for A.B. Vajpayee, Jayalalitha, the second largest coalition partner in the BJP coalition kept the government on the tenterhooks either for not dismissing the DMK government in Tamil Nadu or complaining by her. The other coalition partner, Mamata Banerjee too often embarrassed the government either on grounds of West Bengal's needs not being addressed properly or her party not being given the Railway Ministry; she has even stayed out of the government on this issue. The Samata Party caused great discomfiture to the Vajpayee Government with its futile attempts to get President's rule imposed in Bihar. The Shiv Sena too has embarrassed

the BJP-led coalition government through its anti-Pakistan tirades too often. However, with his astute parliamentary experience and goodwill, A.B. Vajpayee has completed a tenure of one year as the Prime Minister and succeeded to holding the coalition together. But, he could not prove himself to be an able leader at that point of time by holding the coalition together. Nor, for the matter did he head a stable government, in tune with the BJP's election slogan of 'a stable government under an able leader'.

The Vajpayee regime continued to pass through a critical phase even after the first anniversary. Once again crisis emerged in the BJP-led coalition when the outright refusal of Jayalalitha's three demands by the Union Cabinet, the AIADMK decided to pull out its ministers from the centre and later withdraw from the coordination committee. As expected, AIADMK leader Jayalalitha along with party leaders met with President K.R. Narayanan on 14<sup>th</sup> April, 1999 and handed over letter withdrawing support from the Government. Meanwhile, the President of India asked the BJP-led coalition government to seek a vote of confidence from the Lok Sabha. After hectic political drama in the capital of India, the motion of confidence in his government moved by A.B. Vajpayee on 15<sup>th</sup> April, 1999 was rejected by the Lok Sabha by the narrowest of margins of one vote -the tally being 269 in favour and 270 against the motion. Thus, the 13 months old BJP-led coalition government at the Centre headed by A.B. Vajpayee collapsed paving the way for the formation of an alternative government, by the non-BJP parties amid intense bickering failed to provide an alternative to the BJP-led coalition government; the 12th Lok Sabha was dissolved by the President of India on 26<sup>th</sup> April, 1999 following the recommendation of the Union Cabinet.

In 1999 Lok Sabha elections, the BJP and its allies in the National Democratic Alliance secured a comfortable majority and A.B.Vajpayee became the Prime Minister of India for the third time on 13<sup>th</sup> October, 1999, a distinction that he shares with two of his predecessors, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and Indira Gandhi. In the political history of India he is the first non-Congress Prime Minister who is elected to this august office and enjoyed full term in office. In addition, the NDA government at the centre was the only coalition government in Independent India with the partnership of 18 different political parties to complete a full term of 5 years in office till 2004. This is the ninth coalition government in the series, which were formed by the non-Congress parties since 1977.

However, the period between 1996-1999 witnessed a personality-specific than policy-oriented and all the contentious issues were thrown out of window by the respective ruling parties in the name of stable and good governance. No single party on its own could gain absolute majority. There were three general elections and five governments in four years (1996-1999). With these factors in mind one may hope for the stability and good governance. We must ponder over the matter now in the light of our coalition experiments and experiences since 1996 and make such changes which may be found necessary to ensure a stable and good governance in contemporary India.

After the 2004 General Elections to the Lok Sabha, the United Progressive Alliance (UPA) led by the Congress (I) party has formed the tenth coalition government at the centre on 13<sup>th</sup> May, 2004 under the Prime Ministership of Dr. Manmohan Singh, with outside support from the Left parties. The UPA coalition government successfully

completed its full term of 5 years in office, like the previous NDA coalition Government, for stable and good governance in contemporary India.

The General Election to the 15<sup>th</sup> Lok Sabha in 2009 again witnessed the victory of United Progressive Alliance (UPA) led by Indian National Congress (INC) by obtaining the majority of seats from states such as Andhra Pradesh, Kerala, Maharashtra, Rajasthan, West Bengal, Tamil Nadu and Uttar Pradesh. Fortunately this time, the UPA was able to put together a comfortable majority with support from 322 members out of 543 members of the House. Though this was less than the 335 members who supported the UPA in the last Parliament, UPA alone had a plurality of over 260 seats as opposed to 218 seats in the 14th Lok Sabha. Hence, the government appeared to be more stable than the previous one. Besides, the UPA Ministry was extended external support by the Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP), Samajwadi Party (SP), Janata Dal (Secular), Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD) and other minor parties.<sup>41</sup>

The General Election to the 16<sup>th</sup> Lok Sabha in 2014 was remarkable in several ways. The United Progressive Alliance (UPA) was voted out of power with a thumping majority by the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) led by Bharatya Janata Party (BJP). The sweeping victory of the NDA had almost decimated the Indian National Congress (INC) which succeeded to win only 44 Lok Sabha seats across India. This Lok Sabha election was also notable for the transformation of Gujarat Chief Minister,

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<sup>41</sup> "Smooth sailing for UPA, parties scramble to support". CNN-IBN. 19 May 2009. (Retrieved on 04.08. 2016)

Narendra Modi to the position of the Prime Minister of India.<sup>42</sup> Another interesting point is that although the Bharatya Janata Party (BJP) managed to form a government on its own by winning as many as 282 Lok Sabha seats, but it decided to respect the pre-poll alliance and forms a coalition government under the umbrella of National Democratic Alliance (NDA) with several regional political parties.

The 2019 General Election to the Lok Sabha was conducted between 11 April to 19 May 2019 and votes were counted on 23<sup>rd</sup> May, 2019. The BJP-led NDA won 353 seats in all, with BJP alone bagging 303 seats thereby getting a substantial majority.<sup>43</sup> The Congress-led UPA got 91 seats with the Congress improving its seat tally to 52. The BJP again has decided to respect its pre-poll alliance and currently forms coalition ministry with 12 regional political parties in the Lok Sabha<sup>44</sup>. The BJP fought 2019 elections on issues like national security, Pulwama attack, Balakot air strike and Hindutva. Almost all parts of the country mourned the deaths of 40 CRPF personnels on 14<sup>th</sup> February, 2019 due to terrorist suicide attack.. Finally, India succeeded in its limited military objective of conducting air strikes at the terrorist training camp in Balakot located in Pakistan on 26<sup>th</sup> February, 2019. The impact of these events appeared to be a sort of boost to Indian nationalism which the BJP-led NDA exploited successfully for its political gain.

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<sup>42</sup> <http://www.sunday-guardian.com/analysis/the-rise-and-rise-of-tomorrows-prime-minister-narendra-modi> (Retrieved on 20.10.2019) See also <https://www.outlookindia.com/website/story/the-rise-of-modi/218443> (Retrieved on 20.10.2019)

<sup>43</sup> <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/elections/news> (Retrieved on 20.10.2019)

<sup>44</sup> Although MPs from 12 political parties are part of the NDA coalition, in reality 18 political parties had agreed to be a part of the alliance at the time of election in 2019.



**CHAPTER - III**  
**COALITION POLITICS IN INDIAN STATES:**  
**A HISTORICAL BACKGROUND**

Coalition experiment started in some Indian states in a big way only after the 4<sup>th</sup> General Elections in 1967 when the Indian National Congress lost power in six out of the seventeen states and lasted mainly upto 1971. No single political party was able to achieve an absolute majority in all the other states, except in Tamil Nadu where the DMK obtained a clear cut majority. Therefore, the coalition experiment in some states began in order to keep the congress government out of power. Soon these coalescing parties, however, fell apart and thus brought out instability again in the state governments. Therefore, a brief study of the historical background of coalition experiments in some Indian states during the seventies and even through the eighties is being made in order to throw light on the emergence of coalition politics at the national level:

**3.1:Kerala**

Kerala went to polls in february, 1967. As a result of the elections, the United Front consisting of CPM (Communist Party of India-Marxist), CPI (Communist Party of India), SSP (Sanyuki Socialist Party), KTP (Karshaka Thoziali Party) KSP (Kerala Socialist Party) won an overwhelming majority while the Congress got only 9 seats in the House of 140.



On 5<sup>th</sup> March, 1967, a coalition ministry with E.M.S.Namboodiripad as Chief Minister was formed but soon the ministry ran into difficulties due to its failure to fully implement the electoral promises specially in regard to food and general administration. The cleavage among the partners reached its climax when on 24<sup>th</sup> October, 1969 the CPI members got a resolution passed by the Assembly which called for a probe into the alleged charges of corruption against certain ministers. This resolution had been moved by CPI member T.A.Majid. Within a few hours, Namboodiripad tendered the resignation of his Ministry.

After this on November 1, 1969 a new coalition Ministry under the Chief Ministership of Achyut Menon (CPI) was sworn in. Soon after this, the CPM leader, Namboodiripad began to foment trouble and chaos throughout Kerala with the ultimate aim of sabotaging the CPI-led coalition Government. It organized farmers' conventions and incited the peasants in the name of land reforms. Namboodiripad began to preach liberation struggle and said that the Chief Minister had no intention of implementing the Kerala Land Reforms (Amendment) Act seeking to abolish the tenancy system, putting a ceiling on land, and distributing surplus land among the landless, that had been passed a little before his Ministry fell and that the CPM would implement that Act at the grassroots level. On August 4 of the same year the state was put under President's rule,

following the resignation of Achyuta Menon Ministry. This was the 11<sup>th</sup> Ministry in Kerala to leave office without completing its full term<sup>1</sup>.

The state went to the polls on 17<sup>th</sup> September, 1970. In all 21 parties and groups broadly organised into three fronts contested the election. These three fronts were : (1) CPM and its allies viz.SSP and KTP; (2) CPI and its allies viz.RSP,PSP, the Muslim League and the Congress party; (3) Congress (O) and its allies viz. Kerala Congress, Jana sangh, Swatantra Party, DMK and ISP.The Congress had made a sort of pact with the Muslim League.

On 4<sup>th</sup> October, 1970 Achyut Menon formed a new nine-member Ministry. Three ministers taken from the CPI, two from RSP, two from the Muslim League and one from PSP.The Congress agreed to support the CPI-led ministry from outside. The term of the Kerala Assembly expired in September 1975 but was extended by six months thrice and its elections were held along with Lok Sabha elections in March, 1977.

In the new elections the experiment of coalition politics was carried further. This time the various political parties and groups divided themselves into two fronts<sup>2</sup>: (1) Ruling Front consisting of Congress, CPI,Kerala Congress, Muslim League, Revolutionary Socialist Party and Praja Party, and (2) Opposition Front consisting of CPM, Janata Party, Muslim League (Opposition), Kerala Congress (Pillai group). The Ruling Front was able to score a victory by capturing majority of seats.

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<sup>1</sup> M.L. Ahuja, *Electoral Politics and General Elections in India (1952-1998)* (Mittal Publications, New Delhi 1998) Pp. 102-105

<sup>2</sup> S.L.Sikri, *Indian Government and Politics* (Kalyani Publishers, New Delhi, 1989) Pp. 201-205

After the elections a coalition Ministry headed by K.Karunakaran (Congress-I) assumed the office, but it could survive barely three weeks because the Chief Minister tendered his resignations over the Rajan case. After this the Ruling Front elected A.K.Anthony as its leader and he assumed the office of the Chief Minister on 27<sup>th</sup> April, 1977.

There was another election of the Assembly in 1980 in which the CPM and its allies scored a resounding victory. It captured over two-thirds of the seats in the Assembly. After this a new coalition Ministry headed by E.K.Nayanar assumed the office on 25<sup>th</sup> January, 1980 which remained in office till December, 1981 when a new coalition Ministry was formed under the Chief Ministership of Karunakaran. However, the new ministry could not remain in office for long and mutual bickerings brought about its downfall<sup>3</sup>. Consequently, the President's rule was imposed upon the state.

In May, 1982 the elections to the Assembly of Kerala were held along with other State Assemblies. The Congress (I) led United Democratic Front was able to score 77 seats in a House of 140 members, while the Left Democratic Front led by CPM could secure only 63 seats. Consequently, a United Democratic Front Ministry under K.Karunakaran was formed. The Ministry contained 4 representatives of Congress each from Congress (Antony), the Congress (Joseph) and Kerala Congress (Mani Group) and one each from Janata Party, Socialist Republican Party, Revolutionary Socialist Party (Shreekantan) and Praja Socialist Party. Since then Kerala has alternative coalitions

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<sup>3</sup> R.C.Agarwal, Op.Cit. p. 140

between the Chief Minister of the Indian National Congress and of the Communist Party of India (Marxist). Presently, the coalition of the Left Democratic Front government has been in power since 2016.

### **3.2: West Bengal**

The coalition politics in West Bengal also started after the 4<sup>th</sup> General Elections of 1967. After this election the Congress was not able to obtain absolute majority. No other single party emerged to replace the Congress before 1967<sup>4</sup>. As all the parties were anxious that Congress should not form the government, they proceeded to form a United Front with a 18-point programme. Ajoy Mukherjee was unanimously elected as the leader of the United Front and was sworn in as Chief Minister on 2<sup>nd</sup> March, 1967. Soon serious differences developed amongst the constituents of United Front on the question of handling of industrial and agrarian disputes, food policies, threat to law and order arising from them. Consequently, the common programme which had been chalked out was put in cold storage. At that time Jyoti Basu was the Deputy Chief Minister and leader of the Communist Party (Marxist) in West Bengal. The Communists tried to capture the key positions and fit their own men there. They placed their own men above law and order and soon started condemning other rightist constituents of the Front by saying that they had nothing different to offer than the Congress. Under these circumstances, it is said that Ajoy Mukherjee started secret negotiations with Mrs. Indira

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<sup>4</sup> Bidyut Chakrabarty, "The 1999 Lok Sabha Elections and the Left Front in West Bengal" in Mahendra Prasad Singh, Anil Mishra (Eds.) *Coalition Politics in India: Problems and Prospects* (Manohar, New Delhi, 2004). Pp. 155-185

Gandhi to form an alternative government with the help of Congress (I). On October 12, 1967 the Deputy Chief Minister Jyoti Basu alleged that the Union Government, Governor Dharam Vir and the State Inspector-General of Police had entered into desperate conspiracy to overthrow United front Ministry.

A new crisis developed on November 2, 1967 when Dr.P.C.Ghosh (an independent) Minister for Food, Supply and Agriculture tendered his resignation from the United Front Government and informed the Governor that he along with his 17 supporters had decided to withdraw their support from the Ministry of Ajoy Mukherjee. Fifteen of these legislators subsequently wrote to the Governor, Dharam Vir that they would support a new Ministry headed by Dr.Ghosh, K.N.Das Gupta, the leader of the Congress Legislature Party, who commanded the support of 130 MLAs in the House of 284 seats, also informed Dharam Vir in writing that his group would support such a government if and when formed.

### **3.2.1:Dismissal of the Ministry of Ajoy Mukherjee**

When these developments had been taking place, the Bengal Governor, Dharam Vir asked the Chief Minister Ajoy Mukherjee on 6<sup>th</sup> November to convene the session of the Assembly as soon as possible in order to test the strength of his Ministry and v]clear all doubts whether he enjoyed the majority or not. But the Chief Minister replied that the Ministers were busy with other commitments, the defectors had returned to his fold and he would convene the Assembly on 18<sup>th</sup> December, 1967. Consequently, Dharam Vir dismissed Ajoy Mukherjee's Government on 23<sup>rd</sup> November and appointed

Dr.P.C.Ghosh as Chief Minister. Ajoy Mukherjee launched a Civil Disobedience Movement on 18<sup>th</sup> December, 1967 which became violent resulting in burning of buses, trains and cars and bomb attacks on police patrols, beating of pressmen and destruction of private property. About three thousand people responsible for various crimes were arrested but the law and order situation deteriorated considerably.

The mid-term elections to the West Bengal Legislative Assembly was held on 9<sup>th</sup> February, 1969, in which the CPM-led United Front won the majority. Though in the new Assembly of 280, United front commanded the strength of 156 members, differences cropped up over the issue of the leadership of the party. Jyoti Basu, being the leader of the largest group wanted the leadership of United Front but other groups were not ready to do it. Ultimately after prolonged negotiations it was decided that Ajoy Mukherjee shall be the Chief Minister and Jyoti Basu was given the portfolio of Home with charge of Police Department. The new government assumed office on 25<sup>th</sup> February 1969 and the same day President's rule was revoked.

Confrontation between the Chief Minister and Jyoti Basu occurred on many issues. On 4<sup>th</sup> February, 1970 the Chief Minister spoke with anguish on the floor of the Assembly and remarked that the United Front ministry had done many things which were 'barbarous and uncivilized'<sup>5</sup>. At last when the Chief Minister realised that things were beyond his control, he tendered his resignation to the Governor, S.S.Dhawan on 16<sup>th</sup> March, 1970. After this the Deputy Chief Minister, Jyoti Basu staked his claim to

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<sup>5</sup> Ibid., 6 February 1970. p.1

form an alternative government, being the leader of the largest single party but the Governor asked the leaders of other political parties to let him know the reason why Basu should not be allowed to form an alternative government. Thereupon, ten parties comprising 165 Assembly members wrote to the Governor that they were opposed to the formation of a ministry by CPM only. After this the President's rule was imposed and Assembly dissolved.

Election to the State Assembly was held on 10<sup>th</sup> March, 1971 due to the persistent demand of the CPM and other parties. Once again no single party was able to achieve absolute majority.

### **3.2.2: Ajoy Mukherjee again forms Ministry**

Both the Congress Party and CPM-led United Left Front staked their claims to form the government but the governor told each party that he would not recommend the lifting of the President's rule unless he was quite sure that any of them could command absolute majority. After prolonged negotiations ultimately Democratic Front under Ajoy Mukherjee was able to assure the Governor of its majority in the House and Ajoy Mukherjee was invited to form the government on 2 April 1971 and the President's rule was lifted. The Congress also agreed to join the Ministry but alas !this Ministry also could not stay in office for long. Due to differences within Bangla Congress some members left the government after two months and thus bringing its strength at par with the Opposition.

In the meantime a conflict between East and West Pakistan had taken place on the question of creating independent Bangladesh, as Sheikh Mujibur-Rehman was demanding the same. The West Pakistan military was making all types of atrocities and lakhs of refugees had poured into West Bengal from East Pakistan (East Bengal). This created all types of problems for West Bengal government. Ajoy Mukherjee soon realised that with Assembly evenly divided, he would not ' be able to cope with this huge problem and run the administration smoothly, therefore, he recommended to the Governor the dissolution of the Assembly and the same was done on 25<sup>th</sup> June, 1971. His Ministry decided 'not to remain in office even as a care-taker government and he resigned on 28th June. On the advice of the Governor, the President proclaimed the Central rule again in the State on the next day.

### **3.2.3: Election of March 1972: Congress Ministry installed.**

The election in the state was again held in March, 1972. The state was under President's rule then. The significant result of the election was that the Congress was able to gain absolute majority in the Assembly, so there was no need to form a coalition government. Therefore, a Congress Ministry headed by Siddharth Shankar Ray was formed which stayed in office for a full term of five years. These years included the years of Internal Emergency also. After the lifting of emergency, the state went to the polls again in June, 1977.



#### **3.2.4: Election of June 1977: The CPM comes into power**

The significant outcome of the poll was that the CPM was able to obtain absolute majority in the House, so there was no need of any coalition government. Therefore, a CPM government headed by Jyoti Basu assumed the office and continued to rule the state even after the re-emergence of Congress (I) government at the Centre because the Legislative Assembly of West Bengal was not dissolved. Since then the CPM ruled the state for the next 34 years until it was ousted from power by All India Trinamool Congress (AITC) in 2011 under the leadership of Mamata Banerjee<sup>6</sup>.

#### **3.3: Punjab**

After the 4th General Elections on 8th March 1967, Gurnam Singh formed a coalition Ministry. The experiment of a coalition government, however, did not succeed because cracks began to appear soon as the partners had been drawn from various political parties having different ideologies. On November 22, 1967 the Punjab Assembly met for its winter session and on the same day Lachhman Singh Gill, the Irrigation and Power Minister (Akali Dal) announced that he and fifteen other members of the ruling United Front had left it and formed a new party known as Punjab Janata Party. This development reduced the Gurnam Singh Ministry to minority and he tendered his resignation to the Governor recommending at the same time the dissolution of the House. He also wrote to President Dr. Zakir Hussain to hold a mid-term poll. In a

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<sup>6</sup> <https://m.economictimes.com/news/politics-and-nation/election-results-2011-mamata-creates-history-in-west-bengal-jayalalithaa-to-be-cm-again/articleshow/8290563.cms> (Retrieved on 21.10.2019)

statement to the press, Gurnam Singh alleged that the Congress was engaged in a game of political corruption and planned conspiracy at the highest level.

### **3.3.1: Lachhman Singh Gill forms the Ministry.**

The Governor did not abide by the advice of the outgoing Chief Minister as he thought that ordering of new election after such a short time would be only a waste of money. In the meanwhile, the Congress had extended to support to Lachhman Singh Gill, leader of the United Punjab Janata Party and on 27 November (1967) he was sworn in as Chief Minister. After sometime, the Punjab Congress became divided on this issue whether to extend support to the Gill Ministry or not. A large number of Congressmen held the view that instead of supporting the Gill Ministry, the Congress should form its own government and pleaded for the withdrawal of support to Gill Ministry. Ultimately the Congress on 21<sup>st</sup> August, 1968 withdrew its support from the Gill Ministry. Lachhman Singh Gill's ministry was reduced to minority and submitted his resignation. Thereafter, the state was placed under Presidential rule on 23<sup>rd</sup> August<sup>7</sup>. The Assembly was dissolved. Mid-term elections were held in February, 1969 in Punjab.

### **3.3.2: Akali-dominated Coalition Ministry**

The Akali Dal elected Gurnam Singh as its leader and with the support of Jana Sangh, as its junior partner formed the Ministry on 17<sup>th</sup> February, 1969. After sometime differences arose among the Akali leaders on many issues. The Akali leadership decided to remove Gurnam Singh from leadership of the Legislature Party. After this, Prakash Singh Badal was elected as the leader of the Akali Dal in the Punjab legislature. Though

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<sup>7</sup> R.C.Agarwal, Op.Cit. p.140

the Congress Party extended its support to Gurnam Singh and he claimed the support of 54 members in House of 104 members and wrote to the then Governor D.C. Pavate accordingly, yet he could not prove his strength. Badal also staked his claim to form the government and was able to prove his strength. Therefore, the Governor asked Gurnam Singh to tender his resignation which he did in March-1970. On the following day, a three-member Ministry headed by Prakash Singh Badal was sworn in. A few days later Jana Sangh offered to join. Consequently, a coalition government was formed. After sometime 18 supporters of Gurnam Singh also joined the party of Chief Minister. In this way, the position of Badal Ministry became stronger. However, in November 1970 sixteen MLAs decided to withdraw their support from Badal Government on the question of the large size of the Ministry (Its strength was 27 at that time), and he was left with only 39 supporters in a House of 104 members<sup>8</sup>. On 13<sup>th</sup> June, 1971 Badal tendered his resignation. Governor Pavate found that due to the game of defection, the stable government was not possible. Therefore he recommended the President's rule in the state which was imposed after two days.

### **3.3.3: Elections of 1972.**

The state went to the polls in March, 1972. As a result of this election the Congress Party was able to obtain absolute majority. A government headed by Giani Zail Singh assumed office on 18<sup>th</sup> March, 1972. With this ended the era of coalition governments in the Punjab and the State enjoyed a ministerial stability. The Ministry completed its full term. Elections were again held in June, 1977. By that time a big

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<sup>8</sup> D.C.Gupta, Op.Cit. Pp.505-507

change had occurred on the political horizon of India. The Janata Government had come to power at the Centre on March 24, 1977 and completely routed the Congress.

### **3.3.4: Akali Dal forms coalition government with Janata Party**

Though the Akali Dal had secured absolute majority in the House and it was in a position to form the government all alone, but it decided to have a coalition government with Janata Party in the Punjab because Janata Government at the Centre had included two representatives of the Akali Dal in March, 1977. The Janata Government at the Centre fell on 15<sup>th</sup> July, 1979 because of infighting and mutual bickerings. After that Charan Singh formed the government with the help of YB. Chavan, leader of the Congress Party but he was not able to face the Lok Sabha in August and win its confidence. Therefore, he resigned and recommended the dissolution of the Lok Sabha. The President (Sanjiv Reddy) dissolved the sixth Lok Sabha and elections were held in the first week of January, 1980.

### **3.3.5: President dissolves the Assemblies of nine states on the advice of Mrs. Indira Gandhi.**

Following her victory in 1980 election, Indira Gandhi advised the President, Neelam Sanjiv Reddy to dissolve the assemblies of nine states on 17<sup>th</sup> February, 1980, where the non-Congress governments were ruling. Therefore, the President dissolved the assemblies of the following states on the advice of the Prime Minister<sup>9</sup>: (1) Punjab (2) U.P. (3) Bihar (4) Madhya Pradesh (5) Gujarat (6) Orissa (7) Maharashtra (8) Rajasthan

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<sup>9</sup> Himanshu Roy, "Party System and Coalition Politics in Indian States" in Mahendra Prasad Singh, Anil Mishra (Eds.) *Coalition Politics in India: Problems and Prospects* (Manohar, New Delhi, 2004). Pp. 137-153

(9) Tamil Nadu. Therefore, the Akali-Janata coalition headed by Prakash Singh Badal could not complete its five-year term.

The state of Punjab witnessed coalition politics in the same way as other states did during the seventies and eighties. Even during BJP-led NDA under AB Vajpayee, the Akali Dal was heading the coalition in Punjab along with the BJP. Further, the Akali Dal continued to forge its alliance with the BJP during NDA-II under Narendra Modi. However, the Akalis lost to the Congress party in 2017 election and Capt. Amarinder Singh became the Chief Minister, this being his second stint in the office.

### **3.4: Bihar**

In Bihar also the experiment in the coalition government started after the election of 1967<sup>10</sup>. As a result of the election of 1967, the Congress secured 128 seats in a House of 318 and naturally refused to form the ministry. After this Mahamaya Prasad formed a coalition government on 5<sup>th</sup> March 1967 consisting of the Jana Sangh, Jan Kranti Dal (JKD), SSP, PSP on 25<sup>th</sup> August, 1967. B.P. Mandal, SSP Minister resigned from the government and formed a separate group called the Soshit Dal. On 25<sup>th</sup> January, 1968, the Congress and Soshit Dal brought forth a no confidence motion against the Ministry in the house which was adopted by 163 votes to 150. Therefore, Mahamaya Prasad Sinha had to resign and United Front coalition could not last even for a single year.

After this Mahesh Prasad Sinha, leader of the Congress Party was invited to form the government but he declined and informed the Governor that he would support a

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<sup>10</sup> D.C.Gupta, Op.Cit.Pp.526-527

government formed by B.P. Mandal. Thereupon, B.P. Mandal was invited to form the government and he was sworn in as Chief Minister on 1<sup>st</sup> February, 1968. Even after this Bihar could not enjoy government stability for long because 15 Congress MLAs led by Bhola Nath Paswan Shastri (a former Minister) withdrew their support from the Mandal government. Encouraged by these defections the United Front which was in opposition then, brought forth a no confidence motion against the Ministry of Mandal and the same was carried by 165 votes to 148 on 18<sup>th</sup> March, 1968. Therefore, Mandal had to tender his resignation. This second Ministry lasted only for 47 days and this was the 2<sup>nd</sup> fall of the Ministry after the 4<sup>th</sup> General Election.

After this Bhola Shastri formed the government with the support of Binodanand Jha (Chief Minister 1961-63), a new party called the Lok Tantrik Congress Dal (LTCDD) and the United Front elected him as the leader. So on 22<sup>nd</sup> March, 1968 he formed the government. Later on Jana Sangh and left wing parties also joined the government when a compromise about the agrarian policy was struck on May 1, 1968. On the same day 18 of the 20 MLAs belonging to BKD led by Kamakshya Narain Singh (Raja of Ramgarh) withdrew his support because he was not given berth in the Ministry. Therefore, in order to win the support of the Raja of Ramgarh, the Chief Minister Shastri made him the Minister of Public Works Department and his brother as Forest Minister but the Raja wanted him to become the Deputy Chief Minister. Apparently the Chief Minister could not accommodate him to such an extent. After this the Raja started his scheme to cross the floor and bring no confidence motion against the Chief Minister. Apprehending that this might happen, Bhola Nath Shastri wrote to the Governor all about it and conveyed

to him his decision to resign. At the same time he recommended the dissolution of the Assembly. The Governor, upon the receipt of the letter, accepted the resignation of the Chief Minister and invited Mahesh Prasad Sinha, leader of the Congress Party to form an alternative government but Sinha declined the offer because the Congress High Command was not in favour of forming a government that would depend upon the support of the Raja of Ramgarh. Under these circumstances the Governor, Nityanand Kanungo recommended to President on 27<sup>th</sup> June 1968 the imposition of the President's rule and dissolution of the Assembly which was done on 29<sup>th</sup> June.

The mid-term poll was held on 9<sup>th</sup> February, 1969. The results of 317 out of 318 were declared because the election in one constituency was countermanded due to the death of a candidate. The Congress was able to gain 118 out of 317 seats.

#### **3.4.1: Coalition Government**

No single party was able to secure a clear-cut majority. Therefore, a coalition government was the only alternative but the fundamental differences between the Jana Sangh and CPI made the formation of non-Congress ministry impossible. Hence, the Congress had to deviate from its earlier policy announced on 27<sup>th</sup> February, 1967 and its leader Hari Har Singh, who was able to win the support of 162 MLAs including the BKD, Soshit Dal, Hul Jharkhand, the Janata Party, Swatantra Party and six independents formed the government on 26<sup>th</sup> February, 1969. However, the government soon ran into difficulties because of internal bickerings and the government was defeated on the floor of the House on June 20, 1969 on the budget. Therefore, Hari Har Singh tendered his

resignation. After two days Bhola Paswan Shastri, leader of the Lok Tantrik Congress formed the government with the help of BKD and Jharkhand Party. After some time due to the bickerings of the constituents Shastri lost his majority and resigned. As no alternative government was possible immediately, therefore the Governor recommended the Presidential rule in the state which was proclaimed on 4<sup>th</sup> July, 1969. The Assembly was not dissolved but was suspended in the hope that alternative government might be possible after some time.

In October-November 1969, there was a split in the Congress at the Centre. Daroga Prasad Rai was elected as the leader of Bihar Congress (V) Legislature Party and he claimed the support of 71 MLAs. Rai submitted, on 13<sup>th</sup> February 1970, to the Governor a list of 173 of the 316 MLAs who had promised him their support. The CPI, BSP, BKD, Soshit Dal and Jharkhand Party agreed to support Daroga Rai. Therefore, the Governor invited Daroga Rai to form the Ministry and on 16<sup>th</sup> February, 1970 a coalition Ministry was sworn in. The seven-month old President's rule was also lifted on the same day. The Ministry also ran into serious troubles after some time because a section of Lok Tantrik Dal split on May 26, 1970 and PSP split on 24<sup>th</sup> June and a sizeable section of his supporters withdrew their support and the Ministry fell on 18<sup>th</sup> December, 1970 when a no-confidence motion was adopted against it by 164 votes to 146. Thus, the seventh Ministry after the 4th General Election fell from office.



### **3.4.2: Karpoori Thakur formed the ministry**

After this the Chairman of SSP, Karpoori Thakur was able to muster the support of 171 MLAs and he informed the Governor accordingly. Bhola Paswan Shastri presented a counter-claim that he was in a position to form the Ministry since he enjoyed the support of 167 MLAs but the Governor invited Karpoori Thakur to form the government. So the new Ministry assumed office on 22<sup>nd</sup> December, 1970 but its size went upto 252. Those who could not find berth in the Ministry became critical. The Congress Party, CPI, and PSP, the BKD, the Jharkhand and Hul Jharkhand formed a sort of alliance-Progressive Legislature Front against the government and began to talk of toppling it by bringing in a motion of no-confidence. But before this could happen, Karpoori Thakur resigned on June 1, 1971. After some time the Governor invited Bhola Paswan Shastri to form a government. On 2<sup>nd</sup> June, 1971 he took the oath of the office of Chief Ministership for the third time but again the partners fell apart and on 27<sup>th</sup> December, 1971, Paswan Shastri submitted his resignation. The Assembly was dissolved on 29<sup>th</sup> December and President V.V. Giri proclaimed the President's rule under Article 356<sup>11</sup>. General elections were held in Bihar in March, 1972. As a result of these elections the Congress (I) won a clear-cut majority and formed the government.

### **3.4.3: Congress (I) formed Ministry**

The Congress Legislature Party elected Kedar Pandey as its leader, so on 19<sup>th</sup> March 1972, he was sworn in as the Chief Minister of Bihar. In the elections of 1977 the Janata Party was able to secure huge majority and end the Congress rule.

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<sup>11</sup> D.C.Gupta. Op.Cit. Pp.528-530

#### **3.4.4: Congress comes back to power in 1980**

The Janata Government at the Centre could not survive for a long time due to inner bickerings and it fell on July 15, 1979. After this care-taker government of Charan Singh continued for a few months. The elections to the 7<sup>th</sup> Lok Sabha were held in January, 1980. Indira Gandhi won a massive mandate again and she was sworn in as Prime Minister on 14<sup>th</sup> January, 1980. She recommended the dissolution of 9 state assemblies on 17<sup>th</sup> February, 1980 including that of Bihar. The non-Congress governments were ruling those states.

In three constituencies the elections were countermanded due to the deaths of the candidates. The Congress continued to rule the state till March 1985 when the elections to the Assembly were held again. The Congress was able to secure an absolute majority again and the Congress Ministry assumed the office on 12<sup>th</sup> March, 1985, under Bindeshwari Dubey. So the politics of coalition had ended which brought stability in Bihar from 1967 to 1972.

#### **3.5: Uttar Pradesh**

Uttar Pradesh, the biggest state of India, is the mirror of national politics. The political developments taking place at the national scene are very much reflected in the state. Coalition politics is also no exception, especially in 1967 when the entire country was plunged into coalition era. The state of Uttar Pradesh witnessed coalition government in 1967 when Charan Singh formed the government on April 3, 1967. The

United Front or SVD<sup>12</sup> government of Charan Singh ran into many difficulties after some time. On 22<sup>nd</sup> November 1967, Food and Civil Supplies Minister Jharkhand Rai and Deputy Home Minister Rustam Satin, both belonging to the CPI, resigned in protest against the non-fulfillment of their demand for the immediate release of employees detained under the Preventive Detention Act and the withdrawal of all cases against political workers in connection with a violent agitation in 1966. On 5<sup>th</sup> January, 1968 three SSP Ministers and two Deputy Ministers resigned on the ground that the government had failed to implement the common SVD programme. The Jana Sangh and SSP members of the Assembly and UP severely criticised the Charan Singh's government for using force against the students who demonstrated against the language policy of the Union Government in December 1967. Fed up by this criticism and non-cooperative attitude of some of the constituents, Charan Singh tendered his resignation to the Governor on 17<sup>th</sup> February, 1968. While tendering his resignation, the Chief Minister also handed over to the Governor a resolution of the UP cabinet recommending the dissolution of the Assembly and holding mid-term elections if the SVD failed to elect a new leader unanimously. The new SVD leader, Harish Chandra Singh as well as C.B. Gupta, leader of the Congress Party were not able to convince the Governor about the possibility of forming a stable government, so first of all here commended to the President Dr. Zakir Hussain on 25<sup>th</sup> February 1968 about the suspension of the Assembly

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<sup>12</sup> Samyukta Vidhayak Dal was a coalition of parties formed in several north Indian states after the 1967 assembly elections. It was made up of the Bharatiya Kranti Dal, the Samyukta Socialist Party, the Praja Socialist Party, the Jana Sangh. This coalition opposed the Indian National Congress party that had hitherto single-handedly dominated Indian politics. See [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Samyukta\\_Vidhayak\\_Dal](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Samyukta_Vidhayak_Dal) for details. (Retrieved on 25.10.2019)

and later on about the dissolution of the Assembly on 10th April. The Union Cabinet, consequently advised Dr.Zakir Hussain to proclaim the President's rule and dissolve the Assembly<sup>13</sup>. The President did so on 15<sup>th</sup> April.

### **3.5.1: Mid-term Elections of February 1969**

Fresh elections were held on 9<sup>th</sup> February 1969 and the Congress secured an absolute majority. Four independent members later on joined the Congress party, thus the strength of the party in the legislature was further strengthened. After this C.B. Gupta, leader of the Congress Party formed the government on 26<sup>th</sup> February 1969.

### **3.5.2: Split**

In October-November 1969 there was a split in the Congress Party. Indira Gandhi's Congress was called Congress (R) and Nijlingappa's Congress was called Congress (O). Nijlingappa was the President of the Congress at that time. The split took place on the question of the Presidential candidate. The Congress had sponsored Neelam Sanjeev Reddy as the President and Indira Gandhi had supported the candidature of V.V. Giri, an independent candidate. V.V. Giri was elected and this infuriated President Nijlingappa who expelled Indira Gandhi from Congress. Indira Gandhi then formed a separate Congress of her own. After this the followers of Indira Gandhi elected Kamalapati Tripathi as their leader and withdrew support from the Ministry of C.B. Gupta on November 20, 1969 because C.B. Gupta had adhered to Congress (O).After

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<sup>13</sup> S.K.Jha, "Coalition Politics in Uttar Pradesh' in Mahendra Prasad Singh, Anil Mishra (Eds.) Coalition Politics in India: Problems and Prospects, (Manohar, New Delhi, 2004) Pp.187

this Kamlapati Tripathi opened talks with Charan Singh, the BKD leader in order to provide an alternative government.

### **3.5.3: Coalition of Congress (R) and BKD**

Charan Singh formed the government on 17<sup>th</sup> February 1970 with the help of Congress (R). Thereupon the Congress (O) President Nijlingappa and other leaders of the alliance, namely the Jana Sangh and SSP bitterly criticised the action of the Governor. Describing Charan Singh as a ‘King of defectors’ and complaining that the politicians in India had lost honesty, integrity and political morality, Nijlingappa alleged that the Governor had acted under pressure from New Delhi. He said that every Indian ought to “hang his head in shame” over what had happened in Uttar Pradesh<sup>14</sup>. On 21<sup>st</sup> March 1970 the Opposition parties brought forth a censure motion against the Ministry but ‘it was lost by a majority of 67 because only 169 voted in its favour and 239 voted against it.

On August 28, 1970, the relation between the BKD and the Congress reached a breaking point when the BKD members in Parliament voted against the Congress Bill for the abolition of privy purses and other privileges of the Indian Princes. On September 8, Kamlapati Tripathi wrote to Charan Singh that after this voting of BKD members, it was no longer possible for his organisation to support the BKD-led government.

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<sup>14</sup> Hindustan Times, New Delhi, 18 February, 1970, p.1

#### **3.5.4: An unprecedented constitutional crisis in the state of U.P.**

On 24<sup>th</sup> September 1970 the Chief Minister asked 13 out of 26 Congress Ministers to resign. When they refused to resign, he requested the Governor to dismiss them. On the other hand, Tripathi also withdrew his support on the same day from the Ministry of Charan Singh and wrote to the Governor that Charan Singh had lost his majority and he should be asked to resign. On 26<sup>th</sup> September the leaders of Congress (O), Jana Sangh, SSP and Swatantra Party wrote to the Governor that they had decided to support Charan Singh and he commanded the majority in the House. They also requested the Governor to dismiss the Congress (R) ministers. Charan Singh confirmed the support of the 4 parties alliance and declared that the portfolios held by the Congress Ministers would be held by him. Thus an unprecedented constitutional crisis was created in the State. Both sides sought the favour of the Governor and interpreted his powers in diametrically opposed ways. The Governor, instead of favouring any political party sought the opinions of the Attorney-General Niren De and also the Advocate-General K.L.Mishra on this constitutional issue, Niren De recommended that Charan Singh be asked to resign and in the event of his not doing so, he should be dismissed. Without waiting for the opinion of the Advocate-General, Gopal Reddy, the Governor asked Charan Singh to resign. But Charan Singh refused to resign and quoted the opinion of the Advocate-General which was in his favour. But the President, who was on tour in USSR then, signed the Proclamation in Kiev (USSR) on 1<sup>st</sup> October, 1970 imposing the Central rule in the State. The courier returned to New Delhi next day and President's rule was proclaimed in the State on 2<sup>nd</sup> October.

### **3.5.5: SVD leader T.N. Singh becomes the Chief Minister and the President's rule is lifted.**

However, when President's rule became a reality, the Organisational Congress or Congress (O), Jana Sangh, SSP and Swatantra Party agreed to form a "United Legislature Party" or SVD (Sanyukta Vidhayak Dal). On 5<sup>th</sup> October they were joined by the BKD also. The SVD claimed the support of 242 of the 425 members of the Assembly and elected T.N. Singh as their leader. After this they requested the Governor the claim of T.N. Singh to form the Ministry. Tripathi contested the claim of T.N. Singh to form the Ministry, and he wrote to the Governor that only the Congress as the largest single party in the Assembly, was "entitled under the well-recognised and well-established norms of parliamentary democracy to form a Ministry." However, the Governor was convinced that only T.N. Singh commanded majority, therefore he wrote to the President accordingly. He invited T.N. Singh to form the Ministry on 17<sup>th</sup> October and he was sworn in as the Chief Minister on the same day. Then the President's rule was also revoked. After some days the Ministry was expanded and its total strength went upto 53. Its size was larger than any other Ministry previously formed in India either at the Centre or in any State. T.N. Singh was not a member of the State Assembly but only that of the Rajya Sabha. Therefore, he sought election from Maniram constituency on 5<sup>th</sup> January, 1971 but he was defeated by the Congress candidate. After his defeat he offered to resign his Chief Ministership but he was persuaded to continue in his office by all the constituents of SVD except BKD till the Lok Sabha elections to be held in the first week of March, 1972. The Lok Sabha elections were held as scheduled and the Congress (R)

was able to secure 73 out of 85 Lok Sabha seats. Following the defeat of SVD in the Lok Sabha elections there were large-scale defections from the SVD of T.N. Singh and the strength of the Congress group in the Assembly of U.P. rose from 153 to 212. On 30<sup>th</sup> March 1971, an Opposition amendment to the official motion of thanks to the Governor was adopted by 229 votes to 184. Thereupon T.N. Singh immediately tendered his resignation to the Governor.

### **3.5.6: Congress Ministries again.**

The coalition experiment in U.P. came to an end in U.P. on 30<sup>th</sup> March, 1970. After this Tripathi, Bahuguna and N.D. Tiwari remained Congress Chief Ministers till June 1977 when Janata Party captured power. Janata Government fell at the Centre on 15<sup>th</sup> July, 1979. After this, Chowdhry Charan Singh remained care-taker Prime Minister till 13<sup>th</sup> January, 1980. However, Indira Gandhi won the elections to the Seventh Lok Sabha in the 1<sup>st</sup> week of January, 1980. She became the Prime Minister again on 14<sup>th</sup> January, 1980. Upon her recommendation the President Neelam Sanjiv Reddy dissolved the 9 State Assemblies on 17<sup>th</sup> February, 1980. The ministry of Mr. N.D. Tiwari continued for two terms more except for a brief spell.

He, however, lost the elections in December, 1989. Mulayam Singh Yadav became the Chief Minister of U.P. on December 5, 1989. However, the party of Mulayam Singh Yadav lost the election to the U.P. Assembly which were held along with 10<sup>th</sup> Lok Sabha General Elections. After that Kalyan Singh of BJP became the Chief Minister of U.P. on 24<sup>th</sup> June, 1991 till 1993.



### **3.6: Haryana**

The State of Haryana came into existence on 1<sup>st</sup> November, 1966 after the bifurcation of the Punjab into Punjabi and Hindi areas. Haryana consists of Hindi areas. After the formation of Haryana, Bhagwat Dayal Sharma became the first Chief Minister. First elections in the state took place in February, 1967 and in a House of 81 Congress party secured 48 seats and thus it got absolute majority and Sharma was again sworn in as the Chief Minister of the state on March 10. The position of other parties was as follows: Jana Sangh 12; Swatantra Party 3; Republican Party 2; Independents 16. But soon differences cropped up in the Ruling Party over the formation of the Ministry. It was alleged by the opponents of Bhagwat Dayal Sharma that he was accommodating persons of his own caste in the Ministry, 13 of them left the Congress and they formed a new party known as Haryana Congress and elected Rao Birendra Singh as their leader. About this the Opposition parties decided to collaborate with the dissidents and formed United Front. The Congress was reduced to minority and Bhagwat Dayal Sharma tendered his resignation.

#### **3.6.1: First SVD Ministry in Haryana**

After that the Governor B.N.Chakaravarty invited Rao Birendra Singh to form the Ministry on 22<sup>nd</sup> March. Thus the first SVD or United Front came into existence in Haryana on 24<sup>th</sup> March 1967, but soon differences developed among the members of the SVD and some of them alleged that the influence of Jana Sangh was growing in the Ministry. Some of the colleagues also charged the Rao Ministry of corrupt practices. The

MLAs began horse trading and Devi Lal, an important leader of the Haryana Congress claimed that he enjoyed majority. As there were frequent floor-crossings by MLAs, so Rao Birendra Singh in order to have majority began to offer berth to the MLAs in the Ministry or some other kind of allurements. On 17<sup>th</sup> November, 1967 Devi Lal announced that he had decided to merge his party with the Congress, thereby strength of the Congress greatly increased. One Jana Sangh member also defected to the Congress on November 20. This reduced the government into minority. As a result the Governor dismissed Rao Ministry and placed the state under Presidential rule. Rao Birendra Singh on the other hand maintained that he still had the majority of one member but the Governor justified his action on the ground that frequent crossings of the floor by MLAs had brought disrepute to the government and the state.

### **3.6.2: Mid-term Poll and Defections**

The state had mid-term poll in May 1968. The position of the various parties as a result of this election was as follows<sup>15</sup>: Congress 48; Vishal Haryana Party 13; Jana Sangh 7; Swatantra Party 2; Republican Party 1; Bharatiya Kranti Dal 1, Independents 9. As the Congress had secured an absolute majority in a House of 81, so its leader Bansi Lal was sworn in as Chief Minister. Opposition Parties elected Rao Birendra Singh as their leader but soon defections from both sides started. On 9<sup>th</sup> September 1968, six Opposition MLAs defected to the Congress, thus further augmenting its strength. But on 9<sup>th</sup> December, 15 Congress MLAs led by Bhagwat Dayal Sharma left the Congress and joined the Opposition. This led the Opposition to claim that it enjoyed majority and

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<sup>15</sup> R.C.Agarwal, Op.Cit.p.150

should be invited to form the government but after a few days some of the members of the Opposition joined the government again. Frequent floor-crossings by MLAs made the working of the Assembly very difficult. Ultimately on the recommendation of the Chief Minister, the Governor dissolved the Assembly on 21<sup>st</sup> January, 1972.

### **3.6.3: Congress Ministry in Haryana again**

Three months later the elections were held; the Congress secured an absolute majority. The Congress formed the Ministry on 14<sup>th</sup> March 1972 under Chowdhry Bansi Lal. The State experienced a strong government under his leadership and he revolutionised agriculture and nationalised roadways. He kept rapport with Indira Gandhi and his son late Sanjay Gandhi. Later on he rose into the favour of Indira Gandhi. Consequently, he was given the defence portfolio before 1975 and in his place his own man Benarsi Das Gupta was made the Chief Minister of Haryana. The Ministry continued till April 1977.

### **3.6.4: Janata Party Captures Power in 1977**

Janata Party was swept into power at the Centre in March 1977. After this on the recommendation of the Prime Minister Morarji Desai, the Assemblies of 9 states were dissolved on April 30, 1977 by the Acting President B.D. Jatti. In the elections of 1977, the Congress suffered a complete rout in Haryana like other states and Janata Party scored a resounding victory.

Therefore, the Janata Party formed the Government under the leadership of Choudhry Devi Lal. Devi Lal remained Chief Minister for some time (nearly 1 year and

3 months) and after that Choudhry Bhajan Lal assumed the reins of the government. In spite of mutual bickerings, there was no coalition government in the state. In January 1980 the mid-term poll for the 7<sup>th</sup> Lok Sabha was held and Indira Gandhi was returned to power again at the Centre with a thumping majority. She was able to secure 351 seats out of 524 upto 9<sup>th</sup> January 1980. She was sworn in as the Prime Minister on 14<sup>th</sup> January 1980. She recommended the dissolution of 9 Assemblies to the President Mr. Neelam Sanjiva Reddy on 17<sup>th</sup> February 1980. Haryana Assembly was not dissolved at that time because Bhajan Lal had already defected to the Congress (I) with his whole cabinet and a large number of legislators. Therefore the Janata Government was converted into Congress (I) government and it continued till May 1982.

### **3.6.5: Elections of May, 1982.**

In May 1982 fresh elections were held. There was split vote. Congress got 36 seats while Lok Dal got 31 seats. Chowdhry Devi Lal was the leader of the Lok Dal. He was able to muster the support of BJP also, so he staked his claim to form the government. On the other hand Congress (I) leader Bhajan Lal also insisted that as a leader of the single majority party he should be given the chance. The Governor G.D. Tapase asked Devi Lal to prove his majority on 24<sup>th</sup> May, 1982 but before it could happen, he swore Bhajan Lal as the Chief Minister of Haryana on the evening of 23<sup>rd</sup> May. Next day Chowdhry Devi Lal manhandled the Governor at Raj Bhawan in Chandigarh. President Neelam Sanjiva Reddy expressed his unhappiness over the happenings in Haryana and other issues. He said, “my instructions were not obeyed”. 45 Opposition MLAs paraded before the President. CPI General Secretary Rajeshwar Rao

wrote to the President about the impropriety of the act of Governor. President also told Indira Gandhi about the impropriety of the act of the Governor. Bengal Chief Minister Jyoti Basu said that democracy had been butchered<sup>16</sup>. Vajpayee also met the President and expressed his shock over the conduct of the Governor. Tapasse, however, justified his conduct by saying on 31<sup>st</sup> May (1982) that he chose Bhajan Lal to curb defections. Raghukul TiIak, former Governor of Rajasthan who had been dismissed earlier, said that a farce was played at Chandigarh.

Bhajan Lal, however, was able to procure defections by offering various allurements to the Opposition MLAs and thus was able to swell the ranks of the Congress: He secured more than the absolute majority for the Congress in this way and imparted a quite stable Ministry to the state till 14<sup>th</sup> January, 1986. Whatever means he might have adopted to swell the ranks of the Congress but even his critics have to admit that there has been a rapid progress of the state in all fields since he assumed office. In the development of agriculture the position of the state comes second (after Punjab) in India. Per capita income is also above many states. Poverty is not so much visible in Haryana as it is seen in other states. It goes to the credit of Bhajan Lal that he took over more than 20 sick colleges under government control. No other Chief Minister has done so much for the benefit of teachers as he has done. The people were happier during his regime than that of Devi Lal or other former Chief Ministers.

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<sup>16</sup> D.C.Gupta, Op.Cit. p.535

Bhajan Lal continued as Chief Minister of Haryana till June 4, 1986 when he was asked to tender his resignation by the then Congress (I) President and Prime Minister. After that Rajiv Gandhi appointed Bansi Lal as Chief Minister or it can be said that the Congress Legislature Party was asked to elect Bansi Lal. After some time Bhajan Lal was given berth in the Union Cabinet. Chowdhry Bansi Lal was very strict and the Government officers who were appointed polling officers worked against him. Consequently, the Congress lost the election to the Haryana Assembly on 17<sup>th</sup> June, 1987.

### **3.6.6: Chowdhry Devi Lal, Others and Bhajan Lal become the Chief Ministers of Haryana**

After that Devi Lal became the Chief Minister of Haryana on 20<sup>th</sup> June, 1987. He secured 59 seats out of 90. He remained so till 1<sup>st</sup> December, 1989. On 2<sup>nd</sup> December, 1989 he took oath of Deputy Prime Ministership. After this his son, O.P. Chautala became the Chief Minister. However, Chautala resigned on 22<sup>nd</sup> May, 1990 owing to a directive of the Janata Dal leadership due to his complicity in the Mahem incidents. Next day, Banarsi Das Gupta was sworn in as Chief Minister of Haryana. On 27<sup>th</sup> May 1990, Chautala swept the polls of Derba Kalan (Hissar district). Next day BJP decided not to support the government. Banarsi Das Gupta was, however, informed by Ch. Devi Lal on 12<sup>th</sup> July, 1990 that the Janata Dal High Command wanted his resignation. Being a staunch loyalist, he at once resigned without verifying the facts from V.P. Singh, then Prime Minister. Consequently, Chautala again became Chief Minister on that day (1990) but he had to resign after a few days on 16<sup>th</sup> July owing to

strong criticism of other Janata Dal leaders, opposition, public and the media (newspapers). After that Hukam Singh became Chief Minister and continued so till President's rule was imposed on Haryana in April 1991. The Party of Hukam Singh was defeated in the polls which were held along with 10<sup>th</sup> Lok Sabha. Hukam Singh, himself was defeated from Dadri. The Congress won 51 seats out of 90 seats. Bhajan Lal was elected leader. He became the Chief Minister of Haryana on 23<sup>rd</sup> June 1991 for the third time.

### **3.7: Rajasthan**

Though after the 4<sup>th</sup> General Elections no party was able to obtain absolute majority in the House, yet it was saved from the experience of coalition government in the state. The Opposition Parties-Swatantra, Jana Sangh and SSP-formed an alliance and elected Maharawal of Dungarpur as their leader, while the Congress had 88 seats in the Assembly, so the formation of the government was possible only with co-operation of the independents. Congress Party elected Mohan Lal Sukhadia as its leader. The Opposition as well as the Congress staked its claim to form the government and both parties submitted a list of their supporters to the Governor Sampurnanand about their supporters<sup>17</sup>.

The Governor invited Mohan Lal Sukhadia to form the government on the plea that he was the leader of the largest party. This was highly resented by the Opposition and they took a procession at Jaipur. There were incidences of violence also in the city.

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<sup>17</sup> R.C.Agarwal, Op.Cit. p.153

The Opposition paraded its MLAs before the President. In the meanwhile on 12<sup>th</sup> March, 1967 Sukhadia informed the Governor that he was not prepared to form the government. The Governor, instead of giving the chance to the Opposition to form the government, recommended to the President the imposition of Central rule on the same day. The Opposition said that this was obviously done to accommodate Sukhadia on a later date when he would be in a position to form the government.

On March 15, 1967 the combined Opposition claimed that it had the support of 109 members whereas Sukhadia claimed that 94 members were with him. Since both lists contained some common names, therefore the Governor interviewed each MLA, obtained preference from them in writing. He was satisfied that Sukhadia enjoyed the support of the majority, therefore he invited him to form the government on April 28. Obviously that if Sukhadia enjoyed majority, then what was the need of waiting for April 28? In the view of the Opposition, the Governor did it only to enable Sukhadia to gain more time, so that he may create a majority behind him by procuring the support of independents. However, in spite of the protests of the Opposition, Sukhadia was given the chance to form the Ministry and he continued in office till 8<sup>th</sup> July, 1971 when he resigned and was succeeded by Barkat Ullah Khan. The Congress Ministry continued in office till July, 1972 when the elections to the State Assembly were held again. In that election the Congress secured more than two-third seats and formed a Ministry by itself. There was no question of forming a coalition government. The position continued till April 1977. After this on April 30, 1977 the Acting President B.D. Jatti dissolved the Assemblies of 9 states including Rajasthan on the recommendation of the Prime



Minister Morarji Desai. In this election the Janata Party was able to score an absolute majority in the House of 200 by scoring 148 seats. Therefore it formed the government. On 14<sup>th</sup> January 1980, Indira Gandhi was again returned to power. On 17<sup>th</sup> February 1980 the President dissolved the Assemblies of 9 states including that of Rajasthan. There were mostly Janata-ruled states. The elections to these Assemblies were held in June 1980. The Congress (I) secured 133 seats out of 200, so it formed the government. This Ministry continued uptill March, 1985 when elections were held again.

As the Congress (I) secured an absolute majority, so its leader Haridev Joshi became the Chief Minister in the 2<sup>nd</sup> week of March, 1985. It continued upto February, 1990.

### **3.7.1: Elections of February 27, 1990 and Experiment of Coalition Government**

The elections to the Rajasthan Assembly took place again on February 27, 1990. BJP-Janata Dal coalition headed by Bhairon Singh Shekhawat of BJP assumed office on March 4, 1990. BJP withdrew support on 23<sup>rd</sup> October, 1990 from V.P. Singh's government because Advani, then President of BJP was arrested at Samastipur (Bihar) who was going to Ayodhya on Rath Yatra. Even after the withdrawal of support by BJP at the Centre, there was split in the Janata Dal of Rajasthan and one section continued to support Shekhawat who enjoyed majority till April, 1992.

### **3.8: Madhya Pradesh**

The State of Madhya Pradesh also tasted the politics of coalition government after the Fourth General Elections in 1967<sup>18</sup>. In this election, Congress party under the leadership of DP Mishra got 167 seats and assumed office of Chief Minister.

The opposition parties formed a United Front to topple the Congress Government if and when possible. After the formation of the government, some dissident Congressmen charged the Chief Minister with “dictatorial rule, inefficiency and corruption” and over 30 of the Congress MLAs defected to the Opposition. During a Budget session on 19<sup>th</sup> July 1967 these Congressmen voted against the government. On the same day D.P. Mishra stated in a press conference that he would recommend dissolution of the Assembly and mid-term poll would be held. Fearing that this might not happen UDF (United Democratic Front) leaders met President Dr. Zakir Hussain and requested him not to dissolve the Assembly but give a chance to United Democratic Front as it commanded a majority, but the President did not accede to this request. On July 29, Mishra’s government was defeated on the education estimates by 153 votes to 137. The Chief Minister tendered the resignation of his Ministry the same day.

#### **3.8.1: Coalition Government of U.F.**

After this the Governor K.C. Reddy invited leader of the United Front Gobind Narain Singh. He enjoyed the support of Jana Sangh, the SSP, PSP, BKD, Krantikari Dal of Maharani Vijaya Raje Scindhia of Gwalior and the Congress defectors. He

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<sup>18</sup> R.C.Agarwal, Op.Cit.p.155

formed the Ministry on 30<sup>th</sup> July 1967 and took Ministers from all parties. On October 28, 1967 'the Congress Legislature Party elected Shyama Charan Shukla as its leader instead of D.P.Mishra. Soon Shyama Charan Shukla began to play manoeuvres in order to split the UDF and to obtain support of PSP and then form a government. Therefore in March 1968, he brought forth a no-confidence motion against the government of Gobind Narain Singh but was defeated on 30<sup>th</sup> March. Soon after that dissensions began to grow on the question of the abolition of land revenue and other matters. Two SSP members resigned on 22<sup>nd</sup> April 1968 over this issue. Four days later the seven Jana Sangh Ministers and Deputy Ministers resigned in order to protest against the award on the Rann of Kutch which went against India. However, later on these Ministers rejoined the government but soon fresh dissensions arose in the ranks of SVD or United Front and the Chief Minister resigned on 11<sup>th</sup> March 1969.

Fifteen days later Shyama Charan Shukla formed the government but his ministry became very large as he gave berth in the Ministry to every caste and section. For this he was bitterly criticised and after some time was replaced by P.C. Sethi who was Deputy Minister in the Union Cabinet.

### **3.8.2: The Elections of 1972- Congress Ministry again.**

In March 1972, 5<sup>th</sup> Assembly Election was held in Madhya Pradesh and out of 296 seats, the Congress secured 217 seats.

### **3.8.3: Elections of 1977-Janata Ministry.**

Therefore, the Congress Ministry continued in office till July 1977. When the elections were held again, Janata Party secured 229 seats out of 320 seats, so it formed the government.

### **3.8.4: Elections of 1980-Congress Ministry.**

Mid-term elections for the Seventh Lok Sabha took place in January, 1980. Indira Gandhi was again returned to power and sworn in as Prime Minister on 14<sup>th</sup> January 1980. On 17<sup>th</sup> February 1980 the President Neelam Sanjeeva Reddy dissolved the Assemblies of nine states including Madhya Pradesh. The results had been received in the 1<sup>st</sup> week of June, 1980. Congress (I) secured 246 seats out of 320, so it formed the government.

### **3.8.5: Elections of March, 1985.**

The Congress Ministry continued in office till March 1985. After that in the first week of March 1985, the state went to polls again when elections to 11 State Assemblies and one Union territory were held. The Congress (I) secured 250 seats out of 320, so the Congress Party formed Ministry under Moti Lal Vora, who was sworn as Chief Minister on 13<sup>th</sup> March, 1985.

### **3.8.6: BJP Captures Power**

The elections to the M.P. Assembly were held on February 27, 1990. BJP achieved absolute majority and its President Sunder Lal Patwa was sworn in as Chief

Minister of Madhya Pradesh on 5<sup>th</sup> March 1990. But, BJP had lost heavily i.e. 15 seats in M.P. 10<sup>th</sup> Lok Sabha Elections where its ministry had been established after the Assembly elections. In M.P. the Congress had got 8 seats in 1989 but this time (in the 10<sup>th</sup> Lok Sabha elections), it had secured 27 seats. The BJP had got 27 seats in December, 1989 (9<sup>th</sup> Lok Sabha elections) but this time it has got 12 seats only. Anyhow in spite of the reverses in Lok Sabha elections, its ministry worked well till April, 1992.

### **3.9. Odisha (formerly Orissa)**

Odisha also experienced coalition politics after the fourth General Elections of 1967. Swatantra Party and Jana Congress (a group of Congress dissidents) formed an alliance just before the Fourth General Elections. They fought the election as allies and secured 75 seats in a House of 140<sup>19</sup>. The party-wise position was as follows:

#### **3.9.1: Coalition Government in Odisha**

Voting in one constituency was postponed due to the death of a candidate. Combined leader of Swatantra Party and Jana Congress, R.N. Singh Dev formed a coalition government on 8<sup>th</sup> March, 1967. Both of these parties together had secured 75 seats. For some time both the parties worked smoothly on agreed policies and programmes. The Congress Party tried to detach the Jana Congress from the Swatantra Party and in the early January 1971, the Jana Congress withdrew its support from the Swatantra Party on the ground that Swatantra Party Ministers were indulging in corruption. The Governor, S.S. Ansari asked Singh Dev to win the confidence of the

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<sup>19</sup> R.C.Agarwal, Op.Cit. p.156

Assembly. Realising that this would not be possible, Singh Dev tendered his resignation on 9<sup>th</sup> January 1971. The Governor recommended the suspension of the Assembly and the introduction of President's rule which was done on 11<sup>th</sup> January 1971. As efforts to form an alternative government failed, therefore, the Assembly was dissolved 12 days later.

### **3.9.2: Coalition again**

Elections for a new Assembly were held on March 5, 1971 along with Lok Sabha. Voting in one constituency again could not be held due to the death of a candidate. This time again no party obtained absolute majority. Congress party emerged a single largest group with 51 seats followed by Swatantra 36 and Utkal Congress 23. The state was, therefore, to see coalition politics again. Utkal Congress of Biju Patnaik formed an alliance with Swatantra Party and Jharkhand Party (4 seats). Besides that the alliance could win a few independents also and thereby could get a working majority. The alliance elected Biswanath Das, an independent as its leader and he was sworn in as Chief Minister on 3<sup>rd</sup> April 1971. At the time of General Elections to various other Assemblies in March 1972, Biswanath Das was safely saddled in power and there were no elections in Odisha but Biswanath Das could not please the other partners of Alliance. Therefore, Utkal Congress withdrew its support. After this Utkal Congress of Biju Patnaik made an alliance with the Congress and Nandini Satpathy, a Union Minister from Odisha was inducted in the politics of that state and she was elected as the leader of the Congress Party. She became Chief Minister also. On 9<sup>th</sup> June 1972, the Utkal Congress Party adopted a resolution by which it merged with the Congress.

Nandini Satpathy could not keep Biju Patnaik happy and in November 1972 he withdrew support of his party from the government of Nandini Satpathy, and revived his own party. He named now his party as the Pragati Party and started horse trading with other parties for the fall of the government of Nandini Satpathy. Ultimately, he succeeded in his mission when Industries Minister Nilmani Routry resigned from Congress and defected to the Pragati Party along with 25 MLAs. After this they alleged that during the past five months the Chief Minister had been carrying on the administration of the State by a 'coterie', had been busy in "engineering internal squabbles" and had moved away from the people.

As a result of these defections, Nandini Satpathy was reduced to minority and she resigned on 28<sup>th</sup> February 1973. She advised the then Governor B.D.Jatti to dissolve the Assembly and recommend Central rule. Though Biju Patnaik staked his claim to form an alternative government but the Governor refused to give in and recommended to the President the dissolution of the Assembly and proclamation of Central rule. On the receipt of the report of the Governor, the Union Cabinet endorsed his decision and recommended to the President accordingly. So the State was placed under Central rule on March 3, 1973.

### **3.9.3: Central rule and the elections of 1974**

Elections of the State Assembly were held in the last week of February 1974 and no party could get an absolute majority.

The CPI had formed an alliance with the Congress, therefore it offered support to the Congress from outside. A few independents also joined Congress. Consequently, Nandini Satpathy was able to command absolute majority and formed the government on 6<sup>th</sup> March 1973. Therefore, there was no coalition government in the State.

#### **3.9.4: Janata Party forms the Government**

The Janata Government had come into power on 24<sup>th</sup> March, 1977 after winning the elections. It recommended to the Acting President Mr. B.D. Jatti to dissolve the Assemblies of 9 Congress ruled states. These were: (1) Haryana (2) Punjab (3) Himachal Pradesh (4) Rajasthan (5) Madhya Pradesh (6) Uttar Pradesh (7) Bihar (8) Bengal (9) Orissa. The Acting President after a lot of hesitation signed the proclamation for the dissolution of the 9 Assemblies on 30<sup>th</sup> April 1977. The Janata Party was able to score 116 seats out of 147 seats in the Assembly. The position of other parties was as follows: Congress-7; Congress (I) 19; CPI-I; CPM-I; Progressive Party-I; Independents-3. As the Janata Party commanded an absolute majority, so it formed the government alone.

#### **3.9.5: Congress (I) forms the Government**

Indira Gandhi was returned to power in January 1980. So she recommended the dissolution of nine Assemblies to the President because these States were being ruled by non-Congress governments. These Assemblies were : (1) UP (2) Bihar (2) Madhya Pradesh (4) Rajasthan (5) Tamil Nadu (6) Punjab (7) Odisha (8) Gujarat (9) Maharashtra. The President dissolved these 9 Assemblies on 17<sup>th</sup> February 1980. Elections were held in the first week of June, 1980.



The Congress had secured an absolute majority, so it formed the government all alone and there was no question of coalition government. The Congress Ministry continued in office till March 1985 when the state went to the polls. In the election of March, 1985 Congress secured absolute majority, so it formed the government alone.

Janaki Ballabh Patnaik became the Chief Minister of Odisha heading a Congress Ministry. He became the Chief Minister for the 2<sup>nd</sup> term. Thus the state got rid of the dirty politics of coalition government upto February 1973. After this stable governments were formed.

### **3.9.6: Biju Patnaik (JD) forms the government**

The elections to the Odisha Assembly were held again on 27<sup>th</sup> February, 1990. Architect of Janata Dal won a spectacular victory, Biju Patnaik assumed the office as Chief Minister of Odisha on 5<sup>th</sup> March, 1990. After the death of Biju Patnaik, his son Naveen Patnaik became the leader of Biju Janata Dal (BJP) party, and it successfully contested the parliamentary elections with the BJP in 1998, 1999 and 2004<sup>20</sup>. Following their success, BJD formed an alliance with the BJP in the Legislative Assembly elections of 2000 and 2004 and formed a successful coalition government with the BJP in the state. However, BJD continued to win subsequent elections in the state with thumping majority since 2000 until present.

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<sup>20</sup> <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/Orissas-longest-lasting-coalition/articleshow/4246272.cms>  
(Retrieved on 21.10.2019)

### **3.10: Appraisal of the Working of Coalition Governments in States**

The coalition politics in the states has been a total failure and it lasted only more or less between 1967 and 1971 and even until 1977. In some cases, coalition governments were formed as a result of some sort of alliance, united front, among political parties before the election, and in some cases as a result of alliance after the election. But in almost all cases the motivating force was a desire of the non-Congress parties not to allow the Congress party to form the government. In doing so, all types of parties-the rightists, the leftists and the centrists- joined hands, forgot their broad differences, made compromises, did lot of horse-trading, and agreed, in many cases, on nothing except to form the Ministry; in cases where some common programme was agreed upon the agreement proved short-lived. Again, it has been opined that the people had got tired of the Congress rule from 1947 upto 4<sup>th</sup> General Election (1967) because of its hollow promises to the people particularly about bringing the socialist pattern of society, checking the concentration of wealth, ever rising prices and removal of poverty. No doubt, the people wanted a change for the welfare, therefore they did not vote overwhelmingly for the Congress and gave a chance to the Opposition parties but there were fundamental differences amongst the Opposition parties about the policies and programmes, so they experienced greatest difficulty in chalking out a minimum common programme for the welfare of the people. However, their common ardent desire was to keep the Congress out of power somehow or the other. So they had to form coalition forces. Soon infighting started, however, amongst the constituents either on the question of implementation of the common programme or the distribution of offices or portfolios,

etc. It led to lot of horse trading or defections and ultimate downfall of the Ministry. Consequently, there was Presidential rule and the dissolution of the Assembly and fresh elections. This coalition politics lasted in some states only from 1967 to 1971.

Ultimately the people realised that these United Fronts could not impart stable governments and without stability, no long-term planning for their benefit was possible, so they did away with the United Front or coalition governments and voted for one party massively. This they did in the Lok Sabha elections in 1971 and Assembly elections of 1972 in 1977 when the people voted against the Congress, they voted for one Party namely Janata and not any constituent but even that government could not complete its five year term and due to infighting and defections fell on 15<sup>th</sup> July 1979. After that the people realised that only Congress (i) could give strong government, so they voted massively in favour of Indira Gandhi in Lok Sabha elections of 1980 and again in favour of Rajiv Gandhi in December 1984 (because Indira Gandhi was assassinated on 31<sup>st</sup> October 1984). Even in the Assembly elections of March 1985 the people had voted not for, any coalition government. Either they had voted for Congress (i) or they had voted for any other single party in any other state (for Sikkim Sangram Parishad in Sikkim, for Telugu Desam in Andhra and Janata Party in Karnataka).

Even after coalition politics began to sow its seeds firmly at the national level since 1996 onwards, it looks just like a reflection of coalition politics at the state level, i.e, anti-Congressism. It is the desire to prevent the Congress party from capturing power that the current BJP-led NDA coalition ministry is composed of several regional

political parties, even though the BJP has won the require number of seats in the Lok Sabha for forming a government on its own; the BJP is not yet ready to sideline these regional political forces, lest they might join opposition forces led by the Congress party.

Whatever have been the defects of the coalition governments, still they have not been without benefits. An Indian scholar Mr. N.C. Sahni has observed “One of the major effects of coalition politics has been that it has promoted compromise in politics and checked regionalism. It also relieved the government of the restraints and responsibilities which are imposed on the ruling party by the Oppostion benches under the biparty system”.<sup>21</sup>

In sum, Coalition politics first started at the state level and have become a regular feature at the national level as well, especially after 1996 onwards. The formation of the first non-Congress ministry at the national level in 1977 by several parties under the umbrella of Janata Party was basically motivated by their desire to oust the Congress party led by Indira Gandhi from the centre. Again, anti-Congressism has been the main factor that encourages regional and national political parties alike to forge a pre and post electoral alliances till date.

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<sup>21</sup> N.C.Sahni (Ed) *Coalition Politics in India* (New Academic Publishing Company, Jalandhar, 1971) p.28

## CHAPTER - IV

### POLITICAL DEVELOPMENT IN MIZORAM

The year 1898-1899 was an important year in the history of the Lushai Hills, since the South and North Lushai Hills were amalgamated under the administration of Assam<sup>1</sup>. Shakespeare was the first Superintendent of the amalgamated Lushai Hills district under Assam. However, the new administration continued to rule the Lushais through the Chiefs. The Britisher found the Chief system to be adequate for their administration. The rules for the administration of the Hills were drafted by Mr Porteos who had experienced of such exercise for the Naga Hills. Both Mr. Porteos, Mr Davis as well as Mr Shakespeare and Mr Cotton, the Chief Commissioner of Assam, all agree to the observation of Mr Davis on the occasion of his handing over charge of the North Lushai Hills in 1894:

*“I always held the chiefs of the villages responsible for the behaviour of their people, and upheld their authority to the best of my ability. I have repeatedly told them that this policy will be consistently followed and that as long as they behave themselves as they should, their orders will not be interfered with, even-though the orders may appear to us quite in accord with abstract ideas of justice”.*<sup>2</sup>

Mr. Davis observation was agreed upon and the chieftainship continued with little domination of their powers. Although the village administration was left to the

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<sup>1</sup> K.M.Zakhuma, *Political Development in Mizoram From 1946 To 1989: A Study With Special Reference To Political Parties in Mizoram* (Mizoram Publication Board, Aizawl, 2001) p.41

<sup>2</sup> Robert Reid, *The Lushai Hills* (Firma KLM, Calcutta, 1978) p.57

Chiefs, the Superintendent laid down the respective duties of the Chiefs and the village officials so that there was not much scope of arbitrary rule. The following were the orders issued in this connection in 1898:

“1. Every Chief was responsible for all that went on his village. All orders affecting a village in any way would be sent to the Chief through the circle inspector.

2. Every Chief would adjudicate all civil disputes between people of his village. He would also dispose of all criminal cases, except those in which a person was killed or was badly wounded. A chief’s order would not be interfered with unless he had acted in bad faith.

3. The Chiefs were responsible for ensuring that records were kept of the following matters :(i) All births and deaths in the villages;(ii) All movement of people into or out of the village and iii) All changes in the licensed guns”<sup>3</sup>.

This information would be kept in a book by a writer of the village under the Chief’s Order. In either of the following cases, the Chief was required to send immediate intelligence to the Circle Interpreter (C.I.) who would pass it on to the Superintendent or the S.D.O: i) in case a person was killed or severely wounded, either accidentally or intentionally by another person, and (ii) if any discharged sepoy or foreigner arrived without pass.

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<sup>3</sup> Robert Reid, Op.Cit. p.60

The British administration was successful to a larger extent to manage the affairs of the Mizo in the Lushai District through the institution of the Chief. While maintaining the traditional institution from time to time, the British Government brought in some modifications and changes also. The Chief's powers and privileges came from his birth and he functioned with few exceptions as the mouthpiece of the Government. As regards succession, the eldest son of each chief was made heir to the chiefship by changing the prevailing custom division of the deceased chief's domain among his sons<sup>4</sup>. When the British India Government took over the full charge of the Lushai hills, there were 60 chiefs. By 1940, the number rose to more than 400, as the administration created a number of Chiefs it was desired by the administration that there should be some kind of coordination between the administration and the Chiefs. The 'Durbar' or 'Chief's Council' was an out come of this need.

In 1935-1936, Mr. Parry, Superintendent of the Lushai Hills District inaugurated the South Lushai Hills Chief's Council. The idea has originated with Makthanga, the Lushai Chief of Aizawl, as stated by Sir Robert Reid. Three such conferences were held in that year and was found successful; Subsequently. L.L. Peters, the Superintendent mooted the idea of having a collective body of the chiefs to aid and advice the Superintendent. As a result, in 1939, a chief's conference was formed. It was later named as the Lushai Chief's Council. The aims and objectives of the Council were<sup>5</sup> :

1. Gradual development of Lushai people in all spheres of life.

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<sup>4</sup> Government of Assam letter No. 1505 .dt.18<sup>th</sup> August, 1937.

<sup>5</sup> A.C.Ray, *Mizoram Dynamics of Change* (Pearl Publisher, Calcutta, 1982) p.10

2. Establishment of unity and brotherhood among the Chiefs.
3. Maintenance of good relationship between Government and the people.
4. Preservation of hereditary rights of the Chief, and
5. Realisation of self-determination among the people.

The Council functioned as a consultative body in matters of customary laws, hereditary principles of the Chiefs and all matters relating to the administration of the people.

The Chief's Council was a moral booster for the administration, as all the Chiefs expressed their loyalty to the British War efforts against Germany and Japan during the Durbars of 1939, 1941, 1942 and 1943. The subsequent Durbars during 1940 and 1946 discussed at large the political cross currents, which had affected the British Raj in the Indian Sub-Continent.

Being encouraged by the success of the all Chiefs Durbar, Mc Call, the then Superintendent decided to have a district Durbars having representative Chiefs from each circle on the basis of election. This event may be underlined as the first step towards democratization of the Lushais. The Chief getting highest number of votes was accepted as the spokesman for his circle. The main function of the Durbar was to look after the welfare of the people and if desired bring to the notice and also the Governor of Assam any administrative discrimination. The Durbar was given some financial responsibility for developmental purposes. This indeed, enhanced the importance of the



Durbar. The Durbar was further used by the Government as an intermediary body to look into the grievances of the people against the administration.

However, as the Durbar was only a body of the Chiefs, it acted very often to look after the interests of the Chiefs. The Commoners who were distanced from the administration because of the Chieftainship and then by the Durbar gradually realised the problems of their lot. The social and political outlook of these people underwent rapid changes. In 1946, the then Superintendent, A.R. Mc Donald took a bold step allowing commoners being elected to the Durbar<sup>6</sup>. The representatives of the commoners were elected by them. Thus the democratic value system got further strengthened. However, the newly constituted Durbar had an in-built conflict of interests. Guided by their own interests the commoners were agitated over the attitude of the Chiefs in the Durbar. The first meeting of this Durbar, which was held on 18<sup>th</sup> January, 1946 decided on having village advisory councils to advise the Chiefs. However, the village council had died in its infancy, as it was not based on consensus.

#### **4.1: Inner Line Regulation**

Because of the strained relationship between the people of the plains and the hills the British Government resolved to take initiative for the protection of its frontiers under direct Governance The British Government, therefore, decided to have an imaginary line called the Inner Line separating the hills and plains of Assam in its eastern frontier. The provisions of the inner line endowed the Lt. Governor with the power to draw a line to

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<sup>6</sup> R.Zamawia, *Zofate Zinkawngah-Zalenna Mei a Mit Tur a ni lo*, (Lengchawn Press, Aizawl, 2007)Pp.58-72

be called “the Inner Line in each of the tribal areas beyond which no British subject and certain classes of foreigners could pass without a pass”<sup>7</sup>. Under Section 2 of the Bengal Eastern Frontier Regulation of 1873, a Regulation was framed for “the peace and Government of Eastern Districts on the eastern frontier of Bengal, the Governor-General-in-Council notified the Inner Line on the Southern Frontier of the Cachar District”<sup>8</sup>. Under the provisions of the Inner Line rules were laid down determining the conditions under which the people of the plains could carry on trade or jobs.

Initially, the Inner Line was created to maintain peace with the tribes. However, the provision had continued after the annexation of the Hills to the British territory. Further, the relevance of such a provision was felt and underlined by the Government of India for protecting the tribals from economic, cultural and social exploitations.

In fact, the restrictions of entry of the outsiders inside the Lushai Hills and the other hill areas of Assam were reinforced by invoking the Chin Hills Regulation of 1896. Section 22, 23, 38(2) and 40 of this Regulation were extended in a modified form to all the hill areas of Assam with effect from 9<sup>th</sup> October, 1911<sup>9</sup>. These sections of the Regulation empower the Superintendent or the Deputy Commissioner of the district to order a person, who is not a native of the area, to leave the area within a given time, if the presence of the person is considered as injurious to the peace and good administration of the area. Disobedience to such orders is punishable with imprisonment

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<sup>7</sup> K.M.Zakhuma, *Op.cit.* p.46

<sup>8</sup> Section 2 of Bengal Eastern Frontier Regulation, 1873.

<sup>9</sup> Eastern Bengal and Assam Gazette, October 11, 1911, Part-II. p.1882

upto six months or with fine. Only the Government has the authority to revise such an order, which cannot be called in question in civil or criminal court.

The Inner Line kept the people of Lushai Hills segregated from the mainstream of the country. The segregation helped in limiting the exploitation of the Hill people; it also hindered cultural assimilation to a great extent. The isolation seemed to be justified on the ground of step-by-step assimilation. However, apart from the assimilation, the possibility of economic exploitation was more important for which even after 1947 and also after Mizoram was elevated to the status of a full-fledged state, the Inner Line has continued to maintain ethnic and cultural identity.

The administration of the Hills had significant difference with the plains. All the tribal areas in Assam were administered in a similar manner. The introduction of an administrative system called non-regulated system was unique. Under the system, the administration of civil and criminal justice collection of revenue and all other functions of the Government were entrusted to an officer appointed by the Government with the title of the civil Commissioner. This system allowed the emergence of a single officer to be very powerful who combined in himself the powers of a Collector, a Magistrate and Judge. H.Barpujari observed that “With an intensely centralised and all powerful executive the system characterised by a simple and direct procedure was well informed and had the wholesome effect of bringing the authorities well within the reach of the people. The success of the scheme, however, depended on the extent of personal contracts, continuity of policies and mainly on the character, vision and promptitude of

the man at the helm of affairs”.<sup>10</sup> This system was the guiding force till the enactment of Government of India Act, 1919.

#### **4.2: Government of India Act, 1919**

Before the promulgation of Government of India Act, 1919, the Lushai Hills was declared a Scheduled District under the Scheduled District Act, 1974. The Montague-Chelmsford Report recommended exclusion of backward areas from its jurisdiction<sup>11</sup>. Therefore, it was implied that for the Lushai Hills, the Assam Legislative Council would not legislate any law. Legislation for such areas should be effected entirely means of Regulation made by the Governor-General in Council under Section 71 of the Government of India Act, 1919<sup>12</sup>.

After the induction of popular Ministries on the basis of election introduced by the Government India Act of 1919, the subject of backward areas was kept as a reserved subject for the Governor’s special interest. However, the Government of India could have extended reforms to the tribal areas. But the Government of Assam was determined to exclude these areas and thus Lushai Hills was kept out of the purview of the Government of India Act, 1919.

The so called argument for maintaining and respecting the tribal system was a great hindrance to assimilation of the tribes. “Our aim”, the Government of Assam

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<sup>10</sup> H.Barpujari, *Problems of the Hill Tribes of North-East Frontier*, (Lawyers Book Stall, Gauhati, 1970) Pp.24-25

<sup>11</sup> K.M.Zakhuma, *Op.cit.* p.48

<sup>12</sup> Venkata Rao, et al, *A Century of Government and Politics in North-East India Vol-III (Mizoram)* (S.Chand & Company, New Delhi, 1987) p.8

noted, “should be not to retain the aboriginal areas as picturesque survivals but to secure them development by absorbing them with the rest of the community. The process of assimilation was going on and to put an obstacle in its way would be a retrograde step”<sup>13</sup>. In fact, in practice, this was not time for advancing such discriminatory argument. Although the tribal areas constituted a reserved subject directly under the Governor, unfortunately some of these areas hardly attracted the attention of the British administrators.

Dr. Hutton who spent long years in the Hills districts and had an intimate knowledge of the tribal problems categorically stated that in the interest of the Hill tribes, the scheme of reformation should be kept at bay. He justified saying that the tribal people are different culturally, socially and linguistically from the people of the adjoining plains. Therefore, the constitutional reform was not required for the people of the Hills. N.E. Parry, the Superintendent of the Lushai Hills was in full agreement with Dr. Hutton’s observations. N.E.Parry was of the opinion that the union of the plains with the Hills is an unnatural one. Therefore, he suggested that the Lushai Hills remained excluded from the constitutional reforms. He recommended for the constitution of a North Eastern Frontier Province, consisting of all tribal areas of the region<sup>14</sup>.

#### **4.3: Government of India Act, 1935**

The selection of areas as Excluded Areas and Partially Excluded Areas was crucial in the sense that it indicated the Government’s attitude to a particular area or

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<sup>13</sup> Ibid. p.23

<sup>14</sup> Venkata Rao, et al, *Op.cit.* Pp.14-19

tribe. The Lushai Hills remained as an excluded area even under the 1935 Act. Therefore, there was no representation of the Lushais in the process of Self-Government as envisaged in 1935 Act. The Indian National Congress viewed the British decision of excluding some areas with the excuse of non-interference in the affairs of the tribals as arbitrary.

Because the policy of segregation was both a hindrance for economic development and assimilation of these people in the mainstream of the country. The Indian National Congress protested over the 1935 Act by stating that 15 million inhabitants of India were prevented from amenities of civilized life, so that they never develop political consciousness and learn to struggle in an organised and systematic manner against the wrongs they have been subjected to. The provisions of Excluded Areas kept the people of these areas away from political participation.<sup>15</sup>

Although one of the objectives of the Act of 1935 was to allow the Governor to develop these areas according to plans made by him without any interference from the legislature, developmental activities suffered a great setback due to lack of adequate funds. Mc Call has pointed out that his problem was due to the financial ambiguity of the 1935 Act. Mc Call felt that there should have been separate statutory financial provisions for these areas.

There was not much political development between 1935 and the end of Second World War because of the prevailing war situation. However, the Lushai Chiefs offered

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<sup>15</sup> B.K.Roy Burman, Demographic and Socio-Economic Profile of the Hill Areas of North-East India (Department of Publications, New Delhi, 1970) p.113

their allegiance to the British and volunteered to participate in the War. After the war as India was progressing to achieve its independence, the situation in the Lushai Hills became extra-ordinary.

Mc Donald observed :

*“With the movement towards ‘Independence’ in India, political forces were beginning and compete for mastery in the Lushai Hills. The urge to fuse and the urge to be distinguished, the conflicting necessities for freedom and restraint present almost the same problem in India looking at an Empire as a Hill tribe looking at India”<sup>16</sup>.*

In fact, after the independence of India, the Lushais faced the crisis of identity and integration.

However, the nationalist leaders of the country were live to the needs of development of the so-called Excluded Areas. Participating in the Constituent Assembly debates, Rohini Kumar Chaudhury, a member from Assam was critical of the British Government’s policy of segregation. He said that the British Government framed rules of administration so as to keep these areas as a different country. “The British wanted to keep these areas as primitive as possible”<sup>17</sup>. Participating in the debates of the Constituent Assembly, B.R.Ambedkar said:

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<sup>16</sup> A.C.Ray, *Op.cit* p.52

<sup>17</sup> Constituent Assembly Debates, September 6,1949, Vol-X, No.27, p.1015

“The position of the tribals in Assam....is somewhat analogous to the position of the Red Indians in the United States as against the white immigrants there”.<sup>18</sup>

By the time India achieved Independence with the help of the Christian missionaries education had already taken roots in the Lushai Hills. Moreover, the Lushais had been converted into Christianity. They become conscious of their own rights. Political awakening has started its momentum. The birth of Mizo Union as a political party signaled the beginning of a long and protracted political struggle by the Lushais to write their own political history.

#### **4.4: Factors Responsible for the Formation of Political Parties and Birth of Political Parties in Mizoram**

The British policy had been to consistently legitimize and uphold the chief's authority through which they achieved a very efficient and an inexpensive system of administration. Until 1946, any open political activity was kept at bay as a fitting sequel to the policy of quarantine exclusion from the Provincial Legislature. In the meantime, the chiefs were allowed to retain their traditional rights and privileges and they became instrumental in enforcing the practice of forced coolie (or puak phurh). The poor tribals were held in subjection for a considerable period of time under repressive measures of this type through the institution of chieftainship. Generally, for fulfilling the (puak phurh) coolie duty, the people were forced to carry the goods, luggage or sometimes the touring officials without any reward. Besides, this obligation, each family in a village

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<sup>18</sup> Ibid. p.1025



was to subscribe money or sometimes chicken, eggs, etc. to feed the touring officials. Under the iron rule of colonial power, the people were virtually reduced to a state of enslavement. It is against this background that a new political movement under the leadership of the emerging elites had sprung up initially with a design to curtail the chief's powers and rights<sup>19</sup>.

Their vision of political goal was not perceptible in any clear terms beyond the attempt to curtail chief's power. Opinions were also sharply divided over the choice to join either Indian Union or Burma. A section of political leaders and the chiefs were in favour of joining Burma but the majority was in favour of joining India.

From the early 1930's Mizo had become conscious of the political deprivation inflicted by the repressive system of colonial rule and the young graduates of University keenly felt the need to form a united front to fight for their rights under the sun. At the time when the eclipse of the empire was imminent and active debates were conducted in the Provincial Legislature as to the future state of the Lushai Hills District, the first political party came into existence in the Mizo land in 1946. In January 1946, the Lushai Superintendent through the exercise of his discretionary power ordered the election of a body of District Conference to advise him in matters of administration of customary law. This has a feeble semblance of a political body and can be said to be a precursor of unbridled political party of the people. Partly through the repercussion of repressive

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<sup>19</sup> Laldenga, *Christian Missions and Colonialism* (Vendrame Institute, Shillong, 1998) p.111

measures inflicted upon them and partly through the intellectual awakening, the idea of forming a political party had long been fostered by the educated intelligentsia.

#### **4.4.1: Mizo Union**

The first political party formed on April 9<sup>th</sup> 1946 by R.Vanlawma and it was first named as the Mizo Common People Union, but was later called the Mizo Commoner's Union, Vanlawma became the first General secretary of the party and Lalbuaia and Hrangiaia were Adhoc Committee Members<sup>20</sup>. It was first attempted to settle the issue of equal voting rights between the chiefs and the common people in the election of the District Conference. Because of this commendable activity taken up by the party, it gained quickly in popularity. In a fitting response to the call of common people's liberation the very nomenclature of the party was conceived in the name of commoners. But the chiefs who were greatly preoccupied with the status refused to join the party on the ground that it was a Commoner's Union. Realising that the two sides got to know each other better and the party without the participation of the chiefs would leave vacuum for social reorganisation, R.Vanlawma readily agreed to rename the party as the Mizo Union party. By causing the party to assume a new face and contain no repulsive term, he hoped that the chiefs would be willing to come into the fold of the party and persuaded them to join. But the secretary of the chief's council did not agree to the proposal of joining the party. It was indeed pathetic to observe that the attempt to create a good understanding between the chiefs and commoners had ended in failure. This had

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<sup>20</sup> R.Vanlawma, *Ka Ram leh Kei* (Lengchhawn Press, Aizawl, 1965) p.135

created a stultifying atmosphere of political rivalry causing a strained relation between the two groups in the years to come.

The first conference of the party was held on 25<sup>th</sup> May 1946 at Aizawl mainly to approve the draft constitution, and if so, to proceed with the election of its office bearers. At this historic meeting was the first of its kind, there was a great excitement when the members elected the office bearers consisting of the following : President - Pachhunga, Vice President - Lalhema, General Secretary – R.Vanlawma, Asst.Secy - Lalbuaia. Finance Secretary - Lalhmingthanga, Treasurer : Thanga<sup>21</sup>. Political activity began with the party when it pressed a demand for the replacement of Upas (Elders) appointed by the chiefs with members elected by the people in the first General Assembly held at Aizawl in September. In this Assembly, a bold resolution was taken demanding for two third representation on the District Conference by elected members from the common people instead of equal representation of the chiefs and the people. After a long deliberation over the issue of the future status of the Lushai Hills the Assembly resolved.

“In the event of India attaining a complete and unqualified independence the Mizo are also to be included in it, within the province of Assam. The Mizo are opposed to the retention of their district as a excluded area under Independent India, but wish to be included in the Provincial Legislature with a sufficient number of representatives who will represent them on concurrent subjects with the Provincial Government. Except on these subjects, no Legislation of the Provincial Legislature should apply, directly to the

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<sup>21</sup> R.Vanlawma, *Op.cit.* p.137

hills and they reserve all rights and privileges of their internal administration with a local legislative and Executive Body”. In this resolution the party also mentioned its desire to bring all the neighbouring territories inhabited by the ethnic group of Mizo under the umbrella of the Mizo District”.<sup>22</sup>

A.R.Mc Donald, the Superintendent, was sympathetic to the cause of Mizo Unity and separate existence, and disliked the idea of joining the Indian Union, which the Mizo Union found it to be the best course open for settling up the future state of Mizoram. In an attempt to obstruct the Mizo Union movement, he passed an order on 1<sup>st</sup> November 1946, which forbade any collection of fund in the name of political activity. The order stated : “Anyone pretending to be a representative of the ‘Mizo Union’. who takes any money from anyone saying it is for the Mizo Union will be prosecuted as a cheat“.

In the meantime, another trouble cropped up because the Mizo Union boycotted the election to the District Conference which was thought by the Superintendent to represent the popular will of the people. The District Conference was taken as the representative organ of Mizo Nationalism, and to pave the way for independence it drafted a constitution for the Lushai Hills. But contrary to this view point, Saprawnga and Khawtinkhuma of the Mizo Union party represented in the Bordoloi Committee as Co-opted members. This had led to a dispute between the Mizo Union and the

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<sup>22</sup> Content of the Resolution passed in the first General Assembly of the Mizo Union held from 24 to 26 september, 1946

Superintendent for the latter thought that the District Conference was the rightful representative of the District.

It was most probably for the strategy to forestall a political competitor that on April 14, 1947 the District Conference passed the following resolutions for submission to the Bordoloi Sub-Committee<sup>23</sup>:

1. The Conference was elected for framing a constitution for Mizoram, The conference has not yet decided whether Mizoram should be within Assam but should the decision be that it would be within the jurisdiction of the Assam Legislature; they should be given full powers over local matters.
2. All matters of land tenure, agriculture and social customs should be in the power of the local governing body of Mizoram which should also have authority, at least partially, in educational matters. It should also control immigration of people into Mizoram.

When the Bordoloi Sub-committee had a sitting at Aizawl on 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> April, the Mizo Union submitted a memorandum demanding for:

- (i) the inclusion of areas inhabited by the Mizo in the adjacent districts such as Manipur, Cachar and Tripura and the substitution of the term 'Mizo' for 'Lushai';
- (ii) powers of autonomous administration in the internal affairs within the general framework of the province of Assam, and

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<sup>23</sup> Proceedings of the North-East Frontier (Assam) Tribal and Excluded Areas Sub-Committee, Vol-II (Evidence) Part-I, Constituent Assembly of India, New Delhi, 1949

(iii) a special provision for liberal financial assistance from the Central Government.

At that moment, when the political map of India was drawn and demarcated on the basis of religious population, Prof. R. Coupland, a well known constitutional expert proposed to carve out an independent state between India and Burma consisting of the hill areas of Assam and Burma in the name of a 'Crown Colony of Eastern Agency'<sup>24</sup>. This suggestion was given active supports by Mc Donald and had caught the imagination of the people with amazing rapidity by the offer of a possible independent status in the future. It soon found a fertile soil for development among the section of people and a new party United Mizo Freedom Organisation (UMFO) came into being on 4<sup>th</sup> July, 1947 with a political option for joining Burma in case of India's independence. But the Mizo Union (MU) preferred to hold on to its demand for autonomy within India and many of its members left the party because the status of Crown Colony was thought to be far superior to District Council.

As the political development had taken a new turn, it was felt necessary to reach a consensus among the political parties before the final events took shape. So a meeting of public leaders was held on 14<sup>th</sup> August, 1947 under the chairmanship of L.L. Peters, the Superintendent and the following resolutions were passed<sup>25</sup> -

The Lushais should be informed by the Governor of Assam whether they had the option to join any other Dominion, i.e. Pakistan or Burma; and if they were to remain in India, their demands were :

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<sup>24</sup> B.K.Roy Burman, Op.cit p.133

<sup>25</sup> Proceedings of the meeting signed by L.L.Peters and forwarded to all the leaders on August 21, 1947.

- (i) the existing safeguards of the customary laws and land tenure, etc. should continue,
- (ii) the Chin Hills Regulation of 1896 and the Bengal Eastern Frontier Regulation of 1873 should be retained, and
- (iii) after a period of 10 years, the Lushais should be allowed to opt out of the Indian Union if they intended to do so.

Just as the political wind was blowing into unexpected directions from time to time, there arose a very crucial strife within the party cadre. During the general assembly of the Mizo Union party in September, 1946 some of its members, mostly educated stalwarts, began to express their distrust for the conservative and the rich President Pachhunga and conspired to replace him. So the assembly, all of a sudden, decided to elect the new office bearers of the party just after the sitting incumbents had hardly assumed office for a period of five months. In the place of Pachhunga, Lalhema was elected for the President, Lalbiakthanga for the Vice-President and R. Vanlawma was re-elected for the General Secretary. The inner party conflict did not stop here, but it gained a momentum when Saprawnga, at the meeting of the Mizo Union's block officer's conference held on 1<sup>st</sup> November, 1946 moved a motion of no confidence against the President and the General Secretary and succeeded in removing them from office. So the Conference elected new office bearers and this had inevitably led to the split of the party into two camps.

The split in the party brought into existence two parties - the Mizo Union Right Wing and the Mizo Union Left Wing. They were also grouped as the conservative and the radical wing. The Right Wing was led by Lalbiakthanga, Vanlawma and Pachhunga while the Left Wing was led by Khawtinkhuma and Saprawnga.

#### **4.4.1A: Political Development Since Independence**

Immediately after the independence in the transition period, an Advisory Council was elected to advise the Superintendent. The Advisory Council was formed to take the place of the District Conference but with the difference in the composition of membership not requiring equal representation of the chiefs and the commoners. It had been decided on the basis of voting strength with any allotment of seat reservation. In the first election of the Council members, the Mizo Union Party which was strongly opposed to the continuation of the chieftainship, won all the seats save the two seats in Aizawl town which were captured by the U.M.F.O. (United Mizo Freedom Organisation). This incident clearly proved that the Mizo Union had a following in its strife for installing a democratic institution by joining the Indian Union.

However, the favourable wind of political success could not help to throw out a misty atmosphere of administration at the hand of Peters, who always sided with the chiefs. As he did not like the nationalism embraced by the Mizo Union, a confrontation ensued in which the party undertook to launch non-Cooperation movement from December, 1948 till February, 1949. This development added fuel to the flames of resentment harboured against the chiefs and they were systematically harassed in several



ways. A stern measures was taken up against such a rather violent antagonism by the Superintendent who declared the Assam Maintenance of Public Order Act of 1947, to come into force and arrested many union activists and party leaders like Saprawnga and Bawichhuaka. They were again released in February 1948 when the non-cooperation movement was called off. This short episode of their imprisonment made them more popular to the public because patriotism had to get its final glory in the victory through a passive suffering or an armed showdown. Meanwhile, L.L.Peters, the Superintendent was transferred and S.N.Barkataki took over charge from L.L.Peters. It may be mentioned here that S.N.Barkataki was the first Indian Superintendent appointed in the Lushai Hills. At the same time, the designation of Superintendent was changed to Deputy Commissioner.

When the Mizo Union fought their battle for democratic rights, they demanded that the District Council system of administration should be instituted not later than November 1948. Along with this, they insisted that the construction of chief's house by the public, payment of paddy tribute, abolition of judicial powers and flesh tax should be withdrawn. (Anybody who shot or trapped a wild animal had to make over to the chief a leg of the animal). But the Assam Government was not in favour of such drastic legislation as demanded by the Mizo Union<sup>26</sup>. Normalcy was soon restored in the Lushai District when the Adviser to the Governor of Assam visited the District in January 1949, and assure the leaders of an early implementation of the Sixth Schedule to pacify them and ease tensions.

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<sup>26</sup> V.V.Rao, *A Century of Tribal Politics, Vol-III* (S.Chand & Company, New Delhi, 1987) p.138

This period was followed by quick succession of changes in the party leadership. As Khawtinkhuma, the Mizo Union President was offered a post of political officer in N.E.F.A. by the Government, he left the party to join the post on 26<sup>th</sup> November, 1948, and in his place R. Thanhlira became the President on the same day. Later in September 1949, Vanthuama, the General Secretary also left the party to join a gazzetted officer's post in the Department of Agriculture, Government of Assam. In his place, H.K.Bawichhuaka became the General Secretary on 1<sup>st</sup> October, 1948 and continued to hold the post upto 27<sup>th</sup> June, 1952. When the party President R.Thanhlira was elected to the member of the Assam Legislature Assembly in 1952, he vacated the office of party presidentship and it was taken over by Pachhunga from the 4<sup>th</sup> March 1952 and remained in office till 28<sup>th</sup> October, 1953. R.Thanhlira resumed the post of President when Pachhunga resigned from the post and he remained in office till the 9<sup>th</sup> October 1955 when he had to abdicate his post because of disunity and conflict in the inner circle of the party. As a consequence, the responsibility of Presidentship again fell upon Pachhunga and he remained in office till 8<sup>th</sup> October, 1962. Though there were frequent changes in the party leadership, it did not amount to any split within party cadre, and all the discords could be easily patched up.

A very important landmark in the political history of Mizo Union was the nomination of Saprawnga as member of Rajya Sabha in 1950. This was received with great enthusiasm all over the District because he was the first Mizo to be elevated to the membership of the Parliament. From this time onwards the democratic form of election had become operative, and in 1952, the first general election in India was held. Mizo

District was allotted three seats in the Assam Legislative Assembly, two for the Aijal (later Aizawl) sub-division and one for the Lungleh (later Lunglei) sub-division. In the election of the State Legislative Assembly, the Mizo Union party won all the three seats. But for the election to the parliamentary seat, Mizo District was combined with the Silchar sub-division of Cachar district to form one constituency. Since the much smaller population of the Mizo District could hardly matter to decide the election outcome, the party did not enlist a candidate for the Parliament election. The Mizo Union party also won in 15 out of 18 constituencies of the election to the District Council held at the same time. These outcomes of the election certainly proved that the Mizo Union party won the confidence of the people and its policy was overwhelmingly approved.

#### **4.4.1B: Demand for Hill State**

Those who opposed to joining the Indian Union organised into a political party known as the United Mizo Freedom Organisation (U.M.F.O.). This party held a general assembly in 1953 at Aizawl and passed a resolution that the Central Government be requested to form a new state consisting of Manipur, Tripura, the autonomous districts of Assam and the N.E.F.A<sup>27</sup>. They found it necessary to have a separate existence for the following reasons.

First. it was expected that more funds would be made available if the hill districts were formed into a separate state in view of the low state of economic development. Second. the numerous set up of different administrations for the hill areas caused a

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<sup>27</sup> Proceedings of the 7<sup>th</sup> General Assembly of the UMFO held at Aijal in October 1-2, 1953.

serious setback for the progress and development. Third, the adoption of Assamese as the official language of Assam was thought to pose a serious problem to the hill people. They were ready to learn Hindi and English but not Assamese which was spoken in the narrow confine of Brahmaputra Valley. Fourth, the Assam Government did not fully grasp the special developmental needs of the hill people, and this had resulted in the distortion of fund utilisation that flowed from the central grants.

In a very short time, the policy of separate hill state caught the imagination of the people, and even became very popular with the chiefs who fought for their own survival. In the meantime in some parts of the hill districts of Assam, the Assamese language was declared in the schools as the second language. This added fuel to the flames of the political struggle for a separate state. In February 1954, the executive committee of the Mizo Union expressed their concern over the issue and stated that if this language policy was intended to bring out a better integration between the hill people and the Assamese, there should be reciprocity<sup>28</sup>. They failed to understand why the hill languages should also not be introduced in the Assamese schools and it should be a one-way imposition. The question of language policy started to gnaw at their hearts since linguistic domination was interpreted as an assimilation policy. This incident marked the turning point of the political goals of the Mizo Union which had accepted a separate Hill State as the basic solution to their political problems.

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<sup>28</sup> Proceedings of the Mizo Union Executive Committee, reported in *Assam Tribune* of February 12, 1954.

In 1954, the Mizo Union Party again made a landmark in the political history by winning over the Government of Assam to vote for the Bill of Assam Lushai Hills (Acquisition of the Chief Rights) Act of 1954. Henceforth, the chieftainship was abolished and the chiefs and their Council of Elders (Upa) were replaced by an administrative set-up in the form of Village Councils on the basis of universal suffrage. When the first election of the Village Council was held, the Mizo Union won all the elections showing once again that they had the backing of an overwhelming majority of the people. However, it was not all a smooth sailing for the party and before long in November 1954, they began to enter into a rough sea when the party was rent by internal schism. This had led to the resignation of Thanhkira from the Presidentship of the party. It also led to the formation of the Right Wing Mizo Union which ultimately broke away from the main party and joined hands with the U.M.F.O<sup>29</sup>.

#### **4.4.1C: States Reorganisation Commission**

When a series of political events took shape in the Mizo District, the States Reorganisation Commission visited Assam in 1954. Taking this chance to point out the injustice they suffered from the state administration, the Mizo Union and the District Council submitted a joint memorandum which highlighted that in the population break-up of Assam, the Assamese account for 31 % of the population, the Bengalees 31% and the tribals and others 38%; in matters of civil appointment a share of 60% was allotted to the Assamese and only 40% to the others, and in matter of general development, the Assamese areas accounted for 75% of the total expenditure and the other areas 25%. It

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<sup>29</sup> Proceedings of the General Assembly of the Chiefs' Council held at Aijal on October, 9-10, 1953.

made this to be there key issue that prompted them to demand for a separate statehood. In conclusion, the memorandum went on to say<sup>30</sup>:

*“This position has placed Assam, the eastern most frontier state of India, into one of political unrest born of a feeling of frustration and of suspicion which is taking shape; and unless a solution could be arrived at through the merium of (the) commission a more serious complexity can be foreseen in this most important frontier state falling as it is between East Pakistan and Communist infested Burma”.*

In this memorandum, the Mizo Union also put forward a demand for creating a greater Mizoram by annexing the areas inhabited by the Mizo in the adjacent territories to the Mizo District. But the U.M.F.O. in its memorandum submitted to the commission demanded the creation of a hill state consisting of all the hill areas of Assam.

One remarkable development at this time was the budding of Hmar nationalism under the leadership of Rochunga Pudaite. He started a new political organisation called the Hmar National Congress at Lakhipur village in Cachar district during July 1954 and brought up the idea of Hmar District. His party also submitted a memorandum to the Commission demanding the creation of Hmar District by curving out a territory at the confluence of the borders of Lushai Hills, Manipur and Cachar districts.

The State Reorganisation Commission held an interview with Lalmawia, President of the U.M.F.O. at Silchar on 4<sup>th</sup> May, 1955. He was the only person

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<sup>30</sup> Memorandum jointly signed by Lalsawia, CEM, LHDC and Lalbuaia, Gen.Secy, Mizo Union of Assam, Tripura, Manipur dated 17<sup>th</sup> April, 1954.

interviewed by the Commission from Lushai Hills. He and his party stood behind the demand for a separate hill state. He was earlier summoned to Shillong to have a talk with the Chief Minister. During the course of the talk, Lalmawia assured the Chief Minister that he would be ready to withdraw his demand for the hill state if the Assam Government would consider to revoke its language policy, distribute government jobs more equitably. etc. and the post of a Minister in charge of tribal affairs is given to the hill representative. It was reported that the Chief Minister agreed to consider all these demands.

While reviewing the various demands presented by the different organisations, the main centre of attention was on the demand for a separate hill state. It was found to be of recent origin. In the opinion of the Commission, the hill problems stemmed from the psychological prejudice as well as the political discrimination.

Economic factor was thought to play a key role in the demand for a hill state even though the idea of separatist movement was well underway. On its comment on the secessionist inclination among the hill people, the Commission said<sup>31</sup>:

*“This results of the inner line regulation policy as administered by the British, illustrated the dangers of deliberate and complete segregation. This policy, however, in point of fact was not enforced so much against the Europeans and Christians as against the other Indian communities. The broad effect of throwing the tribal areas open to some but not to all external influences during the period of the British occupation has been to*

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<sup>31</sup> Report of the States Reorganisation Commission, Ministry of Home Affairs, New Delhi, 1956. p.186

*divide the tribal people themselves and to create as a result of British and Missionary influence a new class which has so far remained quite distinct from the general public either in the hills or in the plains. This creation of a new hill state will in our opinion accentuate this distinctions. It will, therefore, prove in the long run, against the interest of the scheduled tribes”.*

This expression clearly referred to the association between the separatist tendency and the Inner Line Regulation among the hillmen. It further went to state that “the Inner Line Regulation in the pre-independence period was administered vigorously mainly to exclude all contacts between them and the inhabitants of the plains district. The demand for a separate tribal state is partly a hangover of this policy”.

But the dawn of independence brought about a quite different atmosphere of political freedom among the tribal who had been so long governed under the repressive rule of the chiefs. The Commission felt it necessary at that parting of the way to provide protective measures to prevent the rapid transfer and alienation of land and restrict the activities of private money-lenders and promote economic development. As it happened in the rest of the country in the years immediately following the independence, Assam also faced a grim social problem arising out of partitions and its economy was disrupted. It was therefore discernible why the hill districts felt that they were discriminated in matters of fund allocation. It was not on account of any premeditated policies pursued by the government. This problem was beyond the dimension of economic problem but checking a major activity in developmental efforts, and the hill districts could not have



been paid enough attention. The Commission, however, had its hope fixed on the flow of funds under the various development and welfare schemes from the Central Government to pacify the discontent of the hill people. When these schemes were implemented, it said that some of the causes of misunderstanding were removed.

The Commission expressed the satisfaction it had on the performance of the Assam government which took up measures to relieve the hill problems by arranging supply of subsidised food and other essential commodities, introducing important schemes for land reclamation and pilot projects for jhum control, etc. Moreover, the Commission was against the formation of a separate hill state because it was thought that the administrative cost would be much higher and coordination would be difficult. The substance of its recommendation read as follows<sup>32</sup>:

*“Generally speaking, the United Mikir and North Cachar Hills and the Mizo Hills are not in favour of a separate Hill state and the District Council in the Lushai Hills and the Karbi-a-Dubar (Mikir Hills National Council) are in favour of the status quo. The agitation in favour of a Hill state is, therefore, confined virtually to the Garo and the Khasi and the Jaintia Hills... .. Taking all these factors into consideration, we have come to the conclusion that the formation of a hill state in this region is neither feasible nor in the interest of the tribal people themselves. The Hill Districts, therefore, should continue to form part of Assam and no major changes should be made in their present constitutional patterns”.*

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<sup>32</sup> Report of the States Reorganisation Commission, Ministry of Home Affairs, New Delhi, 1956. p.186

The matter was not altogether put to a close and it suggested that a Committee be appointed to study the working of the Sixth Schedule.

When the hill people came to learn of the recommendation of the Commission, they were not happy over it. The Nagas who refused to be part of India naturally boycotted the Commission and rose in open rebellion for an independent state. But the idea of a Hill state continued to gain ground among the wider spectrum of political organisations in the hill districts.

In spite of the adverse comment given by the Commission, the dream of a Hill States had not been given up by the hill people. In 1955, leaders from the Khasi and Jaintia Hills, the Garo Hills, the Mikir Hills and the Mizo Hills met at Aijal (Aizawl) in order to discuss the issue of a Hill State and resolved that a demand be placed for forming a separate state comprising the hill districts of Assam. They agreed to form a united front to press their demand for the state and a supporting organ of political party called the Eastern India Tribal Union (E.I.T.U.) came into existence. But the Mizo Union decided to keep aloof from the party while the U.M.F.O and the right wing Mizo Union readily joined the fray.

As time went by, the popularity of the Mizo Union showed a tendency to decline since several charges of maladministration were levelled against them by the opposition parties. Thus in the second general election held in 1957, it could capture only one out of three seats in State Assembly and in the District Council election the margin of majority was greatly reduced; the seat distribution being 11 and 8 for the Mizo Union and the

U.M.F.O. respectively. For this term, as in for the first term, the Mizo Union decided to join the Assam Congress Legislature party and its leader A.Thanglura was offered the post of the Chief Parliamentary Secretary.

In course of time, the political situation in the North East threatened the stability of regional integration and in 1957, Prime Minister Nehru visited Shillong to assess the situation and find means of reverting the trend. He made a gesture of goodwill by extending an offer of Ministerial positions in the Assam Government to the three hill leaders. Larsing Khyriem from the Khasi and Jaintia Hill was appointed as Deputy Minister, Capt. Williamson Sangma from the Garo Hill was appointed Minister for Tribal Areas and Lalmawia from the Mizo Hills, a Parliamentary Secretary.

In the wake of the introduction of a language bill for adopting Assamese as the state language in the Assembly, a series of violence broke out in the Assam plains. This bill was known as the Assam Official Language Bill and it was passed by the Assembly in 1961 making Assamese the official language at the state level. All the hill leaders promptly reacted to the ratification of the bill in the Assembly, and immediately resigned from the Government of Assam. As a consequence, a move for separation from Assam spread like a wild fire among the hill people.

This development made the hill leaders realise that their petition was vulnerable unless they made a united stand. Subsequently, the leaders from the hill districts met in Shillong on 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> July, 1960 under the chairmanship of J.Hagjir, a Congress MP and the All Party Hill Leaders Conference came into existence to pursue further a policy

of separate hill state. Thus, all the political parties in existence in the hill districts had come under one umbrella of A.P.H.L.C. and joined hands to fight for a separate hill state and form an Eastern Frontier state. So, in 1962. the Mizo Union contested the general election as the constituent part of A.P.H.L.C. and won the majority of seats in the District Council.

By 1962, the Mizo Union had grown past the zenith of its glory. Again the party was weakened by the internal rivalry among its leaders. As a result, it was badly beaten by the Mizo National Front (MNF) in the election held in 1963. It came to realise that a better political goal was needed to attract the attention of the people. This idea led them to adopt a new policy, a statehood for Mizoram in 1963. Since then, the Mizo Union left the A.P.H.L.C. because the demand for statehood of its own was in conflict with the demand for a hill state. Mizo Union adhered to the policy of statehood mainly to boost the fading spirit of the party workers. It passed a resolution to re-affirm its stand on statehood for Mizoram in 1966 in the memorandum submitted to the Government of India. As the new political developments plunged the District into a state of insurgency from the beginning of 1966, all political activities had been paralysed; Even then the spirit of political separation did not easily yield to the pressure and in 1972 Mizoram had been granted the status of Union Territory which was accepted by the Mizo Union.

With the change in political status, the first general election to the Assembly of Mizoram was held in 1972, and the Mizo Union party won 21 seats out of 30 seats and formed the ministry with Ch.Chhunga as the first Chief Minister of Mizoram. This was a

crucial time of political trouble due to the intensification by the central government of the counter insurgency measures to suppress the M.N.F. movement. On many occasions, they were suspected to side with the Indian government and they were constantly at loggerheads with the M.N.F. At the same time, the Congress party of Mizoram tried every political tactic to discredit the stand they took. Taking this opportunity, the Congress invited them to merge itself with the Indian National Congress even though Mizoram Congress was opposed to it. In view of the situation, the Mizo Union thought it best to refer the matter to the General Assembly of the party. In the General Assembly held on 23<sup>rd</sup> January, 1974 the Mizo Union resolved to dissolve the party with immediate effect and agreed to merge with the Indian National Congress. Thus, the first political party in Mizoram with a regional in spirit and outlook merged with the largest national political party in India.

#### **4.4.2: United Mizo Freedom Organisation (UMFO)**

On the eve of independence when the people in the Mizo Hills enjoyed full freedom of political exercises, the future status of Mizoram became the bone of contention. While Mizo Union fought on the platform of abolition of the chiefs by opting to join the Indian Union, others viewed that the best course of option for Mizo survival was to join Burma. This latter issue led to the formation of a new political party known as the United Mizo Freedom Organisation (UMFO) by the breakaway group of Mizo Union party on the 5<sup>th</sup> July, 1947. Its first President was Lalbiakthanga, Vice President Rev. Zairema and General Secretary L.H.Liana. The President and Vice President were high-ranking members of the Mizo Union who left it on the ground that

the leadership in the party was formed to repress free exercise of speech in party policy formulation.

A very remarkable feature in the rise of the UMFO party was the enthusiastic support it received from the chiefs and their followers who were hostile to the Mizo Union. Perhaps the hatred borne against the Mizo Union had led to the polarization of political goals between the two parties. It was Lalmawia, an army officer (retired) of Burma who took initiative to form the party and tried to inspire the people with the idea of joining Burma on the grounds of common customs, culture, dialects, common descent and common economic pattern<sup>33</sup>. He persuaded that the Mizo people would be more prosperous and better treated in Burma than in India. Consequently, the movement began to gain ground quite rapidly among the mass.

But the initial euphoria quickly evaporated because the event that popularised the movement soon proved untenable. That had come by when Lalmawia led a goodwill mission to Burma in December 1946 and met the Prime Minister of Burma, U Nu and pleaded with him to try a merger of Lushai Hills with Burma. However, a seasoned politician like U Nu could not overlook the political implication to which such a decision would land him in view of the tension prevailing in the hill territories of Burma. Besides that, he was a great friend of Nehru, the Prime Minister of India and he would not welcome with an open arm a policy that would run counter to India's policy. So, U Nu while expressing his happiness at the prospect of the Lushai Hills joining Burma,

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<sup>33</sup> R.N.Prasad, *Government and Politics in Mizoram 1947-1986* (Northern Book Centre, New Delhi, 1987) p.255

laid down the condition that a substantial number of Lushais should support the proposal.

Right at that moment, Lalbiakthanga was offered a post in the Indian Administrative Service and left the party. Thus, Lalmawia succeeded him as President of the U.M.F.O. The Mizo Union dissidents led by Pachhunga joined the party and it became a force to reckon with for the ruling Mizo Union party. Having been disappointed in his attempt to join Burma now Lalmawia turned his attention to strengthen his political position in the district. In the first election of the District Council (Advisory) held in 1948, the U.M.F.O. party contested and won only one seat. It did not fare better in the general election to the Lushai Hills District Council in 1952 as it could capture only one out of the 24 seats. In the meantime, Lalmawia advised the Pawi-Lakher region to demand a regional council and succeeded in this effort. He also started a movement for the formation of a separate hill state for all the hill district of North-East India.

Again his party suffered a serious blow in the election to the Assam Legislative Assembly in 1952, it lost all the three seats to the Mizo Union. In November 1954, the U.M.F.O. supported the demand for the hill state by a new political party known as the Eastern India Tribal Union (E.I.T.U.) and it established a branch in Mizoram with Lalmawia as its President. Even then the U.M.F.O. continued to exist until on 2<sup>nd</sup> October, 1957 the party was dissolved and the E.I.T.U. was formally inaugurated. Since then, the party position was greatly strengthened and in the 1975 election to the Assam

Legislative Assembly; it set up candidates in all the three seats and won in two of them, though in the election to the District Council, it failed to secure majority seats, there was a great improvement. A total of 8 seats out of 22 seats went to the E.I.T.U. Thus, in 1958 when the party had changed from U.M.F.O. to E.I.T.U and gained much in securing popular support, Nehru persuaded them to cooperate with the Chaliha Government. The E.I.T.U. agreed and Lalmawia was appointed Parliamentary Secretary<sup>34</sup>.

After the independence, a door was shut and sealed against the Pro-Burma movement and the party had to find a new political goal to justify its existence. A demand for hill state appealed to a great number of the people but not sufficiently large to win a majority of seats in the District Council. A careful examination of the party movement revealed that the party depended on nothing more than a personal following of popular leader Lalmawia. So with his joining the E.I.T.U., the party also disappeared from the political platform of the Mizo forever.

#### **4.4.3: Eastern India Tribal Union (EITU)**

The party had its origin from the Khasi and Jaintia Hills and the Garo Hills at the time when the States Reorganisation Commission for Assam was being constituted. The main objective was to carve out a hill state from the hill districts of Assam. Even after the demand for a separate hill state was denied by the States Reorganisation Commission, leaders like Pug, Nichols roy and Sangma tried their best to keep alive the party spirit in order to create an atmosphere of better understandings, closer link and

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<sup>34</sup> Ibid p.142



unity among the tribal of the North-East India. Thus, a movement of political reorganisation in the interest of tribal people's solidarity came to figure very highly in party policies. As a consequence, the Chief Executive Members and prominent political leaders of the Khasi and Jaintia Hills, the Garo Hills, the Mikir Hills and the Mizo Hills had a consultative meeting in 1957 at Aizawl in the District Council Hall and resolved that the E.I.T.U. be formed as the joint political platform of the hill districts so that the demand for a statehood may be simultaneously pressurised. In the political agenda of the party, the demand for a hill state was the only important objective clearly spelt out.

When the meeting was held, the ruling party was Mizo Union and it hosted the meeting. But the party refused to merge itself with the E.I.T.U. for no obvious reasons. Such being the case, the opposition parties, the U.M.F.O. and the Mizo Union Right Wing, stepped in to join and the political body of the Eastern India Tribal Union was formally inaugurated on 2<sup>nd</sup> October, 1957 at Aizawl.

Lalmawia and K.C.Lalvunga were the first President and the first General Secretary of the Mizoram unit of the E.I.T.U. On account of his intellectual capacity and imposing personality, Lalmawia remained to be its President till the party was cast out of existence by the outbreak of MNF rebellion in 1966.

At the initial stage, the membership drive made a good headway, and many veteran politicians also joined the party. However, it could not take root in the villages because the ruling Mizo Union party got them into its grasp. In 1962 election, the candidates from the E.I.T.U. could win only one seat each in the District Council and in

the Assam Legislative Assembly. In the meantime, in order to gear up the movement for a separate hill state, a new political organisation known as the All Party Hill Leaders Conference (APHLC) was formed at Shillong. The E.I.T.U. set-up its candidate for Assam Legislative Assembly on behalf of APHLC in the general election that took place in 1962. Both the M.U. and the E.I.T.U., agreed to become the constituent units or APHLC and set-up the Mizo District branch council of action in Aizawl. In the Council, Lalmawia was appointed the General Secretary. All the candidates were set-up by the APHLC on the condition that they would agree to resign immediately after the election in case they were elected. Accordingly, the two candidates, namely, Ch.Chhunga and Saprawnga of the Mizo Union submitted their resignation, and R.Thanhlira of the E.I.T.U. also submitted but withdraws it later on for two reasons. First there was no certainty that he would be nominated again to contest the seat he vacated. Secondly, he reasoned that it was pointless unless the District Council also resigned en masse.

As time passed by, the popularity of the E.I.T.U. slid down very quickly because the central council at Shillong suffered from internal faction, personal rivalry and clash of personality which culminated in a division within the E.I.T.U. These events led to the final dissolution of the party in Khasi and Caro Hills. Its impact was soon felt in Mizoram and it ceased to function after the MNF rose in open rebellion in 1966 .

#### **4.4.4: Indian National Congress (INC)**

The Indian National Congress party was first established in Mizoram by A.Thanglura on 11<sup>th</sup> April, 1961. The party was headed by A.Thanglura as President,

Lalsawia as Vice President, Lalthankima as General Secretary and Hrangchhuana as Treasurer. This body was formed as the first adhoc committee of the party. In the following year in 1962, a conference of the congress workers held in Aizawl formally constituted the Mizo District Congress Committee (M.D.C.C.) and proceeded to elect its office bearers consisting of the President, A.Thanglura, the Vice President-Lalthangliana, Treasurer-Hrangchhuana and Zalawma as the General Secretary

Not before long, the party got into deep waters due to fierce competition for leadership and there were frequent changes in the personnel of the party leadership. Thus the party could not find a congenial soil for growth in Mizoram for a considerable period of time. It was thought that the party was unpopular mainly for two reasons, First, the Mizo had no stomach for the Assam Pradesh Congress Committee. Cultural and ethnic contradiction might play a role here. A strong bond of ethnicity and cultural isolation had been so long the pride of the Mizo and it was not easy for them to be yoked in political partnership with the outsiders. Second, the founder President, A.Thanglura was a defector from the Mizo Union from which he was elected to the Legislative Assembly. He lowered himself in the public esteem by taking an opposite stand over the sensitive issue of language policy. While the other two members of the Legislative Assembly from Mizoram resigned from the Chaliha government in protest against the language policy, A.Thanglura severed his connection with the party under the strain and took initiative to form the Mizo District Congress Committee (MDCC). But A.

Thanglura's personal qualities induced some members of the M.D.C.C. to leave it and his position was high and dry, and the party made no progress<sup>35</sup>.

Moreover, A.Thanglura settled in Shillong and spent most of his time there. Thus, his frequent visit to the District was not sufficient to make a wide-based mobilisation of public opinion and the party was virtually defunct in the initial stage. Due to its lack of leadership and its hierarchical organisation, the average masses of the area were not made aware of its policies and programmes. However, the majority of the hill people did not appreciate the party dominated by outsiders and regarded it as an instrument of exploitation. In general, political parties in Mizoram appeared to have a strong inclination toward regionalism.

In fact, the two dominant parties, the Mizo Union and the Mizo National Front were hostile to the Congress for it was seen as an alien party. Regional biasedness dominated the political scene in Mizoram until in the late sixties when the whole District was plunged into political turmoil.

From the very beginning, the Congress party was debilitated by the internal fighting between two groups, one headed by R.Dengthuama. and another by Hrangchhuana who was favoured by A.Thanglura. This factionalism got intensified as time passed by and continued to do havoc to the party organisation for quite a long time. The M.D.C.C. contested the general election to the Assam Legislative Assembly in 1962, but it was badly humiliated. It did not do better in the ensuing bye-elections for

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<sup>35</sup> V.V.Rao Op.Cit. p.144

the Assembly in 1963 and 1964. Just a year after the insurgency broke out, the General Election to the State Assembly was held in 1967. None dared to file nomination except A.Thanglura who contested from Aizawl West and Aizawl East constituencies. He was elected uncontested and later vacated the Aizawl West Seat. Though this was an ignoble action to the public sight, it marked an important turning point in the political history of the Congress party. Since then, it gained in popularity. Thus, the Indian National Congress emerged as a strong party in 1967 out of the troubled situation created by the MNF insurgency.

A step was taken to revitalize the party activity by calling the party election in 1967. Dengthuama was elected as the President, Zalawma General Secretary and Hrangchhuana, Treasurer. As this election took place in the absence of A.Thanglura, the incumbent President could not thus sit idle to observe the situation. He incited Hrangchhuana to actively participate in the party politics so that a group might be formed to subvert Dengthuama. In the meantime, the Assam Pradesh Congress Committee (APCC) appointed Hrangchhuana as President of the party and Dengthuama Vice-President on the advice of A.Thanglura without party election. This was quite strange to the tribal mind and it made the rift in the party more deeply ingrained. In abid to reach amicable settlement, the two faction groups agreed to hold on election of the president in July 1970, and Dengthuama was again elected as its President.

This incident was far from being a solution to party rivalry because A.Thanglura, a minister in the Choudhury's cabinet of the Assam Legislative Assembly, found that

Dengthuama's leadership was unpalatable. Through his influence, he convinced the leadership at Assam Pradesh Congress Committee (APCC) to appoint Hrangchhuana in place of Dengthuama for the President of the M.D.C.C. and this made the election null and void. But Dengthuama was not content with the decision and continued to work against Hrangchhuana's leadership. So the party remained paralysed owing to the mad race for power and personal rivalries until the general election to the Mizoram Legislative Assembly took place in the Union Territory Government of Mizoram in 1972.

It was indeed not worthy the scenes which arise in quiet recollection of the past history of the party. It was crowned with success in the 1970 election to the District Council and in a span of two years the ministry was toppled twice by the congress led faction with the assistance of Mizo Union. At last, the United Mizo Parliamentary Party formed by the Mizo Union came into alliance with the faction group of the Congress led by Dengthuama to get a majority on the floor. Ch.Chhunga became the Chief Executive Member of the District Council and the Congress Ministry was given a dead blow prematurely. Thus, the Congress party remained faction-ridden during the first ten years of its existence. For this reason, the party leadership had no time to organise the party for the needed mobilisation of public opinion and it remained weak. There was neither ideological basis nor policy issue over which the party came to split into two irreconcilable groups. It was indeed unfortunate to waste so much of time, energy and the public comfort merely because of personality clashes among the leaders.

As the congress party was incurably ailing with internal strife, it performed very poorly in the first election to the Legislative Assembly of Mizoram Union Territory. In the first place, a great pressure was exerted by each group to field group loyalists for the party candidate and it faced serious difficulties in finalising the list of candidates. As a consequence, it fought the election with organisationally divided and unprepared. Unlike the practice in regional parties, the list of candidates was finalised by the Central Parliamentary Board on the recommendation of the two faction leaders, Hrangchhuana and Dengthuama. It was indeed a very trying time for A.Thanglura, the founder President for his name had been struck off in the final list.

In 1972, the Congress party cashed on the MNF resentment for the Mizo Union by honouring the MNF stand and offering as its political goal and peaceful settlement of Mizo political problem. At this time, the greatest anxiety of the Mizo people was the oppression of the military that assumed power without civil administration and the violent reaction of the underground forces of MNF. As the Congress party belonged to the ruling party at the Centre, it was expected by the public to be far more effective in mediating the peace process. However, it paid heavily the price of internal dissension and in the first election to the Mizoram Legislative Assembly in 1972, it could capture only 6 seats out of the 30 seats contested.

With the elevation of Mizoram to the U.T. status in 1972, the jurisdiction of the Assam Pradesh Congress Committee over the Mizo District Congress Committee came to an end. Since then the Mizoram Pradesh Congress Committee (MPCC) came into

existence, and the Mizoram Congress party enjoyed a functional autonomy of party administration. Even then, the fighting for leadership persisted within the party cadre.

Though it stumbled very badly in the first general election of the U.T., the Mizo Labour Party and the Mizo Socialist party agreed to merge themselves with the Congress party and the merger took place on 18<sup>th</sup> October, 1972. As soon as the new organisational set-up was drawn up in 1973, the party elected Lal Thanhawla to the President, Sakhawliana to the Vice-President, C.L.Ruala to the Treasurer and Lalkunga to the General Secretary. A remarkable feature of this election was the relegation of veteran leaders by preferring the new faces to come to the helm of affairs. These new leaders were more militant and active than their predecessors, and under their leadership the party gained much in strength.

In the meantime, political change had taken a different course because the Mizo Union ruling party had been hard pressed by the political intrigues of the Congress party on the one hand and by the MNF resentment of its stance on the other. Under this situation a merger with the Congress party was thought to be the best course of political option by the Mizo Union leaders. Both the parties were inclined to merger since the Congress was eager to be actively involved in administration, and the Mizo Union which was only a regional party also wanted to belong to an All India Party which may bestow patronage from the centre. There were two other important causes. First, because of its cold attitude towards the MNF, many of its members defected to the Congress party. Second, by coming to the fold of the National Party, it would be easier for them to come



to good terms with the MNF; this was understandable since the MNF never recognised the Mizoram Cabinet as competent to discuss outstanding issues particularly when it was headed by Ch.Chhunga who and whose party as a whole had always opposed MNF activities. A change in party would make it possible for them to put on a changed outlook to establish the credibility of their leadership.

The two leaders were invited to come to Delhi during the All India Congress Committee (AICC) session to discuss the issue of merger. Ch. Chhunga, the Chief Minister of Mizoram and Lal Thanhawla, the M.P.C.C. President could come to terms for an unconditional merger of the two parties. To finalise the matter, further discussions were held in New Delhi on 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> November, 1973. Ultimately, the Congress and the Mizo Union were merged as approved by the Congress High Command on 24<sup>th</sup> January, 1974. According to the content of the terms and condition of the merger, Ch.Chhunga would be inducted to the ministry from the erstwhile Congress party. As per the provision, J.Lalsangzuala, General Secretary and Zalawma were inducted as ministers to the ministry from the erstwhile Congress party. The party post also would be shared.

Top priority was given to the issue of the peace settlement and the Congress party resolved in its meeting held at Aizawl from 19<sup>th</sup> to 25<sup>th</sup> May, 1974 to urge the Central leaders to hold direct talks with the MNF.

Immediately after the dissolution of both the parties, an adhoc committee was formed with Lal Thanhawla as President and Ch.Saprawnga as Vice-President. Lal

Thanhawla was later replaced by Hrangia as President at the instruction of the A.I.C.C. When the M.P.C.C. election was held on 28<sup>th</sup> April 1977, Lal Thanhawla was again elected to the President, Lalbuai and C.L.Ruala to the Vice-President and the Treasurer respectively. In the same year, it contested in Lok Sabha election but was defeated. Following this debacle in the election, the Congress party split into two with one group forming Janata Party. A sizeable number of its members thus left the party to join the central ruling party. As a consequence, in the general election to the state assembly it won only four seats. Moreover, the People's Conference Party led by Brig.T.Sailo was well favoured by the Mizo National Army and that force had proved too strong for the Congress.

In the initial period, the M.P.C.C. adopted the rules and regulations framed by the A.I.C.C. But they were soon found to be impracticable in the context of Mizoram and the M.P.C.C. therefore requested the Central authority to allow it to draw its own rules and introduce certain changes in the Congress Constitution to suit the local conditions. Necessary permission was granted and the constitution was amended on 12<sup>th</sup> October, 1978. According to this revised Constitution the structure of the Congress party in Mizoram has been created.

After a short while the relation between the PC Ministry and the MNF was bitter. At that moment Congress came up with peace settlement as its number one policy and gained quickly in popularity among the masses. Later on, the PC Ministry was accused of conspiring the suppression of MNF revolt and mercilessly killing MNF men. This was

indeed successful, the masses of students rose in revolt against the PC Ministry organising protests of various sorts. As the pro-MNF tactic helped Brig.T.Sailo to dethrone the Congress, now the situation overturned and Congress had chosen to arm itself with Mizo nationalism in the form of sympathy to the MNF cause. This was certainly superior to Brig.T.Sailo's ideal of regionalism in the mind of the public and Congress had got a landslide victory in the 1984 election. Since then, Congress had remained a formidable opponent for the regional parties.

The Congress took quite along time to establish itself as a dominant party in Mizoram. It has been mentioned that lack of unity and dynamic leadership were the main weakness of the party. This certainly hampered the development of the party. After the Mizo Union merged into Congress and it became the ruling party in 1974, things began to turn in favour of the Congress party. The whole economy of rural Mizoram shattered under the weight of guerilla warfare and people were impoverished. A long spell of economic difficulty dampened the spirit of nationalism and tribal integrity. A large proportion of the people now have thought that it is best to belong to a party patronaged by the Centre. As a result, the Congress party was in power in Mizoram for more than 20 years (1984-86, 1989-1998, 2008-2018)<sup>36</sup>.

#### **4.4.5: Mizo National Front (MNF)**

The Mizo National Front which rose in open revolt in 1966, traced its origin to the Mizo National Famine Front (MNF) which was formed in 1960 as welfare

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<sup>36</sup> L.H.Chhuanawma "National Parties in Mizoram" in L.H.Chhuanawma et al. *Government and Politics of Mizoram* (Scientific Book Centre, Guwahati, 2015) p.191

organisation to relieve the people who were in great distress due to famine induced by Mautam (Flowering Bamboo). This famine was a botanical phenomenon that occurred every fifty years and it lasted for one year only. From the harvest of 1961, the famine was over, and the organisation had no purpose in continuing to exist. So on 22<sup>nd</sup> October, 1961, the Mizo National Famine Front (MNFF) dropped the word ‘Famine’ from its name, became the Mizo National Front (MNF) and came up as a political party with the objective of the creation of an independent and Sovereign state of Mizoram.

But it was said that the seed of independent movement had been planted long before the MNF came into existence as a political party. On 21<sup>st</sup> February, 1947, a public meeting was held at Theatre Hall in Aizawl to discuss the future state of Mizoram. The meeting was chaired by Sainghinga, Assistant Superintendent and about 200 members consisting of important officials, church leaders and teachers were present in the meeting. After a long and hot debate, the meeting decided to take vote for a resolution by raising of hand. Those who voted for independence were in majority and so the meeting passed the following resolution, “We, the Mizo, should have self-rule and stand on our own feet.”

Some of the leading figures in the meeting went ahead to popularize the independent policy and published a pamphlet<sup>37</sup>, the summary of which read as follows:

*“The members who assembled here today belong to the most intelligent class of the society and they fully represent the community from which they come. What the*

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<sup>37</sup> Pamphlet issued by Pachhunga, P.S.Dahrawka, Hmartawnphunga (in Mizo) 1947

*assembly thought to be the best course of political option at this transitional period has been to uphold independent policy. This must be stand taken by all those who really have a desire for freedom and a true spirit of patriotism. It is equally beneficial to both :the chiefs and the commoners. This will help to preserve Mizo identity as a tribe and safeguard the tribals from being assimilated by the Indians. Some educated people and leaders used to think that it will be possible to retain autonomous administration under the new Government of India. But when the British leaves us and the Indian Government comes to govern us, it will not be possible to effectively prevent outsiders from entering into Mizoram though administrative autonomy is granted to some extent. If the Indians are coming to confront with us we shall be the less competent and looser in all the business dealings. Therefore, the Mizo Nation will perish in a short time.*

*Because of short sightedness some people advocate joining of India since they think that is the best way to emancipate the Mizo people. They eagerly wish the Congress party to set foot on Mizoram because they trust it to have power to deliver the people. The Mizo Union leaders have the same view and hate the British Government and try to keep us into the fold of India. To a certain degree, the Britishers are good defender of backward people like us, the degradation suffered by a small tribe like us would be unspeakable.*

*In any case, we the Mizo have never been subjugated by any other nation except by the British. Why should it be necessary to yield ourselves to India . Since have no common characteristic with the Indians and our language, culture and history differ so*

*much and we should on no account agree to surrender ourselves to the Government of India. We must have a separate entity and stand on our own feet. We should bear no servile attitude so long as we want to preserve our liberty, freedom and ethnic identity. Let us not have a slave mentality. It is not too humiliating that the transfer of ownership should take place for us in this way as if we were a property? Should we rise to do whatever we can to resist it? Lest the opportune time would run out! If we fail to seize this opportune moment, it will be too much damaging to the generations to come and they would find us guilty. Let us know that we who belong to this generation do bear high responsibility. It is thus imperative for us to stand united to confront what may come in our way”.*

The message contained in the above statement is unmistakably clear. A section of the intellectuals was determined to have a homeland for the Mizo and they urged the people to stand united for the cause of freedom. They dreamt that there must be one place in the World where Mizo could be masters of their own fate, where they would have not to rely on others from whom in any case they could expect neither help nor justice. But in that crucial moment many of them grew hesitant and lost their nerve. So the vision of independence could not lift them out of and above themselves and they were then unable to summon the necessary resources to suffer struggle and die.

After a long lapse of time, the incident of a great famine over the Mizo hills disturbed the people from their deep slumber and revived the spirit of independence among the young generations. This famine is a phenomenon that occurs at every 50

years interval owing to the flowering of bamboos. When the bamboos flower and bear seedss they provide a very good feed for the rats whose population usually increases at a rapid rate. Mizo hills had experienced the devastation of the jhum fields by the rats in the past and by 1958 the menace of Mautam famine threatened again and the District Council also cautioned the Assam Government to have prepa~ ration underway for meeting the famine which would strike the Mizo hills the following year. On 29<sup>th</sup> October, 1958 was passed the following resolution and submitted to the Assam Government<sup>38</sup>:

*“With the flowering of the bamboos in the Mizo District the rat population has phenomenally increased and it is feared that in the next year (1959) the whole District would be affected. As a precaution against the imminence of famine following the flowering of the bamboos, the District Council feels that the governmertt be moved to sanction to the Mizo District Council, a sum of Rs. 15.00 lakhs to be expended on a test relief measure for the whole of the Mizo District including the Pawi-Lakher Region”.*

This pleading was dismissed by the Chaliha Government of Assam as of insignificant consequence mainly for two reasons. First, political antagonism between the Mizo Union which controlled the District Council and the ruling Congress in Assam played a role, and Chaliha, the Chief Minister of Assam was not interested to oblige the Mizo Union. Secondly, the state government thought that the prediction of such a large scale famine was more like a flight of fance than reality of natural phenomenon. But in a

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<sup>38</sup> V.V.Rao, Op.Cit. p.235

matter of few days all the standing paddies in the jhum field were devastated and the prediction came true. The Government was taken aback to see that it did happen. People had suffered starvation and leaders were agitated. All this led to more alienation. The members of the District Council were indeed furious to see the indifference of the Assam Government, and one of the members Vanlalbuka said, “If we continue to be neglected...the people’s feeling will be for secession from Assam”.<sup>39</sup>

When the Mautam Famine came to an end, the people who formed the Mizo National Famine Front were psychologically ready to establish a political party with a pro-independent policy and so the Mizo National Front party came into existence in 1961. Laldenga, an ex-havilder of the Indian army was the first President and he was a fiery orator. R.Vanlawma became the first Secretary of the party. As the radical elements of the EITU immediately merged with the MNF, this new party soon made its presence all over the Mizo hills within a short span of time.

From the very beginning, the ideological basis of the party was the right to have self-determination and it set the objectives of attaining independence and sovereignty for greater-Mizoram as its political goals. Formally, the aims of the MNF were, however, to bring all the contiguous areas of the Mizo District inhabited by the ethnic Mizo into one administrative unit. There were two branches in the party organisation, viz. the Political branch and the General branch. The Political branch consisted of party leaders who were responsible for formulating policy framework on the line of which the party had to take

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<sup>39</sup> V.V.rao, Op.Cit p.236



action and perform its task. On the other hand, the General branch comprised elderly members. They carried out all the party tasks according to the directives given to them. Surprisingly, most of the members did not know the real intention of their party until it declared independence and rose in open revolt.

From its very inception, the M.N.F. started to propagate the legitimacy of its claim for independence saying we had the backing of law and United Nations Organisation (UNO) would stand to defend our cause. The ignorant masses were really fascinated by this propaganda. However, Laldenga wanted that they struggled with a non-violent method while Vanlawma proposed to join Naga rebels and fight against India. So their relation was broken and Vanlawma resigned from the party.

Despite the resignation of one of the key persons, the M.N.F. continued to grow in popularity mainly because of the independent policy and charismatic leadership of Laldenga. The main strategy of the MNF was to capture Mizo District Council and then the seats in the Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha. If they could get popular support in the election, then they would be able to press their demand for independence and take the matter to the U.N.O. So Laldenga wrote, “The main aims and objectives of the party are to reunite all the Mizo people living in the contiguous areas, liberate Mizoram from India, to uplift the living standard of the Mizo, to safeguard and promote Christianity, to prepare itself for acquire dependable source of support of some foreign countries”<sup>40</sup>.

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<sup>40</sup> Laldenga, *Mizoram Marches Towards Freedom* (Pamphlet) 1962

Some of the salient points on which the political propaganda was based by the MNF are: First, there is no racial affinity between the Indians and the Mizo. This was the reason why the British made Mizo Hills an excluded area to save it from the process of Indianization.

Second, the rich natural resources which remained unexploited would be utilised to develop industrial enterprises and Mizoram would have abundant wealth.

Third, an independent Mizoram would receive liberal aids from other nations and with these aids Mizoram would be made one of the most prosperous nations of the world.

Fourth, the suffering from food scarcity would no longer happen in independent Mizoram because foodgrains would be easily imported from Pakistan and Burma.

Fifth, Christian religion is despised and suppressed. Moreover, no major project have been planned for Mizoram in the five year plans. The District has been left devoid of any facilities for higher and technical education<sup>41</sup>.

The issue on which they fought for political survival was independent Mizoram and persuaded the masses to be occupied with the vision of free Mizoram. The vision must be made supernaturally glorious, for otherwise men would not be ready to struggle and die. Since reality cannot possibly come up to this expectation, disenchantment is inevitable. Anyway, MNF was not able to take Mizo to its dream land utopia.

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<sup>41</sup> Lalhmingthanga, *Exodus Politics*

In the arena of politics, the MNF first attempted to establish itself securely by capturing District Council administration. It contested in the third District Council election held in February 1962; but all of its candidates were badly defeated. But the MNF would not budge an inch in spite of the humiliating blow inflicted on them in the election. They continued to campaign with fiery zeal to win people to the cause of independence and to arouse communal feeling against Indians. So, in the bye-election to the Assam Legislative Assembly held on 24<sup>th</sup> April, 1963 it won two seats out of three. This proved that the idea of independence had won the hearts of many people since the election to the assembly was contested on the issue of succession.

Encouraged by this budding success in the election in less than two years from its inception, the MNF proceeded to chalked out strategies for its political programme. In view of the geographical position of the territories occupied by Mizo tribes, the General Assembly of the party chalked out the liberation programme as follows<sup>42</sup>:

1. That the liberation movement would be launched with a non-violent method of politics.
2. That the movement should at the first stage be limited and confined to the areas held by India.
3. And that most of the Mizo lands sliced out and given to the adjoining countries should, for the time being, be termed as Irrendenta (unredeemed land).

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<sup>42</sup> Laldenga, Op.Cit.

This statement of political objectives offered the highest option available to the Mizo political status and attracted many young intellectuals. There was momentous growth in membership of the party through the intensification of campaign all over the Mizo District. At the same time, Laldenga appeared to have double standard in his political dealings. On the one hand, he promised to carry out his mission with a non-violent method and on the other, he secretly operated military training for the young volunteers and sent many important leaders and activists to East Pakistan (now Bangladesh). And in the early part of December, 1963 he himself and his Vice President, Lalnunmawia and his Secretary (Political branch) Sainghaka also crossed over to East Pakistan to contact the Pakistani officials for drawing up of the insurrection plan. He was given the necessary backing and sheltering in case the need arose. While returning to India, Laldenga and Lalnunmawia were arrested by the security forces and sent to prison at Silchar. They were, however, released soon since Laldenga promised to the Chief Minister of Assam in writing that he would not anymore indulge in clandestine activities which would amount to anti-national activities. He would continue his political activities within the Indian Constitutional framework peacefully<sup>43</sup>.

A period of confusion in the MNF politics followed the release of Laldenga because his promise to the Chief Minister amounted to undoing of all the political commitment he pledged earlier. He appeared to waver in his public statements without specifying the points of reference, and for this reason, J.D.Bajeva commented that “No

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<sup>43</sup> R.N.Prasad, *Evolution of Party Politics in Mizoram*, Political Science Review Vol-12, No. 3 & 4, 1973, p.199

one imagine that a political leader of his caliber and status who was widely respected in his area was concealing the truth”<sup>44</sup>. His imprisonment did not make him to budge in his activity and he started raising and recruiting volunteer forces all over the villages. The volunteers were divided into three categories Commando squad, Intelligence squad and Signal squad. All the volunteers took oath of allegiance on admission saying, “I hereby willingly and conciously promise in the name of God to be a faithful volunteer of Mizo National Front”. They also conducted campaign for raising recruitment of volunteers. Many volunteers crossed into Pakistan to undergo training in arms and guerilla warfare activities during 1964 and 1965. By the end of 1965, young volunteers numbering about 8000 were recruited by the MNF from different villages and towns.

Assam Government must have been informed about all these activities, but did not take heed to the intelligence reports. It happened so because Chaliha, the Chief Minister, was more occupied with the demand for a Hill State and wanted to strengthen the MNF movement for counteracting the Mizo Union activity. Perhaps he believed that MNF would not go beyond the attempt to overthrow Mizo Union Party in the District Council election. In the meantime, the Mizo Union President, Ch.Chhunga clearly saw the gathering cloud of revolution and persuaded Laldenga to withdraw from his impossible demand for independence and his intension for resorting to violent action in a face to face meeting with him on 28<sup>th</sup> August, 1965. Even though Laldenga was convinced of the dangerous consequences of such a violent movement, he found it

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<sup>44</sup> J.D.Bajeva, The Land Where the Bamboo Flowers, p.80

impossible to go back for his followers were already charged with emotion of rebellion. Whatever the cost, armed confrontation was inevitable<sup>45</sup>.

On 28<sup>th</sup> February 1966, all the MNF volunteers assembled at all important centres of the district and military posts to take complete control of the whole district by making surprise attacks. But the plan could not be made secret. The sound of gun fire, explosives and the battle cries filled the midnight air of the Mizo hills which so long remained tranquil. Within a few hours of the first shots in the campaign, the MNF declared independence. In terms of content and style, the text of the declaration appeared to be cast in the same mould with the American Declaration of Independence.

The revolutionaries had become imbued with the idea of freedom and they felt that it was against the law of Nature's God that India dominated Mizo people against their will. They accused the Government of India of having violated the charter of the United Nations and its decimation of Human Rights. And they reasoned that in accordance with the assurance given in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, India did not have the right to refuse Mizo's their right to self-determination. Moreover, the Government of India was coloured as high-handed alien oppress refusing to mete out justice. This was in contradiction to the promises of setting up a separate administrative machinery in conformity with the principle of democracy. This vilifying of the Indian Government was not warranted but necessary to rouse the Sentiment of the people.

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<sup>45</sup> K.M.Zakhuma, Op.Cit. p.102

As a fitting sequel, the MNF leaders declared India as an unworthy government to rule over the civilised Mizo people who were endowed with territorial integrity by nature and nature's God. The Government of India was found most unwholesome because it tried to suppress Christianity and assimilate the Mizo people to Hinduism. Due to these reasons, 61 MNF leaders claiming themselves as the representatives of the Mizo people, declare Mizoram as an independent state with the power of waging war, concluding peace treaty and establishing commerce and trade with all sovereign states. They also took their case to all the sovereign states appealing them to recognise Mizoram as an independent state.

From the 1<sup>st</sup> March 1966, the MNF party began to fight against India which amounted to unlawful activity and for twenty years it fight under the banner of freedom. The Central Government declared the activities of the MNF party illegal and the personnels involved in the organisation outlawed. Since then, all the normal life in the hill district was completely disrupted. Schools were closed, villages reeled and cultivation disrupted. These events estranged the people of Mizoram from the Indian Government and their relation with the Indian Army was embittered. However, as time went by, the MNF came to realise that they were no match for the Indian Army and their continued struggle would merely prolong the misery of the common people.

After two decades of insurgent activity, the MNF and the Indian Government reached an agreement and the historic peace accord was signed on 30<sup>th</sup> June, 1986. This accord was designated as the Memorandum of Settlement and it was signed by

R.D.Pradhan, the then Union Home Secretary on behalf of the Government of India, Laldenga on behalf of MNF and Lalkhama, the Chief Secretary of the Mizoram Government on behalf of the Government of Mizoram.

According to the provisions contained in the Memorandum of Settlement, the MNF party's constitution was amended and reorganised accordingly. This was followed by the elevation of Mizoram to a statehood on 20<sup>th</sup> February, 1987 and in the first State Legislative Assembly elections held in 1987, MNF won 24 seats out of the 40 seats allotted for the state and formed ministry with Laldenga as its Chief Minister. After the death of Laldenga, MNF party has been headed by Zoramthanga, under whose leadership the MNF came into power between 1998-2008 and 2018 till date. It is now being transformed itself into the strongest regional political party in Mizoram.

#### **4.4.6: Mizoram People's Conference (MPC)**

Since the early part of 1966, Mizoram remained a notified disturbed area on account of the insurgent activity of the MNF. In the first Legislative Assembly election of the Union Territory in 1972, the Mizo Union party was returned with absolute majority and later merged with the Congress on 24<sup>th</sup> January, 1974. However, the state of political disturbance was so disturbing that it was not possible for a democratically elected government to maintain law and order. The required security had been provided by the Indian Army which regularly carried out combing operation of the rebel MNF forces. In such circumstances, the law and order situation was maintained by the army and especially in the rural areas to the MNF hideout, the army was a law unto itself.



Both sides committed heinous crimes. The army had the superior hand all over the territory and looked after the day to day affairs to administration during the darkest period of the disturbance. People felt powerless to react to the injustice suffered from the excess of military operation. They found no political leaders nor civil administrators who were ready and willing to protect the rights of innocent civilians against the inhuman cruelty of the army. There was a period when a great section of the Mizo public was treated as a defeated nation whose people were enslaved under the colonial dictatorship.

It was at this hour of the deepest need of the people for a protector that Thenphunga Sailo, a retired Brigadier of the Indian Army came to Mizoram and became the spokesman for civil liberty. Army operation against the guerilla forces of MNF was so extensively staged that civil liberty was completely curtailed. People in general were seized by fear psychology and no one dared to speak even for the constitutional rights of the people. Fear of torture and killing by the Indian Army was the greatest anxiety that faced them. T.Sailo was particularly moved by the outrage of military operation against innocent civilians. He travelled all through the length and breadth of Mizoram to proclaim to the people that the army personnels were also liable to punishment for wrongful exercises of power. At the same time, he collected evidence against the crimes committed by the army while operating in Mizoram. In order to have a proper forum for organising the activity, he formed the Human Rights Committee on 1<sup>st</sup> June, 1974<sup>46</sup>. The aims and objects of the Committee were to protect and sustain the freedom guaranteed in

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<sup>46</sup> Brig. Thenphunga Sailo, *A Soldier's Story* (Hnamte Press, Aizawl, 2006) Pp. 110-112

the constitution of India; to seek judicial protection in the case of transfer of the people from place to place; to bring about mutual understanding and cooperation between the security forces, and the people; to focus the attention of the authorities to the physical and mental sufferings of the people who were compelled to evacuate their ancestral homes and occupy the newly formed villages.

The Human Rights Committee was a non-political body which committed itself to the duty of corrective measures. It submitted a very long memorandum containing alleged crimes committed by the Indian Army upto 1974. A court case was filed at the Gauhati High Court against the forcible shifting of villages and a claim for compensation was made against the loss of properties. This made the Human Rights Committee very popular and its chairman Brigadier T.Sailo had been regarded as the Messiah who would deliver the people of Mizoram from the oppressive measure of Military Operation.

When the organisation had assumed a stature of maximum popularity, many of its adherents were feeling that if something worthwhile was to be done it should be through a constitutional process of politics. This feeling was heightened by T.Sailo's arrest and detention at Nowgong jail during the enforcement M.I.S.A. A conference was attended by 900 delegates from all parts of the Mizo hills. They agreed to form a political party and the Human Rights Committee was converted into a political party called the People's Conference on 17<sup>th</sup> April, 1975. An Adhoc Committee was

constituted with Brig.T.Sailo as its first President, Sakhawliana as the Vice-President and Zairema as the General Secretary<sup>47</sup>.

As a political party, the People's Conference (PC) party spelled out its political objectives as follows: First, it would make every effort to encourage and assist the MNF for the peaceful settlement of the Mizo problem. Second, it would try to bring all the contiguous areas inhabited by the Mizo under one administrative unit which would be designated as a 'Greater Mizoram'. Third, it would preserve and protect the culture and language of the Mizo. Fourth, it would undertake a developmental programme for the speedy progress of the Union Territory, especially of the rural sector. Brig.T. Sailo held the view that the responsibility for the backwardness of the Union Territory was not with New Delhi but Ch.Chhunga's ministry which performed very poorly, ridden with corrupt practices. Apart from the nagging issue of political trouble, the speedy and allround development of the Union Territory was the main concern of the party.

The structural organisation of the party is similar to the other regional parties with the general headquarters at the Union Territory level, Area Headquarters at the district level, block committee at the constituency level and the village level unit organisations at the bottom of hierarchical structure. The highest authority of the party is the General Assembly which is convened at least once in a year. There is a central executive committee at the general headquarters which deals with day to day administration of the party. Besides this, the party has a well organised youth wing,

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<sup>47</sup> Brig. Thenphunga Sailo, Op.Cit. Pp.112-114.

women's wing and senior wing dealing with the various activities of the party. On all important occasions, the members of the party used to wear a traditional shawl (Tawlhloh puan) symbolizing the traditional valour of Mizo warriors. The motto of the party is Psalm No.15 in the Bible.

Hardly two years had passed since the new political party, PC was born and it faced the Lok Sabha poll held in March 1976. Its candidate Dr. Rothuama won the lone seat of Lok Sabha defeating his Congress rival C.L.Ruala by a wide margin<sup>48</sup>. In the following year, in May 1978, the Assembly poll of Mizoram took place and the PC party had landslide victory capturing 23 seats out of the 30 seats polled for the Union Territory. Brigadier T.Sailo was elected leader of the House and became the Chief Minister, and he installed a five member ministry consisting of Lalhmingthanga, P.B.Rosanga, Zairemthanga and F.Malsawma.

But the events within the ministry soon took a bad turn as confrontation cropped up between two rival groups. The speaker of the House, Thangridema and 8 MLAs lost their confidence in the Chief Minister and formed a split group and later withdrew their support for the leadership of Brig.T.Sailo. This was not a rebellion against the party objectives nor for what it stood for. It was mainly due to personality clash and ambitions for ministership. After all the attempts failed to resolve the crisis within the party forum, 8 PC rebel MLAs met in a joint meeting and formed United Legislature Party. They submitted in writing their claims for majority in the House to the Lt.Governor on 30<sup>th</sup>

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<sup>48</sup> Brig.Thenphunga Op.Cit. Pp. 115-117

October, 1978, requesting him to allow Thangridema to form a new ministry. Without giving chance to prove the validity of their claims, Brig.T.Sailo submitted his resignation and advised the Lt.Governor to dissolve the Assembly for fresh election. So on the advice of the Lt.Governor, the President of India issued on 11<sup>th</sup> November 1978, a proclamation of emergency for placing Mizoram under the President's Rule for a period of six months. As a consequence, the party was split into two camps known as the PC (A) and the PC (B) groups, the first led by Brig. T.Sailo and the second by Thangridema.

The dissolution of the House necessitated the holding of midterm poll which came to take place on 24<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup> April, 1979. Six political parties contested in this election and PC (B) also fielded 24 candidates to contest against its mother party, PC (A). The People's Conference (A) was again voted to power by winning in 18 constituencies. Congress bagged 5 seats, PC (B) 4 seats and Janata 2 seats. Brigadier T.Sailo was again elected the House leader and he proceeded to form ministry with the same nominees of the previous ministry. The captain of a new stable ministry promised a clean and efficient administration to deal with the eventuality in the territory and also to respond to the basic requirements of the vast majority of the poor people.

The PC Ministry directed its main effort to infrastructural development in order to develop Mizoram economy. People in general appreciated its policy for economic development. But Brig. T.Sailo was accused of formulating anti-Laldenga policy and of attempting to suppress insurgency by using force. MNF reacted with fierce violence by killing some of the staunch supporters of the PC leader. A political chaos reigned over

the most parts of T.Sailo's ministry owing to the interference of opposition parties which took advantage of the rift between militant MNF undergrounds and the PC party. People were in general eager to have a peace settlement between the MNF and the Indian Government to end the state of guerilla warfare that had been raging nearly for two decades. T.Sailo was thought to obstruct the peace process and the opposition parties instigated students to stage protest strikes. So in the fourth General Election held in 1984, T.Sailo's party lost the people's mandate and the Congress party which capitalised on the support of MNF came to be victorious. The PC party won only eight seats out of the 30 seats. In the first State Legislative Assembly election held in 1987, the party bagged only 3 seats out of the 40 seats polled. Since then, it could hardly be any force to reckon within the political arena of Mizoram.

In order to stage a comeback, the PC party adopted Zo-reunification policy, without dropping the other objectives, as the foremost political goal after its election debacle in 1987. It was argued that the land inhabited by the racial origin of Mizo was divided into three parts, each going to different national states. Mizo should appeal to the UNO to form a greater Mizoram. But the message was not received with much enthusiasm and in the mid-term poll held in 1989, its strength was further reduced to one MLA. Perhaps the party was enervated by a series of failures in the election that it had chosen to merge with the Mizo National Union and formed a new party known as the Democratic Party (DP) on the 12<sup>th</sup> July, 1989 under the leadership of Brig.T.Sailo; DP was merged with national party, the Janata Dal on 25<sup>th</sup> October, 1991. Again, Janata Dal was changed into Mizoram Janata Dal (MJD) on 24<sup>th</sup> October, 1993, which was

renamed as Mizoram People's Conference (MPC) in 1995. It formed a coalition government with MNF led by Zoramthanga from December 8, 1998 to December 9, 1999<sup>49</sup>. From this date, the PC party ceased to exist as strong regional political party in Mizoram till date.

Besides, Zoram Nationalist Party (ZNP) has been in existence, founded by Lalduhawma on 29<sup>th</sup> June, 2000, which was renamed from Mizo National Front (Nationalist), a splitter group of MNF that was formed following the defeat of Lalduhawma by Zoramthanga in the organisational election to the post of MNF President<sup>50</sup>. While the two regional political parties, having an all Mizoram presence, MPC and MNF already formed a government, ZNP has not yet come into power, despite contesting state assembly elections either jointly with other regional parties or singlehandedly since its establishment in 2000. Yet, it was able to return members to the Mizoram Legislative Assembly in 2004, 2008 and 2018 elections. The last elections in 2018 has been remarkable for ZNP in the sense that it successfully contested elections under the umbrella of Zoram Peoples' Movement (ZPM), a conglomerate of six coalescing political forces by returning seven of its candidates to the Legislative Assembly. After 2018 state assembly election, ZNP decided to merged with ZPM which will try to occupy regional space in the electoral politics of Mizoram in the years to come.

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<sup>49</sup> L.H.Chhuanawma, Op.Cit. Pp.148-150

<sup>50</sup> L.H.Chhuanawma, Op.Cit. Pp.163-164

It has been opined that there have been two political spaces in the electoral politics of Mizoram; one is regional space, which has been occupied alternative by regional parties (1952-1974,1975-1984, 1987-1989, 1998-2008), mostly MU, PC and MNF, whereas national space has been filled in by the Congress party (1974-1975, 1984-1986, 1989-1998, 2008-2018).



## CHAPTER - V

### COALITION POLITICS IN MIZORAM

#### **5.1: Formation of Interim Ministry: The First Coalition Government in Mizoram**

A 'Political Agreement' was signed between the Congress Vice President Arjun Singh and Laldenga in New Delhi on 25<sup>th</sup> June, 1986 in the presence of Lal Thanhawla, the then Chief Minister of Mizoram, thereby paving the way for the formation of an Interim Coalition Ministry, with Laldenga as the Chief Minister and Lal Thanhawla as Dy.Chief Minister. This 'Political Agreement' was signed before Memorandum of Settlement (MoS) was actually signed between Laldenga on behalf of MNF, Union Home Secretary, R.D.Pradhan on behalf of Government of India and Lalkhama on behalf of Government of Mizoram on 30<sup>th</sup> June, 1986. By this 'Political Agreement', the then Chief Minister of Mizoram Lal Thanhawla volunteered to resign to pave the way for Laldenga to become the Chief Minister of Mizoram till fresh elections could be conducted.

Therefore, as per the agreement between Indian National Congress (INC) and the MNF, the Congress in its meeting resolved to accept Laldenga as the leader of the Congress (I)-MNF Coalition government to ensure the restoration of peace and normalcy in Mizoram. Accordingly, Lalthanhawla, the then Chief Minister, resigned to make way for the formation of Congress (I)-MNF coalition. Then a coalition government with Laldenga as Chief Minister and Lal Thanhawla as Deputy Chief

Minister was sworn in on 26<sup>th</sup> August, 1986. With this the birth of coalition politics was witnessed for the first time in Mizoram. The other seven Minister of Cabinet ranks were also sworn in on the same day. The new coalition ministry consisted of 5 Congress Ministers and 4 MNF Ministers. Besides the Chief Minister and Dy.Chief Minister, Vaivenga, R.Thangliana, Sainghaka and CL Ruala from the Congress (I) and Zoramthanga, Tawnluia and Rualchhina from the MNF party were inducted as Cabinet Ministers. After the formation of the Congress (I)-MNF coalition government, the Chief Minister Laldenga described the vacation of the seats of Chief Ministers and other ministers by Lal Thanhawla and his colleagues as a significant contribution for the successful implementation of Mizoram Peace Accord. In a public meeting held at Aizaawl on the 10<sup>th</sup> July, 1986 the Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi also praised Lal Thanhawla and his colleagues for their sacrifice and called them patriots putting the interests of their country above personal interests<sup>1</sup>. The Congress had promised to do whatever means necessary to end the insurgency movement that lasted for 20 years. The credit for the restoration of peace and normalcy in Mizoram fully goes to the Congress politically. By doing all this, the Congress party also won the heart of many Mizo people who in the future became faithful supporters of the party. In this way, they once again firmly established their position in Mizoram politics. What they did at this period also decided their future in Mizoram politics to a great extent<sup>2</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> Lalmuana Guite, *Party System in Mizoram: Its Origin, Growth and Role* (An unpublished M.Phil Dissertation, Mizoram University, 2014) p.65

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. p.65

The life time of the interim government headed by Laldenga was limited to only six months, after which a fresh election was to be conducted. This is because the MNF representatives were not elected by the electorates. Added to this, the MNF was supposed to take immediate steps to amend its Articles of Association to make them conform to the provisions of the Constitution of India and other relevant laws of the country. The Government had declared February 16, 1987 to be the date for fresh election. The parties then soon began their campaign throughout the length and breadth of Mizoram.

## **5.2: Mizoram State Legislative Assembly elections**

As a result of the signing of Memorandum of Settlement between the Government of India and Mizo National Front (MNF) on 30<sup>th</sup> June, 1986, Mizoram was elevated to the status of a full-fledged state in 1987 by the passage of 53<sup>rd</sup> Constitution (Amendment) Bill, 1986 on 14<sup>th</sup> August, 1986, with special safeguards and provisions for forty elective seats in the Mizoram Legislative Assembly, and the first State Legislative Assembly was held on February 16, 1987. The number of Assembly Constituencies was increased from 30 to 40 Assembly Constituencies which are distributed among the various districts of Mizoram.

### **5.2.1: The First State Legislative Assembly Election, 1987**

The first State Legislative Assembly election was held on 16<sup>th</sup> February, 1987. In the election, the Indian National Congress was the lone national party contesting the 1987 election and the rest were state parties. The Mizo National Front (MNF) was not a

recognised political party under Election Commission of India and hence all its candidates fought on independent tickets. Besides, the People's Conference (PC) (recognized) and the Mizo National Union (MNU) (unrecognized) and several independents were in the election fray; the actual contest, however, was between the Congress and the MNF (Ind).

Although working together under a coalition government, both MNF and Congress were carrying out their campaigns separately. There was infighting between the two parties (MNF & Cong). The Congress stated that the MNF was responsible for making Mizoram a disturbed area for 20 years. Their hands were still smeared with the blood of innocent people and were not fit for taking over civilian administration. The PC party also attacked the MNF party from all sides. However, due to the charisma and oratorical skill of Laldenga and the feeling of Mizo nationalism brought up by the underground returnees, the MNF had massive victory in this election. The MNF won 24 seats, Congress 13 seats and PC 3 seats. Laldenga continued as Chief Minister and Zoramthanga became the Finance Minister. It may be interesting to note here that as the Mizo National Front party was not yet a registered party under Election Commission of India, all its candidates fought elections in independent tickets<sup>3</sup>.

**Table 5.I:** Performance of Political Parties in the First Mizoram State Assembly Election, 1987.

PARTY	SEATS		VOTES POLLED	
	Contested	Won	Votes	%

<sup>3</sup> Statistical Report on General Election, 1987 to The Legislative Assembly of Mizoram, Election Commission of India. p.4

IND. (MNF)	37	24	84549	36.62
INC	40	13	76152	32.99
PPC	36	3	54717	23.70
MNU	21	Nil	7688	3.33
Other Ind.	11	Nil	7759	3.36

(Source: **Statistical Report on General Election, 1987 to The Legislative Assembly of Mizoram, Election Commission of India**).

There were 145 candidates contesting the election including the independent candidates. The MNF contested the Assembly elections for the first time on independent tickets and managed to secure 24 seats out of 37 seats it contested. The party secured 36.62 percent of the total votes polled while the ruling party suffered a heavy setback securing only 13 seats out of the 40 contested seats. The People's Conference bagged only 3 seats out of 36 seats it contested and secured 23.70 percent of the votes polled. While the Mizo National Union (MNU) party which championed the cause of the poor section of the society drew blank though it fielded 21 candidates, it could obtain only 3.33 percent of the votes cast. The voter turnout was remarkable in the sense that 74.80 percent of the electorates cast their valuable votes in the very first election after granting statehood to Mizoram. The first state assembly election was also very significant because the MNF party, after twenty years of underground signed a Memorandum of Settlement to bring peace in the Mizo society and contested the Mizoram Legislative Assembly for the first time<sup>4</sup>. The people of the state were willing to give them a chance to sit on the coveted seat of power to try their worth in state administration. The MNF fought the election mostly on the local issues and pledged to implement all terms and conditions and other provisions contained in the Memorandum of Settlement.

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<sup>4</sup> F.Lalhriatpuii, *Urban Local Body Elections in Mizoram* (An unpublished M.Phil Dissertation, Mizoram University, 2016)

**Table 5.II:** List of Successful candidates in 1987 Election

Constituency	Winner	Sex	Party
1.Tuipang (ST)	Hiphei	M	INC
2.Saiha (ST)	S.Hiato	M	INC
3.Sangau (ST)	H.Rammawi	M	PPC
4.Lawngtlai (ST)	F.Lalramliana	M	INC
5.Chawngte (ST)	Nirupam Chakma	M	INC
6.Tlabung (ST)	Hari Kristo	M	INC
7.Buarpui (ST)	P.Lalbiaka	M	INC
8.Lunglei South	H.Lalruata	M	IND
9.Lunglei North (ST)	L.Ngurchhina	M	IND
10.Tawipui (ST)	Siamliana	M	IND
11.Vanva (ST)	K.Thanfianga	M	IND
12.Hnahthial (ST)	Vanlalnghaka	M	INC
13.North Vanlaiphai (ST)	Lalrinmawia	M	IND
14.Khawbung (ST)	K.Vanlalauva	M	IND
15.Champhai (ST)	Zoramthanga	M	IND
16.Khawhai (ST)	R.Lalawia	M	IND
17.Saitual (ST)	Andrew L.Herliana	M	IND
18.Khawzawl (ST)	Tawnluia	M	IND
19.Ngopa (ST)	Zosiana Pachuau	M	PPC
20.Suangpuilawn (ST)	Vanlalngena	M	INC
21.Ratu (ST)	Lalrinchhana	M	IND
22.Kawnpui (ST)	Lalkhawngaiha	M	IND
23.Kolasib (ST)	Aichhinga	M	IND
24.Bilkhawthlir (ST)	Vanlalhruaia	M	IND
25.Lokicherra	J.Thanghuama	M	IND
26.Kawrthah (ST)	Saikapthianga	M	INC
27.Mamit (ST)	Zahungliana	M	IND
28.Phuldungsei (ST)	Liansuama	M	INC
29.Sateek (ST)	Laldenga	M	IND
30.Serchhip (ST)	Lal Thanhawla	M	INC
31.Lungpho (ST)	K.L.Lianchia	M	PPC
32.Tlungvel (ST)	P.C.Zoramsangliana	M	INC
33.Aizawl North-I (ST)	Lalhimpuii	F	IND
34.Aizawl North-II (ST)	Laldenga	M	IND
35.Aizawl East-I (ST)	Saingura Sailo	M	IND
36.Aizawl East-II (ST)	Rokamlova	M	INC
37.Aizawl West-I (ST)	H.Hrangdawla	M	IND
38.Aizawl West-II (ST)	Rualchhina	M	IND
39.Aizawl South-I (ST)	R.Tlanghmingthanga	M	IND

40.Aizawl South-II (ST)	Chawngzuala	M	IND
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(Source: **Statistical Report on General Election, 1987 to the Legislative Assembly of Mizoram. Election Commission of India**)

The victory of the MNF was remarkable in the sense that MNF began to emerge as one of the most popular regional parties like they did in 1960s. It was declared unlawful organisation by the Government since 1966 due to taking up arms against the Government of India. At the first General Election of Mizoram State the party was able to revive itself in the position of capturing political power. This is a remarkable achievement for the party to survive in Mizoram politics. Because, after spending several years inside the jungle, they could lose the confidence of many supporters. But the election results indicated that the people still trusted the MNF. In other words, we can say that majority of the Mizo still favored politics based on regional and Mizo nationalist sentiment<sup>5</sup>.

The MNF in the beginning consisted of mostly non-propertied persons. After the signing of Memorandum of Settlement, the party has brought the urban rich, the urban proletariat, the educated petty bourgeoisie, the upstart contractor, businessman to its fold, who had their specific needs and demands. The party also enrolled many people belonging to urban/rural class. It also extended its supporting base to the areas of Autonomous District Council areas inhabited by the majority of Mara, Lai and Chakma. It accepted the principle of Parliamentary democracy. The party leadership has also claimed to be legitimate body based on election. Despite all this, the party still does not lose its characteristic of personality cult politics because the present leaders were still

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<sup>5</sup> Lalmuana Guite, Op.Cit p.66

those people who guided the party before the Memorandum of Settlement was signed in 1986.

The MNF ministry which enjoyed complete majority in February 1987 election was rudely shaken in August 1988, when 8 MNF MLAs with Chawngzuala, the MNF Vice President announced their rebellion against Laldenga's leadership for his 'high-handedness' for not giving them Ministerial berths. In short, the main reason for their rebel was that they were not happy with the appointment of cabinet members under Laldenga. They formed a new party called MNF (Democrat). However, the speaker J. Thanghuama soon announced the suspension of the rebel MLAs with the promise that a strict action would be taken against them under the Anti-Defection Law. He did this with the hope that, if all the rebel MLAs were suspended the MNF could still retain majority in the House. Meanwhile, the Congress (I) President Lal Thanhawla, who hoped that there was the possibility of forming a government, went to New Delhi to discuss the matter with central Congress leaders. But, on the night of 7<sup>th</sup> September, 1988 the Governor, Hiteswar Saikia announced the proclamation of President's Rule in Mizoram under Article 356 of the Indian Constitution. The MNF government, upon which the people put up so much hope, collapsed without completing half of its term. This caused a great setback for the consolidation of MNF as a strong regional political force in Mizoram, after 20 years of underground movement. It may be interesting to note here that leaders of the MNF (D) returned to the MNF fold in February, 1993.



### 5.2.2: The Second State Legislative Assembly Election, 1989

Within 19 months of the MNF ministry was sworn in, intra-party factionalism took place within the party. The factionalism within the party ultimately brought a split in the MNF in 1988 into two -MNF and MNF (D). Consequently, the House was dissolved in September 1988. Therefore, the second Mizoram Legislative Assembly election was conducted on January 21, 1989. In the election, seven political parties contested the election - the Congress (i), People's Conference (PPC), Mizo National Front (MNF), and other unrecognized parties like Mizo National Union (MNU), Chakma Jati Parishad (CJP), Hmar People's Conference (HPC) and the breakaway Mizo National Front (D) as well as few other independents. Most of the independent candidates came from the unrecognized parties.

**Table 5.III:** List of successful candidates in 1989 Election

Constituency	Winner	Sex	Party
1.Tuipang (ST)	Hiphei	M	INC
2.Saiha (ST)	S.Hiato	M	INC
3.Sangau (ST)	H.Rammawi	M	MNF
4.Lawngtlai (ST)	F.Manghnuna	M	INC
5.Chawngte (ST)	Nirupam Chakma	M	INC
6.Tlabung (ST)	Hari Kristo Chakma	M	INC
7.Buarpui (ST)	P.Lalbiaka	M	INC
8.Lunglei South	F.Sapa	M	INC
9.Lunglei North (ST)	R.Thangliana	M	MNF
10.Tawipui (ST)	P.Siamliana	M	IND
11.Vanva (ST)	R.Romawia	M	MNF
12.Hnahthial (ST)	Vanlalnghaka	M	INC
13.North Vanlaiphai (ST)	C.L.Ruala	M	INC
14.Khawbung (ST)	K.Vanlalauva	M	MNF
15.Champhai (ST)	Zoramthanga	M	MNF
16.Khawhai (ST)	J.H.Rothuama	M	MNF
17.Saitual (ST)	Andrew Lalherliana	M	IND

18.Khawzawl (ST)	Tawnluia	M	MNF
19.Ngopa (ST)	Zosiama Pachuau	M	PPC
20.Suangpuilawn (ST)	Vanlalngena	M	INC
21.Ratu (ST)	Lalrinchhana	M	MNF
22.Kawnpui (ST)	Vaivenga	M	INC
23.Kolasib (ST)	Aichhinga	M	MNF
24.Bilkhawthlir (ST)	Zalawma	M	INC
25.Lokicherra (ST)	Lal Thanhawla	M	INC
26.Kawrthah (ST)	Saikaphianga	M	INC
27.Mamit (ST)	Lalhuthanga	M	INC
28.Phuldungsei (ST)	Liansuama	M	INC
29.Sateek (ST)	Lalrawnliana	M	MNF
30.Serchhip (ST)	Lal Thanhawla	M	INC
31.Lungpho (ST)	P.C.Bawihtluanga	M	INC
32.Tlungvel (ST)	P.C.Zoramsangliana	M	INC
33.Aizawl North-I (ST)	Rosangliana	M	INC
34.Aizawl North-II (ST)	H.Thansanga	M	INC
35.Aizawl East-I (ST)	John Lalsangzuala	M	INC
36.Aizawl East-II (ST)	Rokamlova	M	INC
37.Aizawl West-I (ST)	J.Thanghuama	M	MNF
38.Aizawl West-II (ST)	Rualchhina	M	MNF
39.Aizawl South-I (ST)	R.Tlanghmingthanga	M	MNF
40.Aizawl South-II (ST)	Laldenga	M	MNF

(Source: **Statistical Report on General Election, 1989 to The Legislative Assembly of Mizoram, Election Commission of India**).

The Congress (I) secured 23 seats, the MNF bagged only 14 seats. MNF supremo Laldenga contested from two Assembly Constituencies, but won only from Aizawl South-II constituency. The PC party got only one seat in spite of their heavy campaign on the platform of ZoRO (Zo Reunification Organization) and two independent candidates successfully contested the election as well.

The Congress (I) Ministry headed by Lal Thanhawla was sworn in on the 24<sup>th</sup> January, 1989. Besides the Chief Minister Lal Thanhawla, J.Lalsangzuala, Rokamlova, Zalawma, H. Thansanga and C. L. Ruala were inducted as Minister of Cabinet Rank,

while P. Siamliana, S. Hiato and Nirupam Chakma were sworn in as Ministers of State. The ministry was subsequently enlarged with the induction of Vanlalnghaka, Saikapthianga and Lalhuthanga as Ministers of State.

**Table 5.IV:** Performance of Political Parties in the Second Mizoram State Assembly Election, 1989<sup>6</sup>.

PARTY	SEATS		VOTES POLLED	
	Contested	Won	Votes	%
INC	34	23	93561	34.85
MNF	40	14	94763	35.29
PPC	38	1	52813	19.67
Ind.	50	2	27353	10.19

The above table shows the performance of the participating political parties in the 1989 election. The ruling party, the MNF suffered a heavy blow which was mainly due to the split in the party. However, the Congress gained the maximum due to the internal schism of the MNF party. The Congress managed to secure 23 seats and got 34.84 percent of the votes polled. The breakaway MNF (D) did perform their role, they made an electoral alliance with the Congress and also managed to secure 2 seats. All political parties fought the battle of ballots mainly on local issues like the re-unification of the Mizo inhabited areas of India, Burma and Bangladesh, and laid emphasis on regional grievances and problems as well as the interest and separate identity of the Mizos. The polling percentage increased from 74.80 in 1987 to 81.30 percent in 1989.

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<sup>6</sup> Statistical Report on General Election, 1989 to The Legislative Assembly of Mizoram, Election Commission of India. p.5

The Mizo electorates have once again displayed their belief in the Indian parliamentary system. They voted not only for the interest in partisan politics but also for peace, stability, progress and socio-economic development.

### **5.2.2A: Election Rigging Issue and Formation of Coalition Forces against the Congress Ministry**

After the election results were announced, MNF and PC started making a serious allegation of 'vote rigging' in the election. They accused Santosh Mohan Dev, the then Minister of State for Home at the centre, of manipulating the election that helped the Congress (I) return to power. A joint procession was organised by MNF and PC on the 25<sup>th</sup> January, 1989 where Laldenga and Brig.T.Sailo, who were all along showing each other's backs at together. This signified the emergence of coalescing forces to take on the might of the ruling ministry in the post-peace accord period.

There was a rumor that some of the ballot boxes that were used by the Congress were found under a culvert. The Regional Party Action Committee (RAC) on the night of 16<sup>th</sup> February, 1989 made a statement that they would exhibit the missing ballot boxes that were recovered on the following day. On 17<sup>th</sup> February, 1989 there was a huge public gathering where RAC made a statement that the Congress party had rigged the election but did not have any ballot boxes to exhibit. That night, at about 8:40 PM there was a bomb explosion near the residence of Saikapthianga, MLA at Republic locality, but luckily no one was injured. On the 18<sup>th</sup> February, 1989 five leaders of the newly formed Regional Party Action Committee (RAC), namely C.Chawngkunga, C.Vulluaia,

F.Malsawma, Laltanpuia and Tuikhuahtanga were apprehended in connection with the alleged disappearance of ballot boxes. A case under IPC section 380 was filed against them for the loss of 166 ballot boxes from the custody of the government which were subsequently, found in the possession of these leaders. However, their arrest led to near disorder of law and order when confrontation between opposition party workers and police personnels took place. Opposition party workers shouted the slogan 'Rigging Government should resign'. Clashes erupted, as a result of which 15 persons were brought to the nearby hospital. The RAC leaders were arrested and lodged at the Central Jail that night.

Zoeng, a vernacular newspaper, on 20<sup>th</sup> February, 1989 published that one ballot box was discovered under a culvert as claimed by C.Chawngkunga. But the Chief Election Commissioner Lalmanzuala, in an interview claimed that the Government had in its possession all the ballot boxes used in the election. In the meantime, the Congress party proposed to organise a 'Victory Rally' at Aizawl on 21<sup>st</sup> February, 1989. However, due to the prevailing atmosphere and the fear of more disturbance as the 'rigging of election' climate was still on, they dropped it on the request of the Church and different social organisations.

Ever since Mizoram was elevated to the status of Statehood, there has been high level of political competition between the MNF and Congress. Though PC party had been in existence, it could no longer provide itself as an alternative to the other two parties. It may be worthwhile to mention here that polarisation of political parties has

been the political norm since 1987, although there are always other smaller political parties which have been trying to make their presence felt in the state.

### **5.2.2A: New Political Development in Mizoram**

#### **5.2.2A1: The Political Journey of People's Conference (PC) Party**

By the middle of 1989 a new party called Democratic Party (DP) was born. In the All Regional Party Convention (ARPC) which was held on July 12, 1989 Lalkhawliana in his speech said that there was unanimous decision to form a new regional party by abolishing the existing People's Conference (PC) and the Mizo National Union (MNU). Brig.T.Sailo also said that those who dislike the Congress must all join the new political party where there would be no selfish end. Lalthankunga remarked that the only means available to save Mizoram was in the new party since the MNF had lost all its principle. Zosiama Pachuau suggested that the new party must be named Democratic Party (DP), which was fully accepted. Brig.T.Sailo was made the President, Lalduhawma the Working President, Lalhmingthanga Sailo as Vice President and Malsawma Colney as Treasurer. The Democratic Party, in its Assembly held on 25-26 September, 1990, decided to merge into the Janata Dal (JD) party. On the 27<sup>th</sup> September, 1990, Dulal Chandra Barua, Janata Dal Zonal Convener inaugurated the new JD office at Aizawl. The PC office, office of the DP then become the office of JD which completely swept away the PC and one time much talked about policy ZoRO completely disappeared as a strong opposition force in the politics of Mizoram.

### **5.2.2.A2: Rise of Zoramthanga**

A very remarkable phenomenon in the politics of Mizoram was the emergence of Zoramthanga as the leader of the largest regional political party in the state, following the demise of MNF President, Laldenga. On the 7<sup>th</sup> July, 1990 Laldenga, the founding father and President of MNF suddenly died at the London Heathrow Airport on his way home. This was a great loss for MNF as well as Mizoram because he was a natural born politician. He was a man who can win over the hearts of thousand of Mizo. He led MNF from the beginning, throughout the insurgency period and after which the party formed the government under Mizoram State for the first time. He put the party in respectable position. After the death of Laldenga, Zoramthanga became the President of MNF. Zoramthanga's leadership was, however, constantly challenged by Lalduhawma. The struggle for leadership eventually led to the split of the MNF party in 1997. In the MNF organisational election held in 1997, Lalduhawma lost election to the post of the party President to Zoramthanga.

As a result of the defeat, Lalduhawma and his supporters left the MNF and formed a new party called Mizo National Front (Nationalist) on 20<sup>th</sup> March, 1997, which was later changed into Zoram Nationalist Party (ZNP) on 29<sup>th</sup> June, 2000 with Lalduhawma as its President.

### 5.2.3: The Third State Legislative Assembly Election, 1993 and Formation of Coalition Ministry

**Table 5.V:** Performance of Political Parties in the Third Mizoram State Assembly Election, 1993<sup>7</sup>.

PARTY	SEATS		VOTES POLLED	
	Contested	Won	Votes	%
BJP	8	0	10004	3.11
INC	28	16	106320	33.10
MNF	38	14	129813	40.41
Ind.	47	10	75097	23.38

The third State Assembly Election was held on 30<sup>th</sup> November, 1993. In the 1993 election, there were two national parties in the election fray viz. the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and the INC. Other state parties included the MNF and other unrecognized parties, the rest came from independent candidates. The election witnessed pre-poll alliance between the Congress (i) and the People's Conference (PC). The PC had joined the Janata Dal right after the State Assembly election of 1989 and renamed itself as Mizoram Janata Dal (MJD), thus forming an alliance with the Congress in the 1993 election. The ruling party managed to garner 16 seats, 7 seats less than the previous election securing 33.10 percent of vote share. The MNF party bagged 14 seats with a vote share of 40.41 percent. In the election, the voter turnout was 80.75 percent which is above the national average in General Elections of Lok Sabha. Although, the ruling Congress party won only 16 seats but formed the government with the support of its ally the Mizoram Janata Dal (MJD) which managed to secure eight seats. Thus, the second

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<sup>7</sup> Statistical Report on General Election, 1993 to The Legislative Assembly of Mizoram, Election Commission of India. p.5



coalition government in Mizoram was formed by the Congress and MJD for a short period.

**Table 5.VI:** List of Successful Candidates in 1993 Election

Constituency	Winner	Sex	Party
1.Tuipang (ST)	K.T.Rokhaw	M	IND
2.Saiha (ST)	Zakhu Hlychho	M	MNF
3.Sangau (ST)	S.T.Rualyapa	M	INC
4.Lawngtlai (ST)	T.Hrangluta	M	MNF
5.Chawngte (ST)	Nirupam Chakma	M	INC
6.Tlabung (ST)	Hari Kristo Chakma	M	INC
7.Buarpui (ST)	P.Lalbiaka	M	INC
8.Lunglei South	H.Lalruata	M	MNF
9.Lunglei North (ST)	R.Lalthangliana	M	MNF
10.Tawipui (ST)	F.Lalzuala	M	MNF
11.Vanva (ST)	H.Thangkima	M	IND
12.Hnahthial (ST)	L.P.Thangzika	M	MNF
13.North Vanlaiphai (ST)	C.L.Ruala	M	INC
14.Khawbung (ST)	Hrangthanga Colney	M	IND
15.Champhai (ST)	Zoramthanga	M	MNF
16.Khawhai (ST)	Lalbiakzuala	M	INC
17.Saitual (ST)	C.Chawngkunga	M	IND
18.Khawzawl (ST)	C.Vulluaia	M	IND
19.Ngopa (ST)	H.Zathuama	M	IND
20.Suangpuilawn (ST)	F.Lawmkima	M	IND
21.Ratu (ST)	Lalrinchhana	M	MNF
22.Kawnpui (ST)	R.L.Valla	M	INC
23.Kolasib (ST)	Zosiama Pachuau	M	IND
24.Bilkhawthlir (ST)	Vaivenga	M	INC
25.Lokicherra (ST)	John Rotluangliana	M	INC
26.Kawrthah (ST)	Saikapthianga	M	INC
27.Mamit (ST)	Lalhuthanga	M	INC
28.Phuldungsei (ST)	Liansuama	M	INC
29.Sateek (ST)	B.Lalthlengliana	M	MNF
30.Serchhip (ST)	Lal Thanhawla	M	INC
31.Lungpho (ST)	P.C.Bawihluanga	M	INC
32.Tlungvel (ST)	P.C.Zoramangliana	M	INC
33.Aizawl North-I (ST)	Lalhmingthanga	M	IND
34.Aizawl North-II (ST)	F.Malsawma	M	MNF
35.Aizawl East-I (ST)	John Lalsangzuala	M	INC

36.Aizawl East-II (ST)	F.Lalremsiama	M	INC
37.Aizawl West-I (ST)	Lalkhama	M	INC
38.Aizawl West-II (ST)	J.V.Hluna	M	IND
39.Aizawl South-I (ST)	R.Tlanghmingthanga	M	MNF
40.Aizawl South-II (ST)	Lalsawta	M	MNF

(Source: **Statistical Report on General Election, 1993 to The Legislative Assembly of Mizoram, Election Commission of India**).

### **5.2.3.A: Defection in Mizoram Politics:**

In 1993 assembly election Congress won majority seats. Five MLAs who won on MNF ticket in the election held on 30<sup>th</sup> November, 1993 from Lunglei and Chhimtuipui Districts, namely H. Lalruata (appointed as Cabinet Minister), L.P. Thangzika, F.Lalzuala (appointed as Deputy Chief Whip of Congress (I), Zakhu Hlychho and T. Hrangluta defected to the Congress party. Two independent MLAs H. Zathuama and K.Rokhaw from Ngopa and Tuipang Constituencies respectively also joined Congress (I), as they were eventually appointed as Chairman of MIZOFED and MIFCO respectively. The Congress party led by Lal Thanhawla successfully weakened the bond of the opposition party and further strengthened the Congress rule in the state. An attempt was made by the MNF to disqualify the defected MLAs but their efforts proved to be of no avail.

After this election, there was the formation of coalition government between the MJD and Congress party. But this coalition government did not last long. After a few months Lalhmingthanga, Finance Minister and H.Thangkima, Minister of State were dropped from the ministry. Meanwhile, the other two MJD ministers, namely C.Chawngkunga and Zosiama Pachuau formally joined the Congress (I) and got themselves firmly entrenched in the Ministry. Later on, the three remaining MJD

Ministers of State, namely C.Vulluaia, Hrangthanga Colney and F. Lawmkima were also dropped from the Ministry.

In the meantime, the opposition MNF was also not free from its internal problem. The decision of the party Office Bearers in March, 1997 resulted in the emergence of a splinter group led by Lalduhawma who formed MNF (Nationalist) Party. In 1998, the MNF had another split when three of its MLAs Lalkhama, F.Lalremsiama and Lalsawta formed the MNF (Unity) on 28<sup>th</sup> November, 1998 with H.Rammawi as its President; its objective was to unite the two warring groups- MNF and MNF (Nationalist).The MNF (Unity), however, failed to unite the two factions and soon disintegrated. Lalkhama joined the Congress in 1998, Lalsawta and F.Lalremsiama joined Citizens' Common Front (CCF) in the same year, a non-political outfit dedicated to reform the politics of Mizoram; H.Rammawi also joined the MNF in 2003.

#### **5.2.4: The Fourth State Legislative Assembly Election, 1998**

In 1998 Parliamentary Lok Sabha election, Citizens' Common Front (CCF) and MPC (Mizoram People's Conference) put up a joint candidate Dr. Lallungmuana, a Lecturer in Pachhunga University College who won the election against rival Congress candidate by only a margin of 40 votes which many analysts believed was due to the anti-incumbency wave against the Congress (I).

The 1998 election witnessed the emergence of new political parties and the number of the contesting political parties increased drastically with four national parties, three state parties and three unrecognized parties. The contesting political parties were

the BJP, INC, MNF, Janata Dal (JD), Samata Party (SAP), Lok Shakti (LS), Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD), Maraland Democratic Front (MDF), Mizo National Front (Nationalist) MNF (N), Mizoram People's Conference (MZPC) and independent candidates. A total of 337938 votes were cast with a polling percentage of 76.32.

**Table 5.VII:** Performance of Political Parties in the Fourth Mizoram State Assembly Election, 1998<sup>8</sup>

PARTY	SEATS		VOTES POLLED	
	Contested	Won	Votes	%
BJP	12	0	8448	2.50
INC	40	6	100608	29.77
JD	10	0	947	0.28
SAP	10	0	940	0.28
LS	15	0	774	0.23
MNF	28	21	84444	24.99
RJD	8	0	588	0.17
MDF	2	0	7721	2.28
MNF (N)	24	0	31190	9.23
MPC	28	12	69078	20.44
Ind.	44	1	33200	9.82

#### 5.2.4.A: MNF-MPC Pre-Poll Alliance:

Following the success of the coalescing parties (CCF-MPC) in the Lok Sabha election of 1998, MNF and MPC agreed to enter into pre-poll electoral alliance and fight Legislative Assembly Election together. The fourth Legislative Assembly Election of Mizoram was held on 25<sup>th</sup> November, 1998 in which the coalition of MNF and MPC captured power successfully by winning 33 seats in all. This victory was followed by the formation of MNF-MPC coalition ministry. The 1998 election was one of the most

<sup>8</sup> Statistical Report on General Election, 1998 to The Legislative Assembly of Mizoram, Election Commission of India. p.5

peaceful elections Mizoram had ever experienced. The credit for such calm and peaceful atmosphere goes to the Church and social organisation like YMA.

Out of the total 40 seats, MNF-MPC secured 33 seats which is absolute majority. The Congress won only 6 seats, while Lal Thanhawla and all his Cabinet rank Ministers had lost the election. MNF (Nationalist) Party including its President Lalduhawma also failed to return any of its candidates. On 3<sup>rd</sup> December, 1998 the new MNF-MPC coalition Ministry was sworn in with Zoramthanga, MNF President as the Chief Minister of Mizoram and Lalhmingthanga, Working President of MPC as Dy.Chief Minister.

The message of the electorate in the 1998 election was loud and clear. The ruling party, the Congress suffered a humiliating defeat securing only six seats. The Congress which was in power for the last ten years was voted out of power. It was clear that the electorate wanted a change of government to put an end to the Congress party's decade-long rule in the state. The MNF and MPC formed a pre-poll alliance and the alliance swept the assembly election, securing a majority of 34 seats in the 40 member state assembly. The MNF party gained the maximum by securing 21 seats while the MPC won 12 seats, and also supported by one independent. The 1998 election witnessed another coalition government in the state.

The task of the new Ministry was not that easy. It had inherited an empty coffer and debts to the tune of over 400 crores of rupees and liabilities to be cleared amounting to over 60 crores. The financial position of the state as a matter of fact was in shameless. According to the Finance Commission, the debt and liabilities of the state have to be met

within the current 1998-99 Financial Year. The new Ministry is therefore confronted with a formidable financial problem of gigantic character. The Ministry put top priority on sufficiency on food grains. It also made efforts about the generation of sufficient power from the local rivers by drawing up schemes and projects in this direction.

**Table 5.VIII:** List of Successful Candidates in 1998 Election

Constituency	Winner	Sex	Party
1.Tuipang (ST)	K.T.Rokhaw	M	INC
2.Saiha (ST)	Zakhu Hlychho	M	INC
3.Sangau (ST)	H.Rammawi	M	IND
4.Lawngtlai (ST)	C.Thanghluna	M	INC
5.Chawngte (ST)	Nirupam Chakma	M	INC
6.Tlabung (ST)	Nihar Kanti Chakma	M	INC
7.Buarpui (ST)	Lalrinzuala	M	MZPC
8.Lunglei South	J.Lawmzuala	M	MZPC
9.Lunglei North (ST)	Dr. R.Lalthangliana	M	MNF
10.Tawipui (ST)	Z.H.Ropuia	M	MNF
11.Vanva (ST)	C.Lalrinsanga	M	MNF
12.Hnahthial (ST)	F.Lalthanzuala	M	MZPC
13.North Vanlaiphai (ST)	R.Lalawia	M	MNF
14.Khawbung (ST)	Zoramthanga	M	MNF
15.Champhai (ST)	Zoramthanga	M	MNF
16.Khawhai (ST)	K.L.Lianchia	M	MZPC
17.Saitual (ST)	R.Lalzirliana	M	INC
18.Khawzawl (ST)	Aichhinga	M	MNF
19.Ngopa (ST)	P.B.Rosanga	M	MZPC
20.Suangpuilawn (ST)	H.Laltanpuia	M	MZPC
21.Ratu (ST)	Lalthankunga	M	MNF
22.Kawnpui (ST)	Sanghmingthanga Pautu	M	MNF
23.Kolasib (ST)	Rualchhina	M	MNF
24.Bilkhawthlir (ST)	Lalchamliana	M	MNF
25.Lokicherra (ST)	Tawnluia	M	MNF
26.Kawrthah (ST)	K.Sangthuama	M	MNF
27.Mamit (ST)	Brig.T.Sailo	M	MZPC
28.Phuldungsei (ST)	J.Lalthangliana	M	MZPC
29.Sateek (ST)	B.Lalthlengliana	M	MNF
30.Serchhip (ST)	K.Thangzuala	M	MNF
31.Lungpho (ST)	Vanlalhlana	M	MZPC

32.Tlungvel (ST)	L.N.Tluanga	M	MZPC
33.Aizawl North-I (ST)	Dr.Lalzama	M	MNF
34.Aizawl North-II (ST)	F.Malsawma	M	MNF
35.Aizawl East-I (ST)	Lalhmingthanga	M	MZPC
36.Aizawl East-II (ST)	H.Vanlalauva	M	MNF
37.Aizawl West-I (ST)	Col.Lalchungnunga Sailo	M	MZPC
38.Aizawl West-II (ST)	Lalrinchhana	M	MNF
39.Aizawl South-I (ST)	R.Tlanghmingthanga	M	MNF
40.Aizawl South-II (ST)	C.Sangzuala	M	MNF

(Source: **Statistical Report on General Election, 1998 to The Legislative Assembly of Mizoram, Election Commission of India**).

#### **5.2.4.B: End of MNF-MPC Coalition Ministry**

The Coalition ministry however ended on 9<sup>th</sup> December, 1999 after MPC MLAs were pressured by the MNF to resign. It was opined that the decision of the Congress party and MPC to jointly contest the coming Village Council election to be held on the 16<sup>th</sup> December, 1999 was the immediate reason for the end of MNF-MPC coalition ministry after working together for a year and six days. It was considered as an intention to weaken the MNF. Five MPC ministers were asked to tender their resignation. Besides, since the MNF had a working majority of MLAs on its own, there was a desire within the party to form an all-MNF ministry. And on 10<sup>th</sup> December, 1999 a ministry headed by Zoramthanga as Chief Minister began its rule, lasting its full term of five years.

#### **5.2.5: The Fifth State Legislative Assembly Election, 2003**

There was a change in the 2003 election in the sense that Electronic Voting Machines (EVM) was used for the first time in the state election. There were four

National parties in the election, the BJP, INC, Janata Dal (United) (JDU) and Communist Party of India (CPI). Other state parties were the MNF, MPC and Zoram Nationalist Party (ZNP) (formerly MNF(N)). Other registered (unrecognized) parties included the Ephraim Union (EU), Hmar People's Convention (HPC) and Maraland Democratic Front (MDF). There were 192 contesting candidates with 418561 valid votes polled. The voter turnout has increased from 76.32 to 78.67 percent in 2003.

**Table 5.IX:** Performance of Political Parties in the Fifth Mizoram State Assembly Election, 2003<sup>9</sup>

PARTY	SEATS		VOTES POLLED	
	Contested	Won	Votes	%
BJP	8	0	7813	1.87
CPI	4	0	124	0.03
INC	40	12	125944	30.09
MNF	39	21	132505	31.66
MPC	28	3	67784	16.19
ZNP	27	2	61465	14.68
JD (U)	28	0	1864	0.45
EU	3	0	123	0.03
HPC	1	1	2195	0.53
MDF	2	1	8146	1.95
Ind.	12	0	10598	2.53

As the voters in the state had often given the ruling party a second chance, the MNF party also got another chance by securing a simple majority. It is interesting to note that the vote share of the MNF party, with 31.66 percent had fetched the party 21 seats. While for the Congress, their vote share of 30.09 percent could be translated into only 12 seats. The Maraland Democratic Front (MDF) also returned their President

<sup>9</sup> Statistical Report on General Election, 2003 to The Legislative Assembly of Mizoram, Election Commission of India. p.5



P.P.Thawla from Tuipang constituency; he later tendered his support to the MNF ministry at the behest of his party and was appointed a Minister of State in the new ministry.

One major issue that dominated the election before and after was the allegedly kidnap drama in Suangpuilawn constituency, in which three candidates put up by MNF, Congress and MPC were allegedly kidnapped by unidentified persons. A strong pressure was also made to reschedule the election in this constituency without success. The EVM from the constituency were sent to the office of Election Commission of India, New Delhi for counting. After the votes were counted, H.Lalsangzuala an independent candidate got elected. But, the Central Young Mizo Association (CYMA), the apex body of Young Mizo Association (YMA) asked the winner to resign after the swearing in ceremony, as it claimed that election in this constituency did not take place under peaceful atmosphere. But no resignation was ever tendered.

**Table 5.X:** List of Successful Candidates in 2003 Election

Constituency	Winner	Sex	Party
1.Tuipang (ST)	P.P.Thawla	M	MDF
2.Saiha (ST)	S.Hiato	M	INC
3.Sangau (ST)	H.Rammawi	M	MNF
4.Lawngtlai (ST)	H.Vanlalthaliana	M	MNF
5.Chawngte (ST)	Rasik Mohan Chakma	M	MNF
6.Tlabung (ST)	Nihar Kanti Chakma	M	INC
7.Buarpui (ST)	Zodintluanga	M	INC
8.Lunglei South	Lalhmingthanga	M	MZPC
9.Lunglei North (ST)	Dr. R.Lalthangliana	M	MNF
10.Tawipui (ST)	Z.H.Ropuia	M	MNF
11.Vanva (ST)	C.Lalrinsanga	M	MNF
12.Hnahthial (ST)	F.Lalthanzuala	M	MZPC
13.North Vanlaiphai (ST)	D.Thangliana	M	MNF

14.Khawbung (ST)	K.Vanlalauva	M	MNF
15.Champhai (ST)	Zoramthanga	M	MNF
16.Khawhai (ST)	Lalrinliana Sailo	M	INC
17.Saitual (ST)	R.Lalzirliana	M	INC
18.Khawzawl (ST)	Andrew Lalherliana	M	ZNP
19.Ngopa (ST)	H.Rohluna	M	INC
20.Suangpuilawn (ST)	H.Lalsangzuala	M	HPC
21.Ratu (ST)	Lalduhawma	M	ZNP
22.Kawnpui (ST)	Sailothanga Sailo	M	MZPC
23.Kolasib (ST)	Zoramthanga	M	MNF
24.Bilkhawthlir (ST)	Lalchamliana	M	MNF
25.Lokicherra (ST)	Tawnluia	M	MNF
26.Kawrthah (ST)	Saikapthianga	M	INC
27.Mamit (ST)	Lalthlengliana	M	MNF
28.Phuldungsei (ST)	Liansuama	M	INC
29.Sateek (ST)	B.Lalthlengliana	M	MNF
30.Serchhip (ST)	Lal Thanhawla	M	INC
31.Lungpho (ST)	K.Lianzuala	M	INC
32.Tlungvel (ST)	Sainghaka	M	INC
33.Aizawl North-I (ST)	Dr.Lalzama	M	MNF
34.Aizawl North-II (ST)	H.Liansailova	M	INC
35.Aizawl East-I (ST)	K.Sangthuama	M	MNF
36.Aizawl East-II (ST)	H.Vanlalauva	M	MNF
37.Aizawl West-I (ST)	Aichhinga	M	MNF
38.Aizawl West-II (ST)	Lalrinchhana	M	MNF
39.Aizawl South-I (ST)	R.Tlanghmingthanga	M	MNF
40.Aizawl South-II (ST)	R.Khawpuithanga	M	MNF

(Source: **Statistical Report on General Election, 2003 to The Legislative Assembly of Mizoram, Election Commission of India**).

It may be interesting to state here that political parties in Mizoram started to put their election programmes and manifestoes in black and white, on the basis of which they campaign vigorously during election throughout the length and breadth of the state to capture political power. In its manifestoes, the MNF focuses on the unification of all Mizo residing in different parts of Manipur, Tripura, Myanmar and Mizoram; protection of Mizo customs and culture; solving boundary disputes with other states. Under

economic agenda, self-sufficiency in economics, exploration of natural resources, financial assistance to poor families, helping farmers to increase their production, intensification of border trade and proper utilization of funds coming from the central government.

#### **5.2.5.A:Coalition in Lok Sabha Election-2004 & Bye-Election, 2004 and Major Election Issues:**

The elections in Mizoram are always a relatively calm and quiet affair without much hysteria and fun. The 2004 elections were no exception, However, the message from the elections is loud and clear. The ruling MNF continued to remain the most popular party in the state. The assembly elections were held in 2003 and the MNF got a razor-thin majority by returning 20 members. But as CM Zoramthanga won from two seats, he vacated the Kolasib seat and retained Champhai. So along with the Lok Sabha elections, by-election to the Kolasib seat was also held. While the whole focus was on Mizoram's lone Lok Sabha seat, for the MNF it was more important to win the Kolasib assembly seat. The party had 20 members out of the assembly strength of 39 (one seat was countermanded). Losing this seat would have meant serious problems for the ruling MNF in the state. All the opposition parties were united to wrest this seat so that the MNF government could be dislodged<sup>10</sup>. But with this victory, the government was in a somewhat stronger position. So the 2004 elections were very significant to test the popularity of the state government after its return to power.

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<sup>10</sup> R.K.Satapathy, "Mizoram:Renewed mandate for the State Government" in Sandeep Shastri, et al (Eds.) *Electoral Politics in Indian States: Lok Sabha Elections and Beyond* (OUP, New Delhi, 2009) p.372

The people of Mizoram not only elected MNF candidate Vanlalzawma as the state's lone representative to the lower house of Parliament, but the party also won the Kolasib bye-election. In the bye-election, MNF candidate K. Lalrinliana defeated his lone rival, C. Lalbiakthanga of the Mizo Secular Front (MSF). (Three parties, the Congress, the Mizoram People's Conference, and the Zoram Nationalist Party, had formed an alliance named the Mizo Secular Front [MSF] and had put up their joint candidate in both the elections.) For the Lok Sabha seat, Vanlalzawma retained his seat, defeating his MSF rival Dr.Laltluangliana Khiangte by a margin of 23,694 votes. Similarly, the party's victory margin for the Kolasib assembly seat was 1,294. In the relatively smaller constituencies in the North-east, these victory margins in no way should be considered as small.

The socio-political background of the two main rival candidates needs to be looked into. Both Vanlalzawma and Dr. Laltluangliana Khiangte are from modest economic backgrounds. Both were college teachers. Vanlalzawma held important offices in the Central Young Mizo Association (CYMA), the most powerful and the biggest non-governmental organization (NGO) in the state. In his earlier term, Vanlalzawma won as an independent candidate but backed up by the MNF. However, he maintained close relations with the MNF leadership. Formally, he became member of the party just before the 2004 elections. Similarly, Dr. Laltluangliana Khiangte was not an active member of the Congress although he aligned himself with the Party. Later, he was awarded the Padma Shree. So both the candidates did not have enough direct political experience as members of the parties. The MNF had reasons to celebrate its victories

also because they were against a united opposition, the MSF. Though there was a third candidate, Tlangdingliana, contesting for the Lok Sabha seat, it largely remained a direct contest between the candidates of the MNF and the MSF.

#### **5.2.5.B: Election Issues**

The victory of the MNF could be interpreted as the public recognition of the MNF government's developmental initiatives in the last six years. The MNF's expansion of a strong cadre base covering the whole State and continued unpopularity of the leaders of the Congress added to the success of the former<sup>11</sup>. On the other hand, the Congress continued its failure to get back majority public support. Its support base had eroded significantly over the years. However, the party recovered some of its earlier losses in the 2003 assembly elections. The main reasons for the failure of the Congress can be attributed to the lack of proper party infrastructure at the rural level, charges of corruption against its leaders, internal dissension, increased public attraction towards regional political parties, etc. People thought that the MNF, which was a partner of the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) at the Centre, would be able to extract more funds from the Centre through its MP, than the Congress candidate. People of the state feel a regional party can fulfil the aspirations of the people more than the national parties.

People in Mizoram do not change their allegiance frequently. They generally extend their support to a party over a considerable period unwaveringly. Very few people who are the traditional supporters of a party cast their vote for any other party.

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<sup>11</sup> R.K.Satapathy, Op.Cit. p.373

At the same time the situation in the Mizoram People's Party (MPC) was not very good. Its charismatic leader, Brigadier T. Sailo, a cementing force in the party, had retired from active politics. Second rung leaders were not as visible in the public eye. There were also serious internal squabbles in the party. The Zoram Nationalist Party (ZNP) that was launched in 2000 with the expected support of educated masses could not perform well in the 2003 assembly elections. This newly established party had virtually no organizational base. All these inadequacies of the opposition went in favour of the MNF. The party had another advantage. It developed its organizational infrastructure since the insurgency period. So it was not very difficult to systemize those networks after its participation in the elections.

Zoramthanga's leadership also contributed to the victory for the party; his popularity had no match. The National Election Survey in 2004 reveals that nearly 38 per cent people in Mizoram preferred him as the next CM of the state. The only leader who could come somewhat close to the popularity enjoyed by Zoramthanga was ZNP leader Lalduhawma, who was preferred by nearly 20 per cent people as their CM. While, on one hand, the leadership of Zoramthanga contributed positively to the MNF's success, on the other, the leadership of Lal Thanhawla had a negative impact on the prospects of the Congress. Though the Congress leader had been the CM of Mizoram for two terms, he had been mired in serious controversies and corruption charges during his tenure. Not surprisingly his popularity in the state had waned considerably.

The victory of the MNF could also be explained in terms of its popularity among different social communities. In spite of the united opposition, large numbers of voters cast their ballot in favour of the MNF during the Lok Sabha elections. According to the findings of the NES 2004, the MNF was the most popular party among voters belonging to different social communities. The Mizo in the state voted for the MNF in large numbers, while the MSF candidate remained more popular among the non-Mizo voters. But the non-Mizo are few in number, hardly enough to tilt the election results.

The civil society organizations played a very crucial role in the victory of the MNF. Unlike many other states, Mizoram has a vibrant civil society. This is because Mizo are socially very organized people. Social cohesion, partly due to racial and linguistic homogeneity and partly due to the strong influence of the church over their lives, makes it easy to understand the direction of electoral politics. In the 2003 assembly elections, the MNF could manage to extract latent support from the highly influential youth and student bodies, Young Mizo Association (YMA) and Mizo Zirlai Pawl (MZP), respectively, and also from a sizeable section of the church. This trend continued in the 2004 Lok Sabha elections also. It should be mentioned here that Mizos are ardently religious people. These organizations realize that it would be easier to handle and pressure a regional party whose leadership is known to them from close quarters, than to deal with a national party which receives commands from outside the state. A regional party can better take care of the local interests than the national party as its vote base is confined to that state only. MNF leaders understood this fact very well. This support decisively tilted the balance in MNF's favour.

The 2004 elections were remarkable for Mizoram in many ways. The state chose to vote against the national trend by aligning with the NDA. Local issues were brought in at the campaign this time which was not the case before. Polarization of political parties made the election a straight contest. The anti-incumbency theory did not hold true in case of Mizoram. A close observation reveals that Mizos do not change their attitude towards political parties or leaders frequently. That is why there is least political uncertainty, instability, defection, etc., in the state. This trend has been continuing, except for a few aberrations, since 1972 when it became a Union Territory. This can be termed as a sign of healthy electoral politics.

#### 5.2.6: The Sixth State Legislative Assembly Election, 2008

**Table 5.XI:** Performance of Political Parties in the Sixth Mizoram State Assembly election, 2008<sup>12</sup>

PARTY	SEATS		VOTES POLLED	
	Contested	Won	Votes	%
BJP	9	0	2222	0.44
INC	40	32	195614	38.89
NCP	6	0	538	0.11
MNF	39	3	154132	30.65
MPC	16	2	52222	10.38
ZNP	17	2	51403	10.22
JD (U)	2	0	196	0.04
LB	5	0	43	0.09
LJP	38	0	3307	0.66
MDF	1	1	4206	0.84
Ind.	33	0	38684	7.69

<sup>12</sup> Statistical Report on General Election, 2008 to The Legislative Assembly of Mizoram, Election Commission of India. p.6



The peculiar feature of the 2008 election was the contribution of the Mizoram People Forum (MPF)<sup>13</sup>, a conglomerate of different church denominations in Mizoram and Central YMA to reform politics and electioneering. All political parties including the independent candidates have strictly adhered to the appeals made by the MPF in order to ensure free and fair elections. The MPF erected pandals in each polling station where voters without voter identity cards were being helped to find their names in the voter lists. The political parties in the election fray were the BJP, INC, MNF, MPC, ZNP, JD(U), Nationalist Congress Party (NCP). Moreover, there were three registered (unrecognized) parties Lok Bharati (LB), Lok Jan Shakti Party (LJP) and Maraland Democratic Front (MDF). The electorate strength was 611618; out of which 309129 were female and 302489 were male. Women voters outnumbered their male counterpart.

The voter turnout was as high as 80.02 percent. The three main contenders of the election were the ruling MNF party, the Congress and the United Democratic Alliance (UDA), a pre-poll alliance formed by different parties consisting of the MPC, ZNP and Zoram Kuthnathawktu Pawl (ZKP). In this election, the ruling MNF party was again voted out of power after its completion of two terms. The MNF got 21 seats with 31.66 percent of vote share in the previous election; however, the MNF's 30.65 percent of vote share could only be translated into 3 seats in the 2008 election. Meanwhile the opposition, the Congress party have secured an absolute majority; its 38.89 percent of votes could fetch 32 seats out of the 40 member assembly.

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<sup>13</sup> Mizoram People Forum (MPF) is a powerful election watchdog formed by the Presbyterian Church Mizoram Synod with the support of other major Churches and Civil society like Central Young Mizo Association (CYMA), the largest NGO in the state on June 21, 2006 to work for electoral reform in Mizoram.

**Table 5.XII:** List of Successful Candidates in 2008 Election

Constituency	Winner	Sex	Party
1.Hachhek(ST)	Lalrinmawia Ralte	M	INC
2.Dampa (ST)	Lalrobiaka	M	INC
3.Mamit (ST)	John Rotluangliana	M	INC
4.Tuirial (ST)	Hmingdailova Khiangte	M	INC
5.Kolasib (ST)	P.C.Zoramsangliana	M	INC
6. Serlui (ST)	K.Lalrinthanga	M	INC
7.Tuivawl (ST)	R.L.Pianmawia	M	INC
8. Chalfilh (ST)	Chawngtinthanga	M	INC
9.Tawi (ST)	R.Lalzirliana	M	INC
10. Aizawl North-I (ST)	R.Romawia	M	INC
11.Aizawl North-II (ST)	H.Liansailova	M	INC
12.Aizawl North-III (ST)	Lal Thanzara	M	INC
13.Aizawl East-I	R.Lalrinawma	M	INC
14.Aizawl east-II (ST)	Lalsawta	M	INC
15. Aizawl West-I (ST)	Lalduhawma	M	ZNP
16.Aizawl West-II (ST)	Brig.T.Sailo	M	MPC
17.Aizawl West-III (ST)	R.Selthuama	M	INC
18.Aizawl South-I (ST)	K.Liantlianga	M	ZNP
19. Aizawl South-II (ST)	Lt.Col.Zosangzuala	M	INC
20.Aizawl South-III (ST)	K.S.Thanga	M	INC
21.Lengteng (ST)	H.Rohluna	M	INC
22.Tuichang (ST)	Lalrinliana Sailo	M	INC
23.Champhai North )ST)	T.T.Zothansanga	M	INC
24.Champhai South (ST)	J.H.Rothuama	M	INC
25.East Tuipui (ST)	B.Lalthlengliana	M	MNF
26.Serchhip (ST)	Lal Thanhawla	M	INC
27.Tuikum (ST)	K.Lianzuala	M	INC
28. Hrangturzo (ST)	Lalthansanga	M	MPC
29.South Tuipui (ST)	Lal Thanhawla	M	INC
30.Lunglei North (ST)	P.C.Lalthanliana	M	INC
31.Lunglei east (ST)	Joseph Lalhimpuaia	M	INC
32.Lunglei West (ST)	Dr.R.Lalthangliana	M	MNF
33. Lunglei South (ST)	S.Laldingliana	M	INC
34.Thorang (ST)	Zodintluanga	M	INC
35.West Tuipui (ST)	Nihar Kanti Chakma	M	INC
36.Tuichawng (ST)	Nirupam Chakma	M	INC
37.Lawngtlai West (ST)	C.Ramhluna	M	MNF
38. Lawngtlai east (ST)	H.Zothangliana	M	INC
39.Saiha (ST)	S.Hiato	M	INC

40.Palak (ST)	P.P.Thawla	M	MDF
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(Source: **Statistical Report on General Election, 2008 to The Legislative Assembly of Mizoram, Election Commission of India**).

It has been said that the credit for the success of the Congress party in 2008 elections was due to the introduction of New Land Use Policy (NLUP). This programme promised to provide financial and material support to those unemployed citizens who do not have the capital to start their own occupation. Cash was given directly to lakhs of beneficiaries to enable them to start a trade of their own. NLUP was intended to wean people away from jhum cultivation and to lift them out of poverty. It is by far the single largest welfare scheme as well as the single greatest socio-economic development programme undertaken by the state government of Mizoram<sup>14</sup>. Its socio-economic impact in Mizoram is massive. Therefore, this NLUP programme turns out as an effective instrument to harvest votes for the Congress party in the election.

Besides, while 2003 Assembly election was a renewed recognition of the performance of the Mizo National Front (MNF) ministry, 2008 election was a total rejection of the poor performance of the MNF ministry which had been charged with corruption, nepotism and maladministration. The 2008 election had also brought out interesting trends in the state politics of Mizoram. First, accessibility and personality of candidates seemed to be more important than their parent party in the case of INC, Mizoram People Conference (MPC) and Zoram Nationalist Party (ZNP). The reason for the clear victory of INC can be attributed to the clean image of its candidates; many of them were first-timers. Secondly, the people did not about which party or alliance

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<sup>14</sup> L.H.Chhuanawma, Op.cit.192

formed a ministry at the centre. They were more or less occupied with who would be their representatives (MLAs) from their constituencies. Thirdly, the voters preferred to vote for a political party which could provide a stable government, other than a smaller party or pre-poll alliances whose chance of winning was unsure. Fourthly, the decisive victory of the INC cannot be attributed solely to its regional and national leaders as its candidates were as equally important as the role of its leaders.

#### **5.2.6.A: Lok Sabha Election, 2009: Coalition Forces of MNF and MPC**

The Lok Sabha Election 2009 was just a repetition of the last state Legislative Assembly Elections of 2008. The INC fielded C.L.Ruala as its candidate, and MNF and MPC backed former MP (Lok Sabha) Dr. Lallungmuana, an independent candidate. Dr.Lallungmuana was an ex-member of Lok Sabha between 1998-1999. There were also other candidates from Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) and one independent candidate which may not be important for having a clear picture of electoral politics in the state. The other regional party, Zoram Nationalist Party (ZNP) resolved to play a low profile in this election. The INC candidate, C.L. Ruala is a seasoned politician, former minister in the last Congress ministry, whereas Dr. Lallungmuana is ex-MP (1998-99) and a retired academician. C.L.Ruala is not a good orator, but his experience in politics in general and electoral politics in particular would be his trump card. Dr. Lallungmuana has been known for his oratorical skill and seems to be popular among the youths; he tried to repeat 1998 Lok Sabha Elections, during which the then ruling party in the state was mired with corruption, maladministration and most importantly the stalemate in the sale of ginger by farmers to the government. But, in the absence of major issues during

this election, Dr. Lallungmuana chose Mizo Nationalism (as against Indian Nationalism) as his election propaganda which was publicized as widely as possible in the print media, but this was not translated into popular votes. In fact, DR. Lallungmuana received much publicity in the print media than the ruling candidate during the election<sup>15</sup>.

Another important issue, apart from Mizo Nationalism versus Indian nationalism, is whether Dr. Lallungmuana would join National Democratic Alliance (NDA) led by Bharatya Janata Party (BJP) or Third Front if he is elected? The fact here is that if Dr. Lallungmuana decided to join BJP-led NDA ministry if he is elected, he would be attack vehemently from different quarters including the INC that BJP is a Hindu party and the Church Elder, as he is in his own locality, joining BJP-led Ministry would never be welcome in Mizoram; besides, it was widely believed that his clarion call for the resurgence of Mizo Nationalism would never match the BJP's objective of promoting Hindu nationalism in the country. Therefore, Dr. Lallungmuana was put in a very awkward position as he was unable to make a clear decision during the election.

One of the most significant outcomes of the Lok Sabha, 2009 was that the anti-incumbency factor against MNF Ministry in the last State Assembly Elections still played a crucial role in favour of the Congress candidate. After suffering a severe defeat, the appeal of the MNF party leadership was waning and the organization of the party had no other option, but to fill in a common candidate with other regional party such as

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<sup>15</sup> Lallianchhunga, "The Congress holds its ground" *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol.44 Issue No.39 26 Sept, 2009.

MPC, while ZNP decided to stand aside. Another important result was the ability of Lal Thanhawla, the State Congress Chief and Chief Minister of Mizoram, to become the first choice Chief Minister of the state. Within ten years of the MNF rule (i.e. 1998-2008), Lal Thanhawla was never the Chief Ministerial choice for the state of Mizoram. Instead, MPC leader Brig.T.Sailo and ZNP President Lalduhoma had established themselves as peoples' choice for the Chief Ministership for a very long time; even Zoramthanga was well behind these two leaders. This election proved beyond doubt that there was no other alternative to Lal Thanhawla's leadership in the state at this time. Apart from his ability to win back dissidents to the parent party, the District Court acquitted him from corruption cases while Zoramthanga will begin to have serious challenges in the form of corruption cases. MPC President, Brig.T.Sailo became too old to take on political challenges from different quarters whereas Lalduhoma (ZNP) has not yet a rural support base. Keeping this in mind, it seemed certain that the state of Mizoram would witness the Congress rule for another ten years.

The Lok Sabha Elections once again proved that minority communities in the state such as Hmar, Chakma, Lai, Mara and Brus are still the traditional vote bank of the Congress. These communities have been the stronghold of the Congress party even when it was out of power. It is the Congress party which successfully takes on the regional platform. Regionalism within Mizoram had been gaining ground during the rule of the MNF party for two consecutive terms. Mara Democratic Front (MDF) party has been established in Mara Autonomous District Council (MADC) region whose lone MLA took part in the formation of the last MNF ministry; Hmar Peoples' Conference

(HPC) tried hard to maintain a separate Hmar identity in the state politics albeit unsuccessfully; Lai, Chakma and Bru communities either switched their side from one party to another depending on the party forming ministry in the state, but mostly between the INC and MNF whereas the MPC and ZNP have no visible support base in these communities. Even the ZNP decided not to establish party unit within Chakma Autonomous District Council (CADC) region in order to maintain itself as a Mizo nationalist party. But, the support base of the Congress in these communities has always been remarkable. Therefore, while the last State Assembly Elections witnessed the decline of regionalistic chauvinism which has been used as a source of strength for regional political parties in the state, the Lok Sabha Election, 2009 proved that regionalism is not always the panacea for the underdevelopment of the state<sup>16</sup>.

The 2009 Election signified the polarization of party system in such a way that the ruling Congress and the MNF will be fighting many political battles in a straight contest for the years to come. But, this does not mean the role play by other regional parties like MPC and ZNP would be minimal. In fact, attempts have been made to align all regional parties to take on the ruling party on major issues; on many occasions, the MNF and MPC jointly issued press statements during the Lok Sabha Elections to criticize the weaknesses of the Congress ministry.

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<sup>16</sup> Lallianchung, Op.Cit.

### 5.2.7: The Seventh State Legislative Assembly Election, 2013

There were three national parties, three state parties, two registered (unrecognized) parties and few independent candidates contesting the election. National parties included BJP, INC and NCP. The state parties were MNF, MPC and ZNP. The two registered (unrecognized) parties were Jai Maha Bharat Party (JMBP) and Maraland Democratic Front (MDF). In the previous election, the Congress had managed to win 32 seats with the help of their main poll plank, the New Land Use Policy (NLUP). In the 2013 election, the electorate showed their satisfaction in the performance of the ruling party and voted the Congress back to power for the second term. The party bagged 34 seats and secured 44.63 percent of the votes polled. The rest of the seats went to the MNF which won 5 seats and the MPC won only 1 seat. The voter turnout has reached a historic high of 83.41 percent in the State Assembly election of 2013, and the female voters once again outnumbered the male voters by 2 percent. NOTA (None of The Above) system was introduced for the first time and 0.66% of the electorates preferred to register their votes for NOTA instead of contending candidates.

**Table 5.XIII:** Performance of Political Parties in the Seventh Mizoram State Assembly Election, 2013<sup>17</sup>

PARTY	SEATS		VOTES POLLED	
	Contested	Won	Votes	%
BJP	17	0	2139	0.37
INC	40	34	255917	44.63
NCP	2	0	4835	0.84
MNF	31	5	164305	28.65
MPC	8	1	35269	6.15

<sup>17</sup> Statistical Report on General Election, 2013 to the Legislative Assembly of Mizoram, Election Commission of India. p.6



ZNP	38	0	99916	17.42
MDF	1	0	5433	0.95
JMBP	1	0	29	0.01
IND.	1	0	1764	0.31
<b>NOTA</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3810</b>	<b>0.66</b>

**Table 5.XIV:** List of Successful Candidates in 2013 Election

Constituency	Winner	Sex	Party
1.Hachhek(ST)	Lalrinmawia Ralte	M	INC
2.Dampa (ST)	Lalrobiaka	M	INC
3.Mamit (ST)	John Rotluangliana	M	INC
4.Tuirial (ST)	Hmingdailova Khiangte	M	INC
5.Kolasib (ST)	P.C.Zoramsangliana	M	INC
6. Serlui (ST)	K.Lalrinthanga	M	INC
7.Tuivawl (ST)	R.L.Pianmawia	M	INC
8. Chalfilh (ST)	Dr.Ngurdingliana	M	INC
9.Tawi (ST)	R.Lalzirliana	M	INC
10. Aizawl North-I (ST)	R.Romawia	M	INC
11.Aizawl North-II (ST)	Lalthanliana	M	MPC
12.Aizawl North-III (ST)	Lal Thanzara	M	INC
13.Aizawl East-I	R.Lalrinawma	M	INC
14.Aizawl east-II (ST)	Lalsawta	M	INC
15. Aizawl West-I (ST)	K.Sangthuama	M	MNF
16.Aizawl West-II (ST)	Lalruatkima	M	MNF
17.Aizawl West-III (ST)	Vanlalzawma	M	MNF
18.Aizawl South-I (ST)	R.Vanlalvena	M	INC
19. Aizawl South-II (ST)	Lt.Col.Zosangzuala	M	INC
20.Aizawl South-III (ST)	K.S.Thanga	M	INC
21.Lengteng (ST)	H.Rohluna	M	INC
22.Tuichang (ST)	Lalrinliana Sailo	M	INC
23.Champhai North )ST)	T.T.Zothansanga	M	INC
24.Champhai South (ST)	J.H.Rothuama	M	INC
25.East Tuipui (ST)	T.Sangkunga	M	INC
26.Serchhip (ST)	Lal Thanhawla	M	INC
27.Tuikum (ST)	Er.Lalrinawma	M	MNF
28. Hrangturzo (ST)	Lal Thanhawla	M	INC
29.South Tuipui (ST)	John Siamkunga	M	INC
30.Lunglei North (ST)	P.C.Lalthanliana	M	INC
31.Lunglei East (ST)	Joseph Lalhimpuia	M	INC

32.Lunglei West (ST)	Chalrosanga Ralte	M	INC
33. Lunglei South (ST)	S.Laldingliana	M	INC
34.Thorang (ST)	Zodintluanga	M	INC
35.West Tuipui (ST)	Nihar Kanti Chakma	M	INC
36.Tuichawng (ST)	Dr.Budha Dhan Chakma	M	INC
37.Lawngtlai West (ST)	C.Ngunlianchunga	M	INC
38. Lawngtlai East (ST)	H.Zothangliana	M	INC
39.Saiha (ST)	Dr.K.Beichhua	M	MNF
40.Palak (ST)	Hiphei	M	INC

(Source: **Statistical Report on General Election, 2013 to the Legislative Assembly of Mizoram, Election Commission of India**).

### 5.2.8: The Eight State Legislative Assembly Election, 2018

In this election, six political parties and independent candidatea competed for capturing political power in the state. There were three national parties, viz Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), Indian National Congress (INC) and Nationalist Congress Party (NCP); one state party,namely Mizo National Fornt (MNF) party and PRISM Party, which is a new registered unrecognised political party, National People’s Party from Meghalaya state also entered the election trying to open its electoral account in Mizoram. There were total 209 constestants in the election. The voter turnout was recorded at 80.03%.

**Table 5.XV:** Performance of Political Parties in the Eight Mizoram State Assembly Election, 2018<sup>18</sup>

PARTY	SEATS		VOTES POLLED	
	Contested	Won	Votes	%
BJP	39	1	51087	8.09
INC	40	4	189404	30.55
NCP	5	0	334	0.36
MNF	40	27	238168	37.70
NPP	10	0	3748	0.59

<sup>18</sup> Statistical Report on General Election, 2018 to the Legislative Assembly of Mizoram, Election Commission of India. p.5

PRISMP	12	0	1158	0.18
IND.	63	8	144928	22.94
<b>NOTA</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2938</b>	<b>0.46</b>

After ruling Mizoram for ten years (2008-18), the Indian National Congress suffered a humiliating defeat-bagging only five seats in the 40 seats Assembly. The Mizo National Front (MNF) which has been out of power since 2008 is back with a majority of 26 seats. This election is the first in which BJP seriously contested the election-winning a single seat from Tuichawng constituency. The Zoram People's Movement, a conglomerate of six local political parties managed to win eight seats as independent candidates; its Chief Ministerial candidate, Lalduhoma manages to win from two constituencies. Other smaller parties include PRISM, NPP, NCP and Zoram Thar, not winning a single seat.

The Mizoram Assembly election witnessed the entrance of 19 first time legislators-13 new entrants from MNF, five from ZPM and one Congress first timer. T.J. Lalnuntluanga, a first time MNF legislator defeated Chief Minister Lal Thanhawla from Champhai South constituency. Another prominent first time winner is the owner of Aizawl Football Club, Robert Romawia Royte. He defeated the veteran politician and Finance Minister Lalsawta from Aizawl East II constituency.

For the very first time in the 2013 election, the Mizoram voters gave the Congress party a solid majority of 34 seats. Such popular mandate should have ensured and strengthened the people's faith in the party. But sadly, anti-incumbency feeling in the state was running high for several years. Though the Congress party in Mizoram has

a long experience in politics, complacency seemed to have invaded the leadership. The Congress was also weakened by the ongoing fighting within the party which burst open just before election was announced. Three top legislators resigned from the Congress party- the Home Minister and Vice President of MPCC, Lalziriana and former Health Minister, Lalrinliana Sailo joined the MNF camp, while Speaker of the House, Hiphei joined the BJP.

During the last ten years, Congress achieved successes in schemes like the New Land Use Policy (NLUP), Chief Minister's Housing Scheme, establishing MIMER- the first and only medical college in the state, and other achievements like the Mizoram Youth Commission and Tuirial Hydel Project. Unfortunately, the party failed to highlight their achievements. Had these achievements been focused upon from the past one year, it would have immensely helped to overcome the anti-incumbency wave.

Another fallacious decision of Lal Thanhawla's government was the sale of Indian Made Foreign Liquor (IMFL) in Mizoram, which the Church was strongly against. This had greatly benefitted the MNF party in winning the election as they had promised the people that they would end the sale of liquor and implement the Mizoram Liquor Total Prohibition (MLTP) Act to prohibit alcohol in the state again. But, even for a determined government, checking the sale of alcohol in the black market is going to be a daunting task as experienced during the 17 years of total prohibition.

It is also important to note that one of the key reasons the Congress lost is the vote share of ZPM- which attracted the floating voters of the 2013 Assembly Election. It

must also come as a surprise for the MNF to gain such a massive majority despite the seat projections made by exit polls.

In the last 20 years, voters gave MNF and Congress two consecutive terms each (MNF:1998-2008 and INC:2008-2018). As Congress had miserably failed the people, the MNF is back in power with a promise to implement their flagship programme- the Socio-Economic Development Programme (SEDP) along with total prohibition of liquor. Though MNF had miserably failed to develop the state during their 10 years rule of 1998-2008, the Mizoram voters who put them back to power are hoping, this time, for an all round development- especially better roads and to uplift farmers, facilitating better income from their cash crops. Last but not least, the 8th Mizoram Legislative Assembly will be, however, interesting, considering the opposition will be a force to reckon with in comparison with the previous Legislative Assembly.

**Table 5.XVI:** List of Successful Candidates in 2018 Election

<b>Constituency</b>	<b>Winner</b>	<b>Sex</b>	<b>Party</b>
1.Hachhek(ST)	Lalrindika Ralte	M	INC
2.Dampa (ST)	Lalrintluanga Sailo	M	MNF
3.Mamit (ST)	H.Lalzirliana	M	MNF
4.Tuirial (ST)	Andrew H.Thangliana	M	IND
5.Kolasib (ST)	K.Lalrinliana	M	MNF
6. Serlui (ST)	Lalrinsanga Ralte	M	MNF
7.Tuivawl (ST)	Lalchhandama Ralte	M	MNF
8. Chalfilh (ST)	Lalrinliana Sailo	M	MNF
9.Tawi (ST)	R.Lalzirliana	M	MNF
10. Aizawl North-I (ST)	Vanlalhlana	M	IND
11.Aizawl North-II (ST)	Dr.Vanlalhlana	M	IND
12.Aizawl North-III (ST)	C.Lalmuanpuia	M	MNF
13.Aizawl East-I	Zoramthanga	M	MNF
14.Aizawl East-II (ST)	Robert Romawia Royte	M	MNF
15. Aizawl West-I (ST)	Lalduhoma	M	IND

16.Aizawl West-II (ST)	Lalruatkima	M	MNF
17.Aizawl West-III (ST)	V.L.Zaithanzama	M	IND
18.Aizawl South-I (ST)	C.Lalsawivunga	M	IND
19. Aizawl South-II (ST)	Lalchhuanthanga	M	IND
20.Aizawl South-III (ST)	F.Lalnunmawia	M	MNF
21.Lengteng (ST)	L.Thangmawia	M	MNF
22.Tuichang (ST)	Tawnluia	M	MNF
23.Champhai North )ST)	Dr.ZR Thiamsanga	M	MNF
24.Champhai South (ST)	T.J.Lalnuntluanga	M	MNF
25.East Tuipui (ST)	Ramthanmawia	M	MNF
26.Serchhip (ST)	Lalduhoma	M	IND
27.Tuikum (ST)	Er.Lalrinawma	M	MNF
28. Hrangturzo (ST)	Lalchamlia	M	MNF
29.South Tuipui (ST)	Dr. R.Lalthangliana	M	MNF
30.Lunglei North (ST)	Vanlaltanpuia	M	MNF
31.Lunglei East (ST)	Lawmawma Tochwawng	M	MNF
32.Lunglei West (ST)	C.Lalrinsanga	M	MNF
33. Lunglei South (ST)	K.Pachhunga	M	MNF
34.Thorang (ST)	Zodintluanga	M	INC
35.West Tuipui (ST)	Nihar Kanti Chakma	M	INC
36.Tuichawng (ST)	Dr.Budha Dhan Chakma	M	BJP
37.Lawngtlai West (ST)	C.Ngunlianchunga	M	INC
38. Lawngtlai East (ST)	H.Biakzauva	M	MNF
39.Saiha (ST)	Dr.K.Beichhua	M	MNF
40.Palak (ST)	M.Chakhu	M	MNF

(Source: **Statistical Report on General Election, 2018 to the Legislative Assembly of Mizoram, Election Commission of India**)

From the above State Legislative Assembly elections, it can be said that Mizoram is a state having two-party effective system in the sense that the Assembly elections in Mizoram have always been a battle between the two rival parties, the Congress and the MNF; even though at times they were supported by other parties in forming an electoral alliance. It is true that Mizoram is no stranger to coalition politics. However, the voters are virtually unwilling to vote for an untried party to power. The electorates prefer the change of government after the completion of two terms in which

the Congress and the MNF had been alternated in power since the first State Assembly election till date. The voter turnout in the state has always been very high ranging from 74 to 83 percent. The voters have been constantly displaying their mature state of awareness and consciousness in the political process by participating in the electoral process. Elections in the state have been peaceful with a satisfying polling percentage.

## **CHAPTER VI:**

### **SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS**

Coalition politics has to be accepted not only as a reality in Indian politics, it can also be accepted as a regular political phenomenon in the state politics of Mizoram. There have been three instances of the formation of coalition government and various cases of forming alliances during elections in the political history of Mizoram. The first in 1986 when an Interim Coalition Ministry was formed by the MNF and Congress party, which was based on the political agreement between Indian National Congress and MNF. The second coalition ministry formed by the Congress party and MJD in 1993 that lasted for one year. In 1998, the third coalition government was formed by MNF and MPC which lasted for one year. In Mizoram, formation of coalition ministry by the coalescing parties provides temporary political arrangement, yet it does not lead to instability of the ministry. Political parties do not form coalition forces to end the dominance of a single monolithic party, but to merely capture political power so as to reap the benefits of political victory.

#### **6.1: Factors Responsible for the Growth of Coalition Politics at the National Level**

Coalition politics started first at the state level, and then penetrated to the broader national level. Therefore, coalition politics and the nature of political alliances at the national level more or less resembled the working of coalition politics at the state level. Thus, before analysing the theoretical dimensions of coalition politics in Mizoram, it



will be valuable to examine the factors and circumstances leading to the growth and development of coalition politics at the national level.

1. One of the important factors that cause the growth and development of coalition politics in the states is the breakdown of the monolithic hold of the Congress party due to defections and split in the party. The Congress Party that had been dominating the entire political era of the country and remained in power continuously in almost all states and at the Centre since the independence faced unprecedented defeat in the wake of the Fourth General Elections of 1967 in eight states. As no party was able to secure clear majority in those states, particularly in Assam in the Assembly Election in 1978 a situation of forming political coalitions developed for formation of a coalition government by diverse parties in the Northeast states.
2. Another important factor that led to downfall of the dominant Congress and growth of coalition politics was the split in the Congress Party in 1969. The split in the Congress Party cracked its backbone and monolithic hold over the electorate. This induced the non-Congress parties to be united together to fight the elections and provide an alternative government. Further, Jaya Prakash's call for polarisation of all non-Congress Parties instilled them to sink their ideological differences and form political alliance for providing a viable alternative to the dominant Congress.

3. The emergency excesses committed during 1975-76 by the Congress Governments at the state level roused bitter feelings among the people against the Congress rule. This had a great impact on the electorate who voted the Congress out of power in the subsequent Lok Sabha and Assembly elections.
4. The Gujarat Assembly elections of 1975 acted as an impetus on the part of the non-Congress Parties for entering into political alliances to fight the subsequent Lok Sabha and Assembly elections for providing alternative government to the ruling Congress.
5. Authoritarian rule of the Congress induced the Opposition parties to enter into electoral alliance for fighting the elections to bring to an end of such rule and restore democratic set up of administration.
6. Gradual development of regionalism in various parts of the country has given birth to regional politics. The regional parties have been formed for solution to their socio-cultural and economic problems. These regional parties have entered into political alliance with other leading national parties with a view to share power both at the state and the central level. In the words of Geovani, by and large many regional organisations owing to allegiance to local issues and loyalties rather than national perspectives dominated the electoral politics.

7. Coalitions also seem to have been formed with a view to prevent the opposition party from capturing power or to overthrow the government. As for instance, United Front was formed in 1996 by an alliance of fourteen parties with a view to prevent BJP from coming to power. Though their efforts to prevent BJP from forming a government at the Centre were in vain, they were however successful in ousting thirteen day BJP-led coalition government from power.
8. Political opportunism is also another important factor that greatly induces the parties or the event members of the parties to enter into coalition for gaining political power and getting their interests fulfilled.
9. The most important factor that leads to a situation of forming a coalition government is the electoral behaviour. The electorate can vote a party to power or vote for a hung Parliament. If no party is voted to power then a situation of making an alliance by diverse parties for forming a coalition government arises as experienced in the Lok Sabha or Assembly elections since 1967. As for instance, in the Lok Sabha election of 1989, 1996 and 1998 the electorate voted for a hung parliament. As a result United Front, National Front and a thirteen party BJP-led coalition was formed respectively for forming a coalition government at the Centre.

10. Last, the realisation of the fragmented non-Congress parties that they must enter into political alliances for breaking down Congress fort greatly contributed to the growth of coalition politics both at the national and state arena.

## **6.2: Emergence of Coalition Politics in Mizoram**

Though coalition politics marked its beginning in seven states in India in the wake of the Fourth General Elections of 1967 and at the Centre and in various states as a result of the Sixth General Elections to the Lok Sabha and State Assemblies in 1977, Mizoram had its experiences only in the wake of signing of Memorandum of Settlement by the Government of India and Mizo National Front (MNF) on June 30, 1986 which resulted in the formation of the Interim Coalition Government by MNF and Congress party.

In the first State Legislative Assembly elections held on 16<sup>th</sup> February, 1987, the MNF won 24 seats and formed the first State Government with Laldenga as Chief Minister of Mizoram. Laldenga's ministry lasted about 19 months when 8 of its MLAs rebelled against Laldenga's leadership for his high handedness and for not giving them ministerial portfolios. They formed a new party called MNF (Democrat) in August, 1988, with Chawngzuala, the then MNF Vice-President leading the rebellion MNF (D). Instead of inviting the combined opposition parties to form government, the Governor imposed President's Rule in Mizoram from 7<sup>th</sup> September, 1988 to 24<sup>th</sup> January, 1989.

In the election held on 21<sup>st</sup> January, 1989, the Congress and the MNF (D) formed a pre-poll alliance that eventually helped the Congress to come back into power. This was the first ever pre-poll alliance for an Assembly election in Mizoram. Coalition ministry was not formed with MNF (D) which secured only two seats, and the Congress party managed to form a government on its own with Lal Thanhawla as Chief Minister.

The Congress again entered into a pre-poll alliance with another party for the second time, this time with Mizoram Janata Dal (MJD) in 1993 Assembly election. Seat adjustments were made in 24 Assembly Constituencies. This meant that the Congress and the MJD contested from 12 Assembly seats each. The remaining 16 seats were thus opened for friendly contests between the two alliance partners along with other contesting parties. Common minimum programme was not prepared by the coalescing parties since capturing political power was their ultimate agenda.

The Congress was able to win 16 seats while the MJD managed to win 8 seats in the 1993 Assembly election. The MNF won only 14 seats. The Congress-MJD combined then formed a coalition government headed by Lal Thanhawla as Chief Minister. However, on 11<sup>th</sup> May, 1994 five of the MJD's MLAs broke away from the parent party and formed a separate group called the Mizoram Janata Dal (R). The MJD (R) was led by J.Lalthankunga as its President. The MJD Ministers were thus dropped from the coalition ministry headed by Lal Thanhawla.

Another coalition politics was again witnessed in the Parliamentary elections. On 23<sup>rd</sup> February, 1998 elections to the lone Lok Sabha seat for Mizoram was held. An

independent candidate Dr.H.Lallungmuana, supported by Citizens' Common Front (CCF), MNF (N) (later renamed as ZNP) and MPC narrowly won against his nearest rival, J.Lalsangzuala of the Congress party by a mere 41 votes. The former got 106,552 (34.86%) and the latter got 106,511 (34.85%).

General Elections to the Fourth Mizoram Legislative Assembly was held on 25<sup>th</sup> November, 1998. This time, there was a pre-poll alliance between the MNF and the MPC. This was the first time that the MNF had a pre-poll alliance for Mizoram Legislative Assembly elections and the first time the Congress party faced the might of a pre-poll alliance between two major regional parties in the state. The MNF and the MPC separately contested 20 seats and had friendly contests in another 20 seats called 'free zones'. This time again, no common election manifesto was chalked out by the two political parties.

In this election, the Congress party that went alone had a severe defeat at the hands of the coalition forces of MNF and MPC. Congress managed to win only 6 seats and polled a meager 29.77 of the popular votes cast. The MNF-MPC coalition got 33 seats; MNF won 21 seats, whereas MPC bagged 12 seats.

The MNF President Zoramthanga, who won from two Assembly Constituencies, retained his Champhai seat but vacated Khawbung seat. In the bye-election held on 22<sup>nd</sup> February, 1999 for Khawbung Assembly Constituency, the MNF candidate K.Vanlalauva won to fill the vacancy.

The MNF-MPC coalition government headed by the MNF President Zoramthanga as Chief Minister was installed on 8<sup>th</sup> December, 1998. The MPC leader Lalhmingthanga was Deputy Chief Minister. The coalition lasted for just a year, from 8<sup>th</sup> December, 1998 - 9<sup>th</sup> December, 1999. The MPC was forced by the MNF, which by itself had a majority on its own in the House, to pull out of the coalition government mid-way. There was a strong pressure within the MNF party on their leaders to form an all-MNF government.

Meanwhile, in the Lok Sabha elections held on 25<sup>th</sup> November, 1999 an independent candidate Vanlalawma, supported by the MNF and MPC won by defeating his nearest rival Rokamlova (Independent) who was also backed up by the Congress party, the MNF (N) and JD (U).

The 2003 Assembly elections saw the Congress party being routed again. Despite doubling its seat tally from 6 in 1998 to 12 in 2003, its vote share went up by just about 1 % from 29.77 % in 1998 to 30.06 % in 2003. With a vote share of just about the same as that of the Congress, the MNF won as many as 21 seats, with a vote share of 31.69 %. The MPC won 3 seats with 16.16 % vote share. The Congress membership in the Assembly was reduced from 12 to 10 after its two MLAs, Saikapthianga and Liansuama quitted their membership in the House on 16<sup>th</sup> August, 2005, to join a new party known as Mizoram Congress Party (MCP) led by J.Lalsangzuala.

The MNF President Zoramthanga, who won from two Assembly Constituencies, retained his Champhai seat but vacated Kolasib seat. In the bye-election held on

20<sup>th</sup> April, 2004 to fill this vacancy, an independent candidate C.Lalbiakthanga supported by the Mizoram Secular Force (MSF) consisting of the Congress party, ZNP and MPC lost to the ruling MNF candidate K.Lalrinliana. On account of the death of Sainghaka (INC) and the resignation of RM Chakma from Tlungvel and Chawngte Assembly Constituencies respectively, bye-elections were held in the two Assembly Constituencies in October, 2006. In spite of the formation of coalition force under the political umbrella of Mizoram Secular Force (MSF), both seats were captured by the MNF.

The Mizoram Secular Force (MSF), a conglomerate of Congress party, ZNP and MPC again supported Dr.Laltluangliana Khiangte, an independent candidate in the Lok Sabha election held on 20<sup>th</sup> April, 2004. But, Vanlalzawma, this time as an MNF candidate supported by BJP, once again was elected as Member of Parliament. Since the MNF officially joined the NDA just before 2004 Lok Sabha election, it can be said that Vanlalzawma was an NDA candidate from Mizoram.

Another coalition force called United Democratic Alliance (UDA) emerged in 2008 Assembly election to take on the Congress party and MNF. It was formed by MPC, ZNP and Zoram Kuthnathawktu Pawl (ZKP) combine, and common election manifesto was prepared. UDA chose Brig.T.Sailo as its Chief Ministerial Candidate to form non-congress, non-MNF government in the state.<sup>1</sup> It, however, managed to bag 4 seats (MPC-2 and ZNP-2), while the MNF won 3 seats. The Congress party won 32 seats in this

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<sup>1</sup>Interview with Thanbanglova, President of ZKP on Oct 3, 2008 at UDA Office. During this period, the scholar was already investigating the emergence of coalition politics in the state of Mizoram.



election and formed a ministry under the Chief Ministership of its President, Lal Thanhawla. It enjoyed its full term.

The Congress's performance in 2013 Assembly Election was again phenomenal. It won 34 seats out of 40 seats and the party's vote share in terms of popular votes was 44.63 %; it has been the highest ever seat tally won by any party in Mizoram. The MNF party's tally of 3 seats in 2008 was its worse performance in terms of seat share, although its share of vote at 30.63% was still very high. Its seat share was gone up to 5 in 2013 Assembly election, but its share of popular vote has gone down to 28.65. The MPC managed to win just 1 seat in 2013 Assembly election, while the ZNP failed to capture even a single seat.

In the last State Legislative Assembly elections held on 28<sup>th</sup> November, 2018, a formidable coalition force known as Zoram People's Movement (ZPM) emerged again. ZPM is a political umbrella established by six political organisations on 15<sup>th</sup> August, 2017 to form non-Congress, non-MNF government in Mizoram. The MNF successfully captured 26 seats, while the newly formed ZPM managed to win in 8 (eight) Assembly Constituencies, its leader Lalduhawma won from two Assembly Constituencies, namely Serchhip and Aizawl West-I; he retained Serchhip but vacated Aizawl West-I seat. The Congress party bagged 5 (five) seats. But, in the bye-election held on 11<sup>th</sup> April, 2019 for Aizawl West-I Assembly Constituency, the MNF candidate Zothantluanga won against his rival Lalbuanga Sailo, an independent candidate supported by Congress party and ZPM.

The Lok Sabha General Election held on 11<sup>th</sup> April, 2019 again showed formation of coalition arrangement between Congress party and ZPM. These two political organisations supported Lalnghinglova, an independent candidate to take on the ruling MNF party candidate C.Lalrosanga.<sup>2</sup> In this election, MNF party candidate C.Lalrosanga won with a vote share of 44.89%, while Congress and ZPM candidate Lalnghinglova's vote share was 43.26.

Although there are several political parties in Mizoram, the present party system can be best described as a two-party formation system. Effective and electorally significant parties are actually quite few in the state. Many small local and regional parties as well as some national parties do come, but most of them go as quickly as they come, notwithstanding a brief experiment of coalition governments Mizoram has developed in its political history.

### **6.3: Coalition Politics and Coalition Government**

In the light of the above political scenarios that reflected the emergence of coalition politics in Mizoram, it will be worthwhile to trace the original meaning of 'Coalition' and 'Coalition government' in order to understand the problems and prospects of coalition politics in the state of Mizoram.

In a simple language, coalition politics signifies a temporary coalescence of distinct parties formed either to fight elections for capturing powers or forming or pulling down a government after elections.

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<sup>2</sup> Interviewed with PB Lalsawmliana, Secretary, Coordination Committee of MPCC & ZPM for Lok Sabha Election, 2019 on March 21, 2019 at Congress Bhavan, Aizawl

‘Coalition government’ denotes a multi-party ministry formed by distinct parties who by their joint endeavour make a compromise between their varied and common ideologies and agree on a common minimum program or a common agenda for governance. Thus coalition politics or a coalition government signifies multi-party system in a Parliamentary form of democratic set-up.

As a coalition government is a combination of heterogeneous parties having different ideologies, it is internally ridden by dissensions and bickering created by the coalescing partners. In the words of Sahni, "a coalition though outwardly appears to be a solid mass, internally it is ridden by party foibles and frantic party fervours and it is for this reason that a coalition proves to be transient”.

#### **6.4: Theoretical Implications of Coalition Politics in Mizoram**

First, coalition politics is interdependent for some benefits or rewards, which may be material in nature. When coalescing parties consider that their interests or material achievements as they expected to derive have been deterred, they may secede from the alliance. The desire to form a government remains the strongest motivating factor that encouraged Congress and MNF (D) to form pre-poll alliance in 1989 Assembly elections in the case of Mizoram politics<sup>3</sup>.

Second, coalition politics is based on the principle of give and take, trust and faith as well as mutual cooperation of the allying parties.

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<sup>3</sup> Interview with former Chief Minister of Mizoram, LalThanhawla on March 8, 2019 at Congress Bhavan, Aizawl

Third, coalition government refers to a multi-party phenomenon and as such it is formed by a number of parties at least two. While the number of political parties forming coalition ministry remains high at the national level, in Mizoram only two to three political parties or groups usually formed pre-poll alliance in 1989, 1993, 1998 and 2008 State Assembly elections.

Fourth, coalition government remains in power so long as it functions within the purview of the common minimum programme and policy decisions made by joint efforts of the constituent elements. As soon as the government itself or any of the allies deviate from this basic principle, the coalition government may fall. Common agenda has always been chalked out by coalescing parties at the national level, but there is near total absence of such common minimum manifestoes prepared by political parties forming pre-poll alliance in Mizoram, except in 2008 when United Democratic Alliance (UDA) chalked out common agenda for its members.

Fifth, coalition denotes a temporary alliance or a co-operative arrangement of the coalescing partners. As such, it facilitates coming in or going out of the alliance leading to its formation or break down. Breakdown of political arrangement does not result in the fall of coalition ministry in Mizoram, as the largest political party in the coalition always succeeded in running the ministry singlehandedly for the rest of the term.

Sixth, coalitions are also formed to prevent a common opponent from capturing power. With this end in view the coalescing parties of opposite ideology are united together by setting aside their ideological differences and come to a mutual

understanding. There are several instances of forming an alliance by the Rightist and the Leftist as the United Front constituted by such 13 parties, to deter their common opponent BJP from capturing power at the national level. In the case of Mizoram, the situation is different, although the national party, Indian National Congress worked in coalition with MNF to facilitate the peace process leading to the signing of the Peace Accord in 1986.

Seventh, the coalescing parties very often change their commitment from one alliance to another for share of power or get their interests fulfilled. If power is their only motive behind joining a coalition, in such a coalition set up alliance goes on changing like sand dune of a typical desert.

Eighth, the allying parties retain their self-identity and as such, they are at liberty to secede from the alliance if and when they consider it necessary. So, a coalition system lacks stability.

Ninth, coalition system is not static. It is a dynamic process as it provides scope for the allying partners or at all events, member of such parties to dissolve it or form a new one, and thereby it facilitates its breakdown, formation and reformation within the framework of the coalition arrangement. As for instance, if any of some of the coalescing parties withdraw their support to the coalition government then, it will lose majority strength in the House and fall. Under such a situation, if the new groups or parties extend their support to the existing coalition set-up, a new government comes into existence. However, if the coalescing parties or groups decide to merge themselves

into a new party, the coalition arrangement breaks down. In such a case, the unifying parties lose their self-identity. As for example, when in January 1977, Jana Sangh, Congress(O), BharatiyaLok Dal and the Socialist Party decided to merge themselves to form Janata Party they lost their self-identity. Similarly, in Mizoram the formation of Zoram Peoples Movement (ZPM) by six political groups is a case in point. So, such a unification of certain political parties signifies a new party but not a coalition system.

Tenth, another important theoretical model of coalition politics is pragmatism and not ideology. While making coalition adjustment the ideological aspect may have to be set aside to suit their preferences. The readiness of MPC and ZNP to form an alliance with either the Congress party or the MNF is a case in point. Besides, the coalition ministry formed by both Congress party and BJP in May, 2018 to run Chakma Autonomous District Council (CADC) in Mizoram aimed to keep the MNF out after election delivered a hung result.<sup>4</sup> Coalition politics in Mizoram has, thus, been solely guided by the attempt to prevent another group of parties from coming into office.

### **6.5: Functional Dimensions of Coalition Politics**

To sum up, the functional dimensions of coalition politics at the national and Mizoram state level may also be given here:

First, a coalition set-up is formed by some groups or different political parties either for any kind of activity or profession, or for certain purpose or purposes of forming or pulling down a government with a view to provide an alternative one. If the

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<sup>4</sup> Interviewed with Zodintluanga, CLP Leader and MPCC Treasurer on June 4, 2019 at his residence.

constituent elements while entering into an alliance do not come to a compromise over their varied interests and agree on certain common programme, such a coalition set-up is likely to suffer from defections that may lead to break down of the coalition government.

In the words of Punjab Governor, D.C.Pavate, if the purpose of forming a coalition is to overthrow the existing government without any common programme of action or plan at hand, the coalition would not be able to provide stability and rather in course of time would be the victim of defections<sup>5</sup>.

Second, coalescing partners while trying to achieve the best possible outcome they may or may not care for their loss or gain.

Third, a coalition politics has two other operational features-(a) In certain coalition set-up the party in power, by virtue of inherent coalitional characteristics, may be able to obtain invisible support from some other parties, and play more dominant role than that of the supporting parties. (b) In a formal coalition set-up, two or more parties unite together by mutual understanding of give and take with a view to achieve their goal or goals. Hence, in such alliance, the constituent elements are much more concerned with their loss or gain. The coalition between Congress party and Zoram People's Movement (ZPM) on the eve of Lok Sabha General Elections of 2019 may be a case in point, since the formation of this coalition was solely motivated by their desire to take on the candidate of the ruling party.

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<sup>5</sup>Quoted in Sudhir Kumar, "Constitutional Position of Coalition Government in India" in *The Indian Journal of Political Science* Vol. 69, No. 3 (JULY - SEPT., 2008), Pp. 531-545

Last, a coalition politics involves two purposes-constructive as well as destructive purposes. The constituent parties while entering into an alliance may aim at either to form a government or to overthrow an existing government with or without any scheme in hand.

From the analysis of the conceptual as well as operational dimensions of the coalition politics, it is evident that a coalition set-up denotes a collaborative arrangement in which two or more political parties or groups unite together and by their mutual understanding agree on certain common programme with a view to achieve their desired goal or goals of formation, reformation or control of a government.

Second, it also implies concerted efforts of coalescing parties to prevent the common opponent party from coming to power and provide an alternative government. In this respect, the constituent elements are to set aside their ideological differences and agree on a common agenda by concerted efforts. There are certain glaring instances that the Rightists and Leftists were united together by sinking their ideological differences with a view to overthrow the ruling party or to deter the opposition party from capturing power. As for instance, after the Lok Sabha elections of 1996, a United Front was formed by Leftist and Rightist Parties to prevent BJP from coming to power or to form a Government at the Centre. The United Front was successful in pulling down BJP Government and forming an alternative government at the Centre.

Third, a coalition set-up is a temporary arrangement for combining the interest of mixed motives of the allying parties. It is based on the principle of unity in diversity. As



such, the whole concept of coalition politics is based on the principle of maintaining a balance between diversity and compromise. The coalescing partners are to make a compromise between their varied ideologies and common interests with a view to achieve the best possible outcome. But if protection of selfish interests and power capturing become their only motive behind forming a coalition, party realignment becomes a regular feature. So in such a situation alliances go on changing. Hence, a coalition set-up lacking mutual understanding and a common programme of constituent elements, does not have static existence. So, for the sake of stability of a coalition government, the coalescing parties are to make a compromise between their varied ideologies and common interests and agree on a certain common programme or agenda by mutual understanding and give more importance to the national cause rather than being guided by selfish interests or political power. As Gamson observes, “Coalition adjustment can take place only within the context of mixed motives in which both conflicts and common interests are simultaneously present and must govern the sources of action chosen”.<sup>6</sup>

### **6.6: Nature of Political Coalition in India**

The Coalition Politics both at the national and Mizoram state levels has its own nature and shared some peculiar features. These are as follows :

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<sup>6</sup> William Gamson, *A Theory of Coalition Formation*, American Sociological Review 26,1961 Pp. 373-382

### **6.6.1: Uncertainty and instability**

The coalition governments formed during the pre and post independent period of India seem to be unstable in nature. The constituent partners did not have cohesion among them. The inherent bickering among the coalescing parties led to the breakdown of not only the political alliances but also of the governments as well. Thus, uncertainty and instability are the inherent features of a coalition government in India.

### **6.6.2: Lack of Strict Discipline and Polarisation**

The Coalition Governments were formed neither on strict party discipline nor on the basis of polarisation of the coalescing parties. The alliances had been formed by heterogeneous and opposite elements like C.P.I. and the Jana Sangh. Though such heterogeneous elements or groups were united together by setting aside their ideological differences or by making a compromise between their varied and common interests with a view to capture power only, soon bickering started due to lack of cohesive party discipline or urge for political polarisation of the political forces.

### **6.6.3: Ousting of Congress**

Political alliances were formed by the non-Congress parties in the pre and post independent periods particularly to oust Congress from power and break up its monolithic hold over the electorate. Ram Monohar Lohia and Jaya Prakash Narayan advocated this stratagem. D.C. Pavate rightly observes, "The prime reason for such a coalition of opposition groups was not to provide an alternative government with a

purposive programme different from that of the Congress but to oust the Congress from power somehow or rather”.

#### **6.6.4: Promotion of Political interests**

Another important feature of coalition politics is signified by efforts to promote political interests of the coalescing partners. The coalition had been used as a common platform by the self-interested and power-hungry politicians for winning their game of political opportunism. As soon as the coalescing parties considered that their interests had been jeopardised they immediately seceded from the coalitions without caring for any eventualities.

#### **6.6.5: Defections**

Another salient feature of the coalition politics is defection. The heterogeneous elements very often seemed to indulge in defections resulting in break down of the alliances and fall of the governments. During 1967-73 about 16 state governments were overthrown in quick succession with as many as 2,700 cases of defection by the legislators. Hence, the fate of the coalition governments was dependent to a large extent on the ‘Aya Rams’ and ‘Gaya Rams’ of the Legislative Assemblies.

#### **6.6.6: Lack of Broad Based Outlook**

The coalescing partners seem to be more concerned with their political gains rather than the interests of the state or of the country. They were guided more by narrow outlook of party or self-interests rather than broad perspective of the coalition. So, they did

not hesitate to dishonour even the common programme agreed on by them at the time of forming political coalition.

### **6.7: Problems and Prospects of Coalition Government in Mizoram**

During the formation of coalition government in Mizoram, enormous problems were faced by the coalition ministry, which may be highlighted by way of summarising the issue:

First, problems arise while forming a political coalition by diverse parties. The parties forming an alliance are to set aside their differences but in practice they seemed to be guided more by individual or party interests rather than broad perspective of the coalition. The Congress-MJP pre-poll alliance in 1993 was forged merely to defeat the MNF party and no common programme was chalked out for implementation, in case of forming a coalition government.<sup>7</sup> This deterred the smooth functionings of the government.

Second, problems also arise while selecting a leader of the alliance. On various occasions conflicts and contradictions started on the selection of a leader that even ultimately led to the fall of the government. The appointment of Dy.Chief Minister from the smaller partner always posed lots of problems for the smooth functioning of administration in Mizoram.

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<sup>7</sup> Interviewed with C.Chawngkunga on May 25, 2019 at Congress Bhavan

Thirdly, a coalition government also faces great problems while keeping the allies together. Experiences show that bickerings and dissensions among the constituent elements led to fall of the government.

Fourth, a coalition government in Mizoram also lacked cohesive party discipline.

## **6.8: Typology of Coalition Problems in Mizoram**

A coalition government in Mizoram confronts various problems. So, these problems may be analysed in three broad divisions-

### **6.8.1: Problems of Coalescence**

A political coalition in Mizoram is formed by heterogeneous parties with a view to achieve their goal of formation, deformation or reformation of a coalition government. A pre-poll alliance has been always formed. The parties while entering into an alliance agree to set aside their differences and arrive at a consensus on certain view points. Generally, problems of pre-poll alliance are less than that of the post-poll alliance. In the former case the parties forming a coalition have one common vision – to win the elections and form a government, but in the latter case the party or parties before they enter into an alliance may lay some conditions which may not be acceptable to other constituent elements. In such cases a deadlock may prevail in forming a government as it happened to BJP-led coalition headed by Atal Behari Vajpayee in 1998. Again, if the parties agreeing to form an alliance happened to fight the elections as

opponents in some Assembly Constituencies, serious problems may appear at the constituency level, which will naturally have far reaching political consequences in another constituency\ies where alliances were formed during political campaign. Reference may be made to MNF-MPC alliance in 1998, in which they agreed to make seat adjustment in 24 Assembly Constituencies only out of 40; the rest were fought in open contests. In such political arrangement, the problems of uncertainty and instability easily cropped up after forming a coalition government.<sup>8</sup>

Another problem in the formation of a coalition is that though the coalescing parties by setting aside their difference arrive at a common agenda with a view to give a united fight in the elections or deter a party from coming to power, in practice they seemed to be guided more by individual or party interests rather than that of the common cause of forming the alliance. When the constituent elements think that their party or individual interests have been jeopardised or their demand have not been given due consideration, they never hesitate to force their partner to pull out from the government, as in the case of MNF-MPC coalition ministry in 1999.

### **6.8.2: Leadership Problem**

Immediately after an alliance has been formed, a wrangle starts on the selection of its leader. A person to be selected for the leadership must be acceptable to the other parties as well. From the experiences in Mizoram, it is evident that a leader always emerged from the party that captured the largest number of seats in the House. The

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<sup>8</sup> Interviewed with Brig.T.Sailo, then President of MPC on Sept.30,2008 at his residence. The scholar had already started investigating the emergence of coalition politics in Mizoram during this time.

office of the Deputy Chief Minister goes to the smaller partner, even though there is no such agreement in writing between the two parties in their pre-poll alliance.

### **6.8.3: Problems of Coalition Government**

After overcoming the leadership problem when a coalition government is formed, it faces enormous problems created either by the constituent elements opposition parties. From the experiences in Mizoram, it is evident that the coalescing parties put the government in a difficult situation by pressurising the cabinet ministers to judiciously distribute government contract works for their party workers. If the members of an ally or allies feel that their demands have not been conceded in total or, their individual or party interests have been jeopardised, they never hesitate to secede from the alliance. In this respect, reference may be made of five of the MJD's MLAs who decided to break away from the parent party on 11<sup>th</sup> May, 1994 and formed a separate group called the Mizoram Janata Dal (R) in order to topple the coalition ministry led by Chief Minister Lal Thanhawla.

### **6.9: Impact of Coalition Governments on Politics of Mizoram**

Coalition Government has certain impact on politics in Mizoram. The impact may be positive or negative.

### **6.9.1: Positive Impact on Politics :**

The significant effect of coalition government on politics of Mizoram is that it prevents the state politics from one party dominance system. It led the emergence of multi-party coalitions. The Mizo Union dominated the entire political system of Mizoram since 1952 and continuously remained in power for more than two decades until it merged itself with the Congress party on 12<sup>th</sup> January, 1974. The reason behind the growth of one party dominant system was that the Mizo Union by virtue of its accommodative character thereby created monolithic hold over the electorate. Besides, other parties such as UMFO and MNF were also weak and disorganised, they could not provide viable alternative to the Mizo Union. In a way, the merger of Mizo Union with the national party paved the way for the rise of strong regional political outfit in the following years to come.

Thus, the emergence of strong regional parties after the merger of Mizo Union with the Congress party in Mizoram paved a new era-an era of politics of coalition. The coalition government failed to live long in view of dissensions and bickerings within the allies, and this led to reinstallation of a ministry led by single party in 1993 and 1998. Meanwhile, other smaller regional parties realised the importance of building a strong party to provide a viable alternative to the dominant one party led either by MNF or the Congress party. This had an impact on the Assembly elections of 2008 and 2018 that resulted in the formation of coalition forces outside the two major parties- Congress and MNF.



Thus, it is evident that coalition politics in Mizoram gave rise to politics of anti-dominant party. All the parties outside the MNF and the Congress developed a sentiment against these two major parties and as such they made combined efforts to deter them from coming to power. Formation of non-Congress, non-MNF government has been the popular campaign slogan of these coalition forces.

Second, coalition politics in Mizoram resulted a turn in the political system from single party dominant politics to multi-party coalition politics and vice-versa.

Third, with the formation of coalition government monolithic hold of the single party over the electorate started shrinking and in its place united hold of diverse parties marked its head way in Mizoram.

Fourth, another impact of the coalition government on politics is that it has given rise to demand for more autonomy and better political status by the three Autonomous District Councils. In this respect reference may be made to some of the regional parties like the Mara Democratic Front (MDF) who demanded Union Territory for Maraland. The MDF submitted memoranda three time to the Indian Prime Minister in 1996, 1998 and 2007 and it also submitted memorandum to the Union Home Minister in 2014.

Fifth, in comparison to one party government there is less chance for corruption in a coalition government. There have been huge corruption cases against leading politicians during Congress and MNF regimes and such cases are always given wide coverage either for party interests or for tarnishing future image of the political leaders involved in corruption cases. Such kind of big scandals were not fortunately witnessed

during the formation of coalition governments led either by the Congress or the MNF in 1993 and 1998 respectively.

Sixth, the coalition government has also discarded autocratic behaviour of the leading politicians and the ministers of a dominant single party rule.

### **6.9.2: Negative Impact on Politics**

The Coalition Politics in Mizoram resulted uncertainty in the political situation. The experiences of coalition governments formed in the state has brought home to the fact that none of them could live for long and had to meet premature death.

The reason behind the uncertainty and instability of a coalition government may be traced to the bickering and dissensions taking place within the constituent elements. In a simple language a coalition government may be termed as a government of heterogeneous elements overridden by bickering and dissensions that lead to disintegration of the allies and pave the way for defections inherent in lure of power and ultimately cause premature death of the alliance.

Further, coalition government lacks cohesive discipline to keep the allies together. Though the coalescing parties while entering into an alliance for formation, deformation or reformation of a government seemed to have set aside their ideological differences and arrive at a common agenda, in practice they acted in reverse and seemed to be guided more by individual or party interests rather than broad perspectives of the coalitions. So, when they found that their personal or party interests had been sidetracked, they immediately seceded from the alliance and even did not also hesitate to

lead to end of the coalition. All this caused uncertainty and instability in the political situation.

Reference may be made to the Congress-led coalition government headed by Lal Thanhawla in 1993. This first coalition government in the post-statehood had to face contradictions and meet premature death in view of bickering and dissensions among the members of the allying partners and secession by some of the allies or its even members from its partner. It was not surprising that five of MJD MLAs walked out of the Congress-MJD alliance for not getting ministerial berths. This has brought home to the fact that the coalescing partners are guided more by political opportunism rather than broad perspectives of the very purpose of forming a coalition government.

This exhibits how a coalition government is turned into home of contending elements and demands for fulfilling selfish or party interests. Thus, from the above analysis of negative effects of coalition politics in Mizoram, it is evident that a coalition politics signified uncertainty in the political situation and instability of the government. It also gave rise to politics of opportunism and pulls and pressures for fulfillment of vested interests to its allies. The reason behind such uncertainty, instability, political opportunism and scope for giving rise to politics of placing demands for fulfillment of vested interests either of an ally or main supporting parties of a coalition government may be given as follows:

- (i) Heterogeneity in political coalitions.
- (ii) Lack of cohesive party discipline.

- (iii) Allies of the government being guided more by selfish or party interests rather than common cause of the coalescence.
- (iv) Political opportunism playing important role in the formation and deformation of a coalition government.
- (v) Leadership problem.

In spite of the above factors of negative effects on the politics of coalition government, it has certain positive impact too. The reasons may be as follows:

- (i) Unity among the non-major parties.
- (ii) United efforts by other regional parties to bring to an end the dominance of one political party
- (iii) Scope of the regional parties for taking part in the decision-making body.
- (iv) Increase of political education and consciousness of the electorate.
- (v) Less chance for corruptions.

#### **6.10: Suggestions:**

1. There should be dominant party in the coalition government to oversee the policy and programmes in consultation with the allies. Common minimum programmes/manifesto should also be worked out, not merely seat adjustment among the coalescing parties.
2. There should also be pragmatic understanding and electoral adjustment prior to the polls among the coalition partners. They should contest the election jointly and try to obtain a mandate with long-term objectives.

3. If erstwhile rivals come together to forge an electoral alliance in pre or post-poll, they should publicly declare their historic compromise. Lack of transparency is another factor, which results in mistrust between coalition partners during election.

In sum, the study also shows that many of the characteristics of coalition politics like instability, hankering for office, uncertainty, opportunistic and so on are primarily a result of the incentives and opportunities offered by the institutional framework rather than a particular political culture of the state. However, coalition studies have been one of the most dynamic sub fields in political science and if it has to maintain the same and vitality in the future it is imperative that it takes into account the fact that coalition formation is not simply a pre or post- electoral phenomenon, but could also take place in the electoral arena as well.

## **APPENDIX-1**

### **UNITED FRONT'S POLICY STATEMENT: A COMMON APPROACH TO MAJOR POLICY MATTERS AND A MINIMUM PROGRAMME 1996\***

#### **THE BACKGROUND**

The United Front has been formed at a crucial moment in our nation's history. The 1996 Lok Sabha elections have given a decisive mandate in favour of secular and democratic forces. Three out of four voters have voted against sectarian and communal parties. At the same time, we recognise that these three out of four voters have voted for a number of parties including national and state-level parties. These voters have also voted for a government, which is guided by the principles of probity, responsibility with accountability and openness and transparency in all decision-making. We therefore, interpret the verdict as a mandate for the formation of a secular, liberal and democratic coalition government at the centre. It is only such a government that can reflect the pluralistic nature of our society. .

The United Front represents the diversity of India in substantial measure. We pledge to represent the resolve of the Indian people to preserve the secular nature of their heritage. We pledge to represent the resolve of the Indian people to give themselves a government that is representative, responsible and responsive. We pledge to represent the will of the Indian people to strengthen the forces of political federalism which in the Indian context means a strong centre, strong states and viable local bodies. We pledge to represent the desire of the Indian people to give themselves a higher standard of living and a better quality of life through faster economic growth and enhanced social justice.

The United Front government will not be a replacement of one set of rulers by another. It will mark the beginning of an alternative model of governance based on federalism, decentralisation, accountability, equality and social justice, economic and

political reforms, respect for human freedom and openness and transparency which will ensure the dignity of both the nation and the individual citizen.

The United Front presents below an agenda for a central government-founded on the pillars of unity, secularism, stability, development and distributive justice.

### **STABILITY AND FEDERALISM**

The United Front is committed to giving a stable government at the centre for the full term of five years. In any coalition, there will be differences, but what is important is the manner in which these differences are aired, discussed and resolved. During its term of office, the United Front government will advance the principles of political, administrative and economic-federalism. In each of these spheres, power will be devolved and authority will be decentralised. The last review of centre-state relations was undertaken by the Sarkaria Commission which gave its report over ten years ago. Since then, there has been a sea-change in both the politics and economics of the country. There has also been a new articulation of the states rights and the need for greater powers to the state of meet the aspirations of their respective states.

Hence, the United Front government intends to pursue a two-track policy: On the first track, the recommendation of the Sarkaria Commission on which there is already a broad consensus will be implemented through legislation and administrative action as appropriate. The United Front believes that it is possible to take following matters;

(i) to give greater autonomy of states in determining their priorities in developmental programmes

(ii) to give states greater freedom to draw their state plans within the broad framework of the National Five Year Plans

(iii) to transfer most centrally sponsored schemes to the control of the state governments

(iv) to grant assent promptly to bills passed by state legislatures on matters which are within the legislative powers of the state legislatures.

On the second track, the United-Front government will immediately appoint a high level committee to review and update the recommendations of the Sarkaria Commission. The committee will be requested to also look into the vital question of devolution of financial power from the central government to the state governments, The committee will be required to give its report within three months. The report of the committee will then be made that so public there is an informed public debate before final decisions are taken.

Besides, the United Front government will reactivate and energise institutions like the National Development Council and the, Inter-State Council.

The scope of Article 356 of the constitution has been interpreted and circumscribed by recent decisions of the Supreme Court. Article 356 will be amended to reflect these decisions and to prevent the misuse of that Article.

Elections have been held in most states to panchayats and in some cases, also to the Nagarpalikas pursuant to the 73rd Amendments to the constitution. The process will be taken further to ensure devolution of administrative and financial powers to Panchayats and Nagarpalikas in all the states. Steps will be taken to ensure that regular elections are held according to the prescribed frequency.

## **SOCIAL JUSTICE**

The United Front is committed to the empowerment of the underprivileged and deprived sections and communities. One-third of the elected membership in Parliament and State Legislatures will be reserved for women. Legislation, including; an amendment to the constitution if necessary, will be introduced to reserve one-third of all posts in government for women. The United Front government will take all possible measures to promote and ensure gender equality. All laws will be reviewed to remove provisions, which discriminate against women.



The policy of reservation in public employment for Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and Other Backward Classes will continue and will be implemented vigorously. The benefits of reservation will be extended to Dalit Christians. Special courts will be set up under the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (prevention of Atrocities) Act to ensure quick justice to victims of atrocities. Artisans, craftspersons, tradespersons, weavers and fishermen are among the most neglected sections of the society. Special programmes will be devised to enhance their skills, give them modern tools and more credit facilities and make their products and services more marketable so that they will earn living wages.

The United Front government will urge the state governments to take up, on a priority basis, the question of conferring ownership rights on slum dwellers in respect of the land on which they live with suitable provisions for slum improvement, public or private group housing to replace kutcha shelters and allotment of alternative sites in case it becomes necessary to relocate slum dwellers on grounds of public interest.

### **EMPOWERMENT OF SCHEDULED TRIBES, SCHEDULED CASTES AND OTHER BACKWARD CLASSES**

Scheduled Tribes are found in many parts of India and dwell in the most difficult and inhospitable terrains. There is growing disaffection among Scheduled Tribes because of lack of security. Alienation of their lands, exploitation of the mineral wealth, deprivation on their rights to forest produce and wealth and despoiling of their environment. The United Front government will appoint a high-level commission to enquire into and report on the status, problems and aspirations of the members belonging to the Scheduled Tribes. The United Front government will also study the conclusions contained in the report of the Bhuria Committee on Scheduled Tribes made in 1995 and take necessary steps to implement the salient recommendations.

The United Front government will urge the state governments to make legislation for conferring ownership rights in respect of minor forest produce, including Tendu Patta, on Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, Other Backward Classes and other

weaker sections who work in the forests. The central government will consider extending some financial assistance to the state governments which take up this responsibility.

A large number of members belonging to the Scheduled Castes and Other Backward Classes are dependent on their traditional occupations. On the one hand, the door of access of other occupations has been barred to them while, on the other hand, there is a sharp dwindling of opportunities and incomes in their traditional occupations. Despite the policy of reservation there is no true equality of opportunity. The Central government and the state governments have not addressed themselves comprehensively and consistently to measures which would bring economic freedom, educational equality and true equality of opportunities to these people. The United Front government will carefully study the Dalit Manifesto formulated by the National Action Forum for Social Justice and implement its saline recommendations. A number of cases are still under consideration for inclusion in the list of Scheduled Tribes. Decision will be taken on these cases expeditiously.

## **SECULARISM**

The United Front is founded on the plank of secularism and democracy. The United Front declares that secularism means that there should be separation of state and religion and also notes that it is this definition that has been accepted as correct by the Supreme Court in numerous decisions. Attempts by sectarian or communal forces to erode the multi-ethnic, multi-religious and multi-linguistic character of our society will be strongly resisted.

The contentious issue to Babri Masjid-Ram Janmabhoomi will be referred to the Supreme Court under Article 138 (2) of the constitution. Stringent steps will be taken to implement the Protection of Places of Worship Act.

The constitutional rights to freedom of religion contained in Articles 25, 26, 27 and 28 of the constitution will be respected and protected. At the same time, the United

Front government will not allow obscurantism and fundamentalism from any source and of any sort. The personal codes of different religious communities will not be altered until and unless consensus has emerged in the religious community concerned for bringing about change. Untiring efforts will be made to bring every section of the society together to build a strong, modern, forwardlooking, liberal and democratic society imbued with a scientific temper and an aspiration for material progress.

The United Front government will review and if necessary, enlarge the 15-point programme for the minorities and ensure the implementation of the programme. Special emphasis will be placed on finding solutions to the problems of the minorities in relation to education, employment, and opportunities for economic betterment.

### **TOWARDS A JUST HUMANE SOCIETY**

The United Front government will in close cooperation with state governments, take steps to build a just and humane society. The right to free and compulsory elementary education shall be made a fundamental right and enforced through suitable statutory measures. Special programmes will also be launched to take care of children and the disabled and to eradicate child labour in all occupations and industries.

The Indian Penal Code, the Criminal Procedure Code and all other penal laws will be reviewed and amended to make their provisions consistent with the sanctity of human rights. The United Nations Convention on Torture will be adopted. State Governments will be required to appoint Human Rights Commissions.

### **ECONOMIC POLICIES**

Growth with social justice will be the motto of the United Front government. There is no substitute for growth. It is growth which creates jobs and generates incomes. Self-reliance has been an article of faith since independence and the United Front government will adopt such growth-oriented policies that lead to greater self-reliance. The United Front is committed to faster economic growth. The country's GDP needs to grow at over seven per cent per year in the next 10 years in order to abolish endemic

poverty and unemployment. The Ninth Five Year plan is scheduled to be launched on 1st April, 1997. The United Front government will, within six months, bring out a detailed document that will articulate the priorities and programmes of the Ninth Plan.

## **AGRICULTURE**

The Agriculture sector cries out of reforms. No strategy of economic reforms and regeneration in India can succeed without sustained and broad-based agricultural development. The rate of investment in agriculture will be stepped up. All controls and regulations that are in the way of increasing the incomes of farmers will be reviewed immediately and abolished wherever found unnecessary. Controls on the movement of agricultural products and on the processing of agricultural products will be abolished. Measures will be taken to ensure that farmers receive fair and remunerative prices for their produce. Special attention will be devoted to augmenting rural infrastructure. A special plan for infrastructure development will be taken up in the 100 most backward and poorest districts of the country. The rural credit system will be restructured so as to double the flow of credit to agriculture and agro-industries, particularly to small and marginal farmers within five years. A national policy on water sharing and water management will be devised in order to save farmers all over the country from recurrent floods and droughts.

Agencies that supply inputs to farmers will be professionalised and where found feasible converted into farmer-owned cooperatives. Agricultural research and extension organization will be thoroughly overhauled. The most modern technology will be brought to the farm sector, for example biotechnology for livestock and cold storage for agro processing. A comprehensive law will be made by Parliament in respect of agricultural workers to guarantee them minimum wages and fair conditions of work group, insurance and other rights.

States will be encouraged to implement land reforms by plugging the legal and administrative loopholes. States will also be urged to make a law dealing with land

records including record of tenancy rights. In cooperation with the states, larger funds will be allocated for irrigation and extension of cultivation.

## **POVERTY ALLEVIATION**

A frontal attack on poverty is an important element in any development policy. This is the main rationale for anti-poverty programmes. Such programmes must be redesigned to ensure generation of more employment, creation of assets, imparting productive skills and raising the incomes of the very poor so that a significant number is brought above the poverty line every year. The United Front government will review all the anti-poverty programmes with a view to strengthening them and providing them with larger funds. A programme for guaranteeing 100 days of employment for every unemployed person will be implemented through Panchayati Raj institutions.

## **INDUSTRY**

The key to faster economic growth is rapid, labour intensive industrialization. The United Front is committed to maintain a 12 per cent annual growth in the industrial sector. This will require massive capital and modern technology, apart from continuing the process of deregulation and decontrol as required. There is ample room for public investment as well as private investment. When it is required to face competition, domestic industry will be assured of a level playing field.

Suitable policies will be devised to stimulate domestic savings and capital formation. The bulk of the industry's requirements will indeed come from within the country. However, at the margin, the country cannot do without foreign investment particularly if that foreign investment will also bring modern technology and management practices and create new markets for products manufactured in the country. The nation needs and has the capacity to absorb at least \$10 billion a year as foreign direct investment.

Suitable credit and taxation policies will be devised to ensure that the bulk of new investments, both domestic and foreign, will be channelled into the core and

infrastructure sectors. Entry of multinational companies into low priority areas will be discouraged through suitable fiscal and other measures. In order to promote even development, suitable incentives and policies will be devised to encourage new industries to locate in the backward districts of the country.

The United Front recognises the role of the corporate sector in building a strong and modern India. The corporate sector should create conditions in which the working class of country is able to make its contribution with enthusiasm. The United Front government in its dealings with the corporate sector will follow a policy informed by transparency and fair play and expects that the corporate sector will reciprocate by following the rules and conventions of a healthy market economy. The corporate sector should also keep in mind the paramount interest of the consumer and will be held accountable through an expanded network of consumer courts. The United Front government will always be ready to engage in a meaningful and constructive dialogue with the corporate sector with a view to strengthening the Indian economy.

The progress towards the goal of bringing India's tariffs accord with world levels will be measured and calibrated. An independent Tariff Commission will be appointed within three months to hear and determine tariff disputes as well as to recommend appropriate levels of tariffs for different products and different industries keeping in view the larger interests of the country.

There are a number of domestic industries which are essentially home-based or village-based requiring low skills and employing a large number of people. These industries will be given adequate protection and it will be ensured that foreign investment does not displace such industries.

The balance among large, medium and small cottage industries will be restored. Small cottage industries have the potential of creating large job opportunities. They are also more elastic in responding to changes in the market. Hence, special plans will be

devised to promote small cottage industries to achieve the twin objectives of growth and employment

## **PUBLIC SECTOR**

In the early decades of development, the public sector played a pioneering role. The public sector will continue to be an important component of Indian industry. The United Front government will help to make the public sector strong and competitive. In a competitive and technology-driven economy, there is no room for monopolies and inefficiency. Public sector enterprises which are essentially commercial enterprises should conduct their business on commercial lines. They cannot be allowed to dissolve, they should show a healthy return on the capital employed. It is widely acknowledged that the public sector requires to be reformed and restructured. The United Front government will identify public sector companies that have comparative advantages and will support them in their drive to become global giants. Other profit making and efficient public sector companies will be strengthened and their managements professionalised and participation of workers in the management of these companies will be encouraged. Sick or potentially sick public sector companies will be rehabilitated through menu of options that may include handing over the management of professional groups or workers cooperatives.

The question of withdrawing the public sector from non-core and non-strategic' areas will be carefully examined subject, however, to assuring the workers and employees of job security or, in the alternative, opportunities for retraining and redeployment. The United Front government will establish a Disinvestment Commission to advise the government of these steps. Any decision to disinvest will be taken and implemented in a transparent manner. Revenues generated from such disinvestment will be utilised in two vital areas, health and education, particularly in the poor and backward districts of the country. A part of such revenues will be earmarked to create an investment fund which will be used to strengthen other public sector enterprises.

## **INDUSTRIAL SICKNESS**

A new law will be made to deal with industrial sickness and the Board for Industrial and Financial Reconstruction will be completely revamped. The law, will also provide for a separate mechanism to deal with sickness in small industries. Efforts will be made to rehabilitate and revive sick industries and protect the interests of the workers.

## **LABOUR**

Workers form the backbone of the industrial sector. Their rights are spelt out in a number of laws made by the Parliament and legislatures. The United Front government will ensure that these laws are implemented in the spirit in which the laws were made. The rights of unions will be respected and recognition of trade unions will be required to be done by secret ballot.

Some laws have been made in respect of labour in the unorganized sector. These laws will be strengthened and, where necessary, new laws will be made to protect the interests of such labour particularly in the construction and beady-rolling industries.

## **INFRASTRUCTURE**

Investment in infrastructure has to be stepped up from the present 3.5-4.0 per cent of GDP to atleast six percent of GDP in the next few years. The economy cannot grow and the needs of the people cannot be met without more capacity in power, oil, telecom railways, roads and ports. The cumulative requirement of these sectors over the next five years is estimated to be \$ 200 billion (Rs 700,000 crores) at the very minimum. Thus, there is ample room for all modes of investment-public and private, domestic and foreign. The United Front acknowledges that the state and public investment have a leading role to play in the development of infrastructure. The scope, functions and the procedures of the Foreign Investment Promotion Board will be reviewed in order to make it an effective and credible instrument to promote foreign investment in India. Transparent rules and regulations will be drawn up to attract foreign investment. Every



decision on the award of large contracts will be made public together with the process by which the decision was arrived at.

There is a strong link between infrastructure development and financial sector reforms. Infrastructure needs long-term finances. The United Front government will carry out further reforms of the financial sector so that the flow of both domestic and foreign funds to the infrastructure sector is enhanced substantially. There is room for public sector companies and private sector companies to co-exist and compete in the financial sector. We have gained considerable experience in the working of the banking sector. The said experience will be applied to the restructuring of the insurance industry but at the same time, public sector companies like LIC, GIC, etc. will be strengthened.

### **PUBLIC INVESTMENT**

There is a crucial role for public investment particularly in social sectors like education and health. However organisational and management changes in these sectors are as necessary , as increased investment. Besides, there can be no compromise on efficiency and productivity. Public services and utilities must be made to deliver at the lowest cost. Where there is a need for subsidy, the subsidy must be closely targeted to benefit the really needy and the poor.

### **FISCAL MANAGEMENT**

It is recognised world over that fiscal prudence is the key to low inflation stable price levels and rapid growth. The United Front is committed to bringing the fiscal deficit to below four per cent of GDP. The management of the fiscal deficit will, therefore, enjoy the highest priority. The United Front government will continue with tax reforms and take other steps to augment revenues legitimately due to the government and to curb tax evasion. All inessential and unproductive expenditure will be eliminated. Subsidies will be targeted to the really needy and poor. Public borrowing will be severely restricted and, as far as possible, borrowed money will not be used for consumption expenditure. Growth in domestic debt will be slowed down and a portion

of the debt will be retired in a phased manner. These principles of fiscal management will however, not be followed at the cost of development or investment.

### **PRICE STABILITY**

The Public Distribution System will be strengthened to meet the twin objectives of price stability and making available essential articles to the poor. Special cards will be given to families below the poverty line and essential articles under the PDS will be sold to them at one-half of the normal issue prices. Access to the PDS will be barred for the affluent sections of the society. While the responsibility of supplying food grains and essential articles will remain with the central and state governments, the management of PDS shops will be entrusted to elected Panchayats and Nagarpalikas.

Foodstocks and foreign exchange reserves will be used imaginatively and purposefully to stabilise prices. Speculators, hoarders and blackmarketeers create havoc. Preventive and punitive action will be taken against them. Swift and severe punishment will be meted out to the offenders.

### **DRINKING WATER, PRIMARY HEALTH CARE AND HOUSING**

Although drinking water, primary health care and housing are subjects which fall under the purview of the state governments, the central government also bears a responsibility to ensure that these basic human needs of every citizen are satisfied. Special plans will be drawn up during the Ninth Plan period to ensure that:

- 1) every habitation has access to potable drinking water,
- 2) one primary health centre is established for a population of 5000 people and it is efficiently managed and
- 3) the very poor have access to houses built under the public housing programme or to credit that can be utilised to build their own houses so that the goal of providing a shelter for every family is achieved by the year 2005.

## **EDUCATION**

Six per cent of the nation's GDP will be earmarked for education. This will be achieved by the year 2000. Fifty per cent of these funds will be spent on primary education. Substantial funds will be earmarked for imparting technical and vocational skills and training in order to turn out more employable and self-employed youth. The goal of the National Literacy Mission to cover 10 crore adults will be achieved by the target year 1998-99. The NLM will give special attention to the spread of literacy among women.

The United Front is also committed to making the nation fully literate by the year 2005. A special effort, will be made in the states where there is very high incidence of illiteracy and constitutes the bulk of educational deprivation. Weaknesses and loopholes in the implementation of the literacy programme will be identified and removed.

The mid-day meal scheme will be implemented in all the states to ensure regular attendance and retention in primary and middle schools. In every initiative that is taken to promote the spread of education, the girl-child will be a special focus of attention.

## **SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY**

Science and technology are engines of change and growth. A nation can make advances in science and technology only at its peril. All-out efforts, including the provision of adequate funds, will be made to promote research and development and to strengthen the national and other laboratories. The United Front government will adopt and implement a forward looking policy on science and technology which will help to build a modern and self-reliant society on the foundations of a rational outlook, scientific temper, creative work and material progress.

## **CLEAN ADMINISTRATION**

The United Front is committed to a corruption-free and clean administration. A bill to set up that Lok Pal will be introduced in the first budget session of the eleventh

Lok Sabha. The bill will cover the office of Prime Minister as well. All members of the Parliament will be required by law to declare their assets annually before the Lok Pal.

The Official Secrets Act will be reviewed and amended keeping in tune with the need . for openness and transparency in governance. A bill on freedom of information will be introduced within six months to give the people access to information at all levels.

Discretionary quotas, hitherto enjoyed by ministers, will be abolished. In areas where it is necessary to make a small number of outof-turn allotments, such allotments will be made by a committee and in accordance with published rules and guidelines. All exercise of discretionary powers in this behalf will be made public quarterly, through a suitable publication equivalent to the gazette.

A bill on electoral reforms reflecting the consensus already arrived at will be introduced in the first budget session of the eleventh Lok Sabha. A bill on judicial reforms will be introduced within six months in order to expedite trial of cases and to eliminate delays.

In consultation with the Chief Justice of India and the Chief Justices of High Courts, steps will be taken to dispose off all pending cases within a period of three years. The United Front government is committed to fight corruption, particularly corruption in high places, and will take such steps as are necessary and in accordance with the law to restore the confidence and credibility of the offices and institution of the state.

The people of the country are greatly exercised by the growing emergence of a nexus between politicians, civil-servants, businessmen and criminal elements which has been eloquently illustrated by the report of the Vohra Committee. The United Front Government will disclose to Parliament the relevant facts and material which formed the basis of the report of the Vohra Committee. It will also set up a statutory authority with adequate powers to go into these facts and circumstances and make suitable

recommendations to identify and punish the guilty with a view to eliminate the role of the "parallel government".

### **JAMMU AND KASHMIR**

The State of Jammu and Kashmir and its people are an inalienable part of India. The resolution of the problem of Jammu and Kashmir can only be through consulting the wishes of the people. The elections held recently in six Lok Sabha constituencies is the first step in the process of consultation. The United Front is committed to hold elections to the Jammu and Kashmir State Legislative Assembly as soon as possible. Respecting Article 370 of the constitution as well as the wishes of the people, the problems of Jammu and Kashmir will be resolved through giving the people of that State the maximum degree of autonomy.

### **ASSAM AND THE NORTH-EASTERN STATES**

The problem of influx of foreigners into Assam will be resolved on the basis of the Assam Accord to which the central government is a signatory. The resolution of the issues relating to ULFA and Bodo Security Force also lies only through a political dialogue.

The United Front government will take up special programmes for the economic development of Assam and the North-Eastern region. The recrudescence of insurgency in Manipur, Mizoram and Nagaland is a cause for concern and will be met with a firm resolve of enforced law and order.

### **FOREIGN POLICY**

There is a large measure of consensus of foreign policy which is based on our traditional values and on the experience gained during the freedom struggle and in the post-independence era. Non-alignment is the cornerstone of our foreign policy. The United Front government will closely adhere to the consensus.

Good and friendly relations with neighbouring countries will receive the highest priority. The SAARC forum and SAPTA leading to SAFTA will be the principal instruments through which close and friendly relations will be forged between India and her South Asian neighbours.

China is a neighbour of India. Important steps were taken in recent years towards cordial relations and harmony between India and China. Further steps will be taken in this direction.

The United Front government will work to strengthen the NonAligned Movement. It will also actively participate in the deliberations of UNCTAD so that the organisation and the member-countries are able to articulate the views of the developing countries.

India has taken many initiatives to become a partner in many multilateral arrangements as, for example, the Indian Ocean Rim Association, APEC and ASEAN. These initiatives will be pursued.

While India has good relations with all countries of the world, it has especially warm relations with the United States and Russia as well as Japan and many countries in Central Asia, South-East Asia, the European Union, the Middle East, Africa and Latin America. These wfirm relationships will be emphasized while strengthening relations with all countries of the world.

The United Front Government will continue the South-South dialogue in order to make South-South cooperation an important plank of multilateral efforts taken by the developing countries.

The United Front government will continue to work for universal nuclear disarmament and will retain the nuclear option till this goal is achieved. It will press India's case for permanent membership of the Security Council.

Economic and commercial relations are now important components of our foreign policy. Foreign economic relations will be based on the principle of mutual cooperation and benefit through bilateral and multilateral arrangements.

## **INTERNATIONAL BODIES AND TREATY OBLIGATIONS**

India has been an active member of the United Nations since its inception. India is also a founder of many international bodies and organisations. These organisations will play important role in an increasingly interdependent world. The United Front government will assert India's rights and interests in these Organizations. It will also mobilise other developing countries to fight for their rights. In forging international or multilateral agreements, the United Front government will continue to ensure the interests of the country's agriculture, leading sectors of industry and our genetic resources.

## **PRASAR BHARATI ACT**

The Prasar Bharati Act will be reviewed and amended in the light of the recent judgments of the Supreme Court and implemented without further delay.

## **ENVIRONMENT**

The United Front is committed to protecting and preserving the environment and the adoption of green policies in every walk of life. A massive programme for afforestation, wasteland development and revegetating of degraded forests will be launched through Panchayati Raj institutions.

The United Front government's policy on environment will be consistent with the need for rapid and sustainable economic development, Stern measures will be taken against pollution and polluters. The interest to the workers will be safeguarded when it becomes necessary to relocate polluting industrial units. The displacement of communities as a result of developmental activities will be avoided as far as possible and, in any case, rehabilitation of the displaced families will be made an integral component of any developmental plan.®

Millions of young men and women are imbued with idealism. The United Front government will harness the energies of the youth. They will be recruited in Development Corps and deployed in a large number of public works like afforestation, repair and restoration of canals, waterways and irrigation systems, etc.

## **CONCLUSION**

India today is in the midst of a major transition in its economic, social and political life. This is a transition period which will be guided by the need to strengthen the principles of democracy, secularism, federalism and social justice.

The ethos of our humanist tradition and the aspirations of the independence struggle inspire the United Front government to carry out the above programme. In the building of this new India of equality, justice and fraternity, we seek the fullest participation of all citizens. The hallmark of the United Front government's approach will be the greater and greater involvement of our people in all its endeavours.

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**\* United Front's Policy Statement, "A Common Approach to Major Policy Matters and a Minimum Programme" available at <http://www.linksjstor.org>.**



## **APPENDIX-2**

### **BJP AND ALLIANCE PARTNERS: NATIONAL AGENDA FOR GOVERNANCE, 1998\***

#### **PREAMBLE**

In the recently concluded elections to the 12<sup>th</sup> Lok Sabha, the BJP and its alliance partners went to the people as a team and sought their support for forming a new government. The electorate has given its verdict. The BJP and alliance partners have untidily won. We have the mandate to govern. This we will do mindful of the high responsibility and honour that has been conferred upon us.

On this occasion, we recollect the core of the appeal for support that we had made; the assurance of a stable government and an able leadership. As a reaffirmation of that, and in joint and unanimous commitment to this high national endeavour, together the BJP and alliance partners now present to the country a 'National Agenda for Governance'.

This is our joint commitment, an assurance that we give together to the entire country. We do so conscious of the deep historic import of the moment in this the Golden Jubilee year of our independence; of the great relevance and significance of 'The Agenda for India', adopted unanimously by both Houses of Parliament on that occasion; the impending end of the twentieth century and the dawning of a new millennium. On this occasion we appeal for an aspire to the advent of a new political age of reconciliation and accord; of dynamic economic growth with our cherished values of humanism in the forefront and above all with an unshakable faith in the destiny of our great land and its people.

#### **GOVERNANCE**

1. Our first commitment to the people is to give a stable, honest, transparent and efficient government capable of accomplishing all round development. For this, the

government shall introduce time bound programmes of needed administrative reforms including those for the police and other civil services.

## **ECONOMY**

2. We will continue with the reform process, give it a strong Swadeshi thrust to ensure that the national economy grows on the principle that 'India shall be built by Indians reappraise and revitalize reforms through giving primacy to removal of unemployment, and to an accelerated development of infrastructure, particularly energy and power production. We will bring GDP growth to the 7-8% bracket, and control deficit fiscal and revenue. We will take all such steps as would expedite implementation of policies and programmes in accord with our national interests and give to the entire national development efforts a humane face with total eradication of poverty as the ultimate goal. For this 'Berozgari hatao' eradicate unemployment our call.

3. We will carefully analyse the effects of globalization, calibrate the process of it by devising a time-table to suit our national conditions and requirements so as to not undermine but strengthen the national economy, the indigenous industrial base and the financial and service sectors.

4. We will earmark 60% of the plan funds for and effect public investment in agriculture, rural development, irrigation and by diverse incentives, including tax shelters, achieve a quantum leap in agricultural production so that agriculture, horticulture, forestry, food processing, fisheries and so on become the vehicles for growth resulting in an enhancement of the purchasing power of the people. Effective crop insurance schemes will be introduced. Special efforts will be made in Animal Husbandry, Dairying, particularly in respect of cow and its progeny. This is one of the routes to generating employment, thus eradicating hunger and poverty in rural as well as urban areas. We will continue with farm subsidies but make them more direct, efficient and specific. Development of medium and smallscale irrigation projects shall receive

priority attention emphasis for investment here will be accordance with the potential for development.

5. We will adopt a National Water Policy which provides for effective and prompt settlement of disputes and their time bound implementation.

6. We will increase the national savings to 30% of the GDP in the next five years by appropriate incentives and through motivation encourage Foreign Direct Investment in core areas so that it usefully supplements the national efforts and discourage FDI in non-priority areas.

7. We will institute a comprehensive study of the financial, technological and social security requirements of the self-employed and unincorporated sector, also constitute a Development Bank to promote this largest segment of the national economy which too, has great employment and self-employment potential. Further, in addition to financial support institutions we will bring into being other institutional systems for providing services, technology and marketing facilities for artisans, the small-scale village khadi, powerloom, handloom, handicrafts and such other industries. This and the agriculture sectors are an untapped source with unlimited scope for generation of employment.

8. We will give a major thrust to infrastructure development, particularly energy and power, by recommending public expenditure in the sector. Towards this, we will access long-term funds in the national and international markets, remove administrative bottlenecks, reverse the slowdown in this critical area of national economy, thus giving a fresh impetus to growth.

9. We will undertake a review of all laws and regulations relating to industry so as to free it from bureaucratic control institute a system of voluntary compliance with laws, including tax laws; ensure speedy redressal of industrial sickness; arrange for meaningful interaction between industry and government; and revive the capital market as a viable and transparent mechanism for raising capital. We will also expedite

comprehensive reform of the PSUs, including restructuring, rehabilitation and disinvestment.

## **LABOUR**

10. We will make labour, both organised and unorganised, an equal and proud partner in the production of the nation's wealth and in its progress. Laws relating to equal pay for equal work for men and women shall be strictly implemented.

## **ERADICATION OF UNEMPLOYMENT**

11. Recognising the right to work of every citizen, the main thrust of the new government will be: 'Berozgaari Hatao' (Eradicate Unemployment). As against the present trend of jobless growth, our government will measure growth by generation of gainful employment. Our new investment and institutional thrust to agriculture, the self-employed, the unincorporated sector, infrastructure development and housing will act as the vehicles for massive employment creation at all levels.

## **FOOD SECURITY AND PRICE STABILITY**

12. We will ensure food security for all, create a hunger-free India in the next five years and reform and improve the Public Distribution System so as to serve the poorest of the poor in the rural and urban areas. We will also ensure price stability by all appropriate means and necessary legislation.

## **HEALTH AND DRINKING WATER**

13. We will ensure that potable drinking water is available to all villages in the next five years. We will strive to achieve 'Health for All' by diverse programmes.

## **EDUCATION FOR ALL**

14. We are committed to a total eradication of illiteracy. We will formulate and implement plans to gradually increase the governmental and non-governmental spending on education up to 6% of the GDP so as to provide education for all. We will implement the constitutional provision of making primary education free and compulsory up to 5th

standard. Our aim is to move towards equal access to and opportunity of educational standards up to schoolleaving stage. We shall strive to improve the quality of education at all levels from primary schools to our universities.

### **HOUSING FOR ALL**

15. Shelter is a basic human requirement that needs to be met on a priority basis. We are, therefore, committed to evolving a National Housing and Habitat Policy in consultation with state governments, aimed at providing housing for all. Towards this end, we shall facilitate construction of 20 lakh additional housing units annually. As in other programmes, the emphasis will be on the benefit to the poor and the deprived.

### **EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN**

16. We will legislate for the reservation of 33% of the seats in Parliament and State Assemblies for women; also institute plans for providing free education for girls up to college level, including professional courses, so as to better empower women. We will also set up a Development Bank for women entrepreneurs in the small scale and tiny sectors.

### **HARNESSING YUVA SHAKTI**

17. Our youth are the strength of the family, village, locality and the community. They are also the future of our nation. We will take all necessary steps to mobilise this most idealistic, inspired and energetic section of our society in the mission of nation building. For this purpose, we shall build national consensus for the creation of a National Reconstruction Corps aimed at environmental protection, ecological tasks reclamation of waste land, including afforestation, and for spreading literacy. We will have a time-bound programme for promotion of sports.

## **CHILDREN**

18. We will present a National Charter for Children. Our aim is to ensure that no child remains illiterate, hungry or lacks medical care. We will take measures to eliminate child labour.

## **POPULATION**

19. A suitable and judicious mix of incentives and disincentives for population control shall be presented early so that national commitment on this critical issue is obtained.

## **CONSTITUTIONAL AND LEGAL REFORMS**

20. We will appoint a commission to review the constitution of India in light of the experience of the past 50 years and to make suitable recommendations.

21. We are convinced that there is a clear case for devolution of more financial and administrative powers and functions to the states. We will take suitable steps to ensure harmonious centre-state relations in the light of the recommendations of the Sarkaria Commission and also effect decentralization right up to the grassroots level by activating and involving Panchayats and local bodies. States of the Union where the percentage of population below the poverty line has increased during the last five decades shall receive special attention.

A Backward Area commission for each state of the Union to identify least developed areas and recommend comprehensive measures for their development shall be instituted. A committee will be set up to study the feasibility of treating all 19 languages included in Schedule 8 of the Constitution as official languages.

22. We will introduce necessary electoral reforms on the basis of the recommendations of the Goswami Committee so as to deal with the malaise of defections, corruption and criminalisation of politics and to prevent electoral malpractices.

23. We will set up a National Judicial commission which will recommend judicial appointments in High Courts and the Supreme Court and draw up a code of ethics for the judiciary.

### **CORRUPTION**

24. We will enact the Lok Pal Bill with adequate powers to deal with corruption charges against anyone, including the Prime Minister. In the administration of justice, we shall not allow discrimination between the rich and the poor, the empowered and the powerless restore the majesty of law, and the objectivity of the state.

### **NEW STATES**

25. We will give full statehood to Delhi and also create Uttaranchal, Jharkhand and Chhattisgarh as new states.

### **NATIONAL SECURITY**

26. The state of preparedness, morale and combat effectiveness of the Armed Forces shall receive early attention and appropriate remedial action. We will establish a National Security Council to analyse the military, economy and political threats to the nation, also to continuously advise the government. This council will undertake India's first ever Strategic Defence Review. To ensure the security, territorial integrity and unity of India, we will take all necessary steps and exercise all available options. Towards that end, we will re-evaluate the nuclear policy and exercise the option to induct nuclear weapons.

### **INTERNAL SECURITY**

27. We are committed to ensuring the safety and security of all citizens in all parts of the country. For reaching this goal, we will take effective steps to create a riot-free order and a terrorism-free India.

## **INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS**

28. We will strive to secure for India a place, role and position in the global arena, consistent with our size and capability and promote peaceful relationship with all neighbours on a reciprocal basis. We will promote and strengthen regional and civilisational grouping on the lines of SAARC and ASEAN and reorient our diplomacy to pursue our economic and commercial goals. We will formulate our agenda on the WTO issues in the wider perspective of the universal goal of creating a world order which is more equitable, humane and free of exploitation. To this end, we will attempt to build a system of trade and economic cooperation through an expanded Global System of Trade Preferences (GSTP) among developing countries. In the WTO, we will assert more robustly India's national interests.

## **GENUINE SECULARISM**

29. We are committed to establishing a civilised, humane and just civil order; which does not discriminate on grounds of caste, religion, class, colour, race or sex. We will truly and genuinely uphold and practice the concept of secularism consistent with the Indian tradition of 'Sarva Panth Samadara' (equal respect for all faiths) and on the basis of equality of all. We are committed to the economic and educational development of the minorities and will take effective steps in this regard.

## **SCs, STs AND BACKWARD CLASSES**

30. The interests of Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and Backward Classes will be adequately safeguarded by appropriate legal, executive and societal efforts and by large scale education and empowerment. We will provide legal protection to existing percentages of reservation in educational institutions at the state level. We will continue to offer all assistance to the SCs, STs and Backward Classes to ensure their speedy socio-economic development. We will remove the last vestiges of untouchability from our society. Further, we will present a National Charter for Social Justice (Samajik Nyay) based on the principle of social harmony (Samajik Samarasata).



## **ENVIRONMENT**

31. We will establish an appropriate legal framework for the protection of the environment and unveil a National Environment Policy to balance between development and ecology.

## **PRASAR BHARATI**

32. We will improve the Prasar Bharati Act as originally enacted (before its amendment by ordinances) to make it an effective instrument accountable to the Parliament. We will also enact the Broadcasting Bill to regulate private broadcasting and to protect Indian interests.

We will restrict foreign equity holding in private television broadcasting to 20% and prevent cross holding to avoid emergence of monopolies in the media.

## **SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY**

33. For sustainable national development and the long-overdue transformation of India into a modern, prosperous and knowledgedriven nation, we will ensure integration of efforts in the field of science and technology with development programmes in various socio-economic sectors. We will further speed up the modernization of national laboratories, strengthen R&D and establish new as well as strengthen existing centres of excellence.

## **INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY**

34. A new revolution is sweeping the globe that of Information Technology. We believe that Information Technology is an important vehicle for future development. We are committed to ensuring that India is full and equal partner in its global progress; indeed, that India can be a software superpower. We will, for that purpose, unveil a National Informatics Policy with short, medium and longterm perspective.

## **A NEW NORM FOR GOVERNANCE BY CONSENSUS**

35. Finally, we are convinced that a nation of nearly 100 crore people representing a sixth of humanity cannot be governed on the arithmetic alone of majority and minority. Governance must become unifying, not divisive, in its practice. It is this mindless manner of the domination of the majority that has led to bitterness, hostility and confrontation and has even made the opposition and ruling parties like permanent adversaries. This destructive trend of politics of negativism and political untouchability which has distorted our body politic in the last few decades, calls for an immediate correction. We will, therefore, strive to develop national consensus on all major issues confronting the nation by involving the opposition parties and all section of society in dialogue. We will also try for a consensual mode of governance as far as practicable.

## **CONCLUSION**

This National Agenda is a sincere and solemn covenant aimed at changing the content and culture of governance of this great nation, freeing it of the triple curses of hunger (bhookh,) fear (bhay) and corruption (bhrashtachar) and transforming it into a New India that is prosperous, strong, self-confident and at peace with itself and the world.

We appeal for the cooperation of all parties and all sections of society in this great endeavour.

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\*National Democratic Policy Statement, "A Common Approach to Major Policy Matters and a Minimum Programme available at <http://www.bjp.org>.

### **APPENDIX- 3**

## **NATIONAL DEMOCRATIC ALLIANCE: FOR A PROUD, PROSPEROUS INDIA, AN AGENDA 1999\***

### **INTRODUCTION**

The 1999 General Elections is an unnecessary imposition. It was thrust upon the country by a motley combination that put political negativism, narrow personal interests and greed for power far above the national good. The government led by Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee lost the vote in the Lok Sabha on April 17 by just one and that too questionable vote. Despite promising a new government "in five minutes" and futilely attempting widespread defections, this negative coalition led by the Congress failed to come up with alternative arrangement, forcing the dissolution of the Lok Sabha and fresh elections. A serving, performing government was needlessly destabilised.

Hardly had the country absorbed the shock of this avoidable uncertainty, then we were faced by Pakistani armed intrusion in Kargil.

The Government rose to the challenge and acted decisively. Faced by this aggression in Kargil, the response of the government was swift, though measured. The last of the Pakistani intruders were cleared from the Kargil Sector on 27th July.

We salute the heroism, dedication and selflessness of our armed forces. We dedicate ourselves anew to preserving the honour and territorial integrity of our motherland. We reiterate our commitment to look after the welfare of the armed forces and of the dependants of all those that laid down their lives in service of our motherland.

The security of the nation is our paramount duty. In fulfillment of this sacred duty we will ensure that the neglect of defence preparedness by the previous governments during the last decade shall be corrected. The defence of India and the needs of our armed forces is our commitment.

This General Election allows the country a great opportunity of finally putting an end to the era of political negativism, uncertainty and dynasticism. In this hour of national challenge, when the faith of the people in democratic institutions is under test, it is vital that all nationalist forces join hands. This is the moment to look ahead, to a new, resurgent India.

In Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee, the country has a leader who blends tradition with modernity, a leader who understands India and the world and a statesman who is accepted by all sections of the country. In just 13 months, the Vajpayee Government set new parameters of purposeful governance. In the realms of national security, regional cooperation, economic modernization and centre state relations, the Vajpayee Government has shown the way forward. Under Shri Vajpayee's leadership, the Indian National Democratic Alliance seeks a firm and resounding mandate to complete the unfinished agenda.

The National Agenda for Governance of the National Democratic Alliance constitutes the basis of our joint commitment for a stable government to take India into the new millennium. On this occasion we appeal for a new political age of reconciliation and accord based on our principled commitment to:

- National Security - ensuring full combat effectiveness of our armed forces;
- National Reconstruction - an end to divisiveness and a moratorium, on contentious issues;
- Dynamic Diplomacy - In service of motherland to obtain for India its rightful place in the comity of nations;
- Federal Harmony - ensuring a partnership of the centre and states;
- Economic Modernization - harnessing technology for rapid, equitable growth;

- Secularism - the emotional harmony of all Indians and full protection of minorities;
- Social Justice - empowerment of all weaker sections and gender rights;
- Probity - transparency of decision-making and corruption-free governance;

## **PREAMBLE**

When the whole nation was thrown into the vortex of political instability because of the toppling of the government headed by Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee, by the irresponsible combination of Congress, the left parties and their old and new found allies; when the whole nation felt that it will be duped and deceived by their chicanery because they could not fulfil their boast of an alternative government in 'five minutes' even for several days; and when the whole nation was on the verge of losing faith in our democratic system and was getting cynical about politics and politicians; the signatory political parties came together as an act of national commitment and founded the National Democratic Alliance (NDA), under the leadership of Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee, to set the Indian polity on a new course for the future.

The reason for creating the NDA is to lift the spirit of the nation at large, to draw its people together and, most importantly, to rebuild the bonds of common purpose that are, the very roots of our democratic polity.

The NDA came into being because of a historic need and realization amongst us that our young democracy cannot bear the fits and tremors of frequent elections which will undermine the people's faith in the democratic process. Therefore, with a consensus on a common cause and a common set of principles, we have sunk our differences to weld ourselves into a solid phalanx of a single dominant political formation and thereby we fulfil the resolve of the Indian people to give themselves a stable, strong and progressive government.

We are proud that the NDA is representative of both national interests and regional aspirations - after all the NDA is nothing but the mirror image of our nation unity in multifaceted diversity, rich pluralism and federalism.

## **OUR MISSION**

The NDA's mission in politics is to build a bond of trust between government and people. This is the only way a democracy can flourish; but unfortunately has been ignored during the last 50 years of oneparty rule.

Therefore, the NDA pledges to the people of India a government which shares their hopes and anxieties and which will work as partner with all people irrespective of class, caste and religion - not just with a privileged few. This is our contract with the people.

The NDA is new; the NDA is the future and the NDA is a broad based movement for progress and justice. Our vision is one of national renewal with modern programmes of change for a resurgent India.

We reach out to the minorities and even at the cost of repetition proclaim that we will safeguard the lights as enshrined in our constitution. NDA is the political arm of none other than the Indian people as a whole. No one will be cast aside; fairness and justice will be rendered to one and all and we assure you that there will not be any discrimination.

We appeal to our brothers and sisters of the minorities that we, whole-heartedly extend our hands of friendship, in these fraternal words:

Let us hold hands and walk together to build a resurgent, modern  
India.

Let us throw away our old prejudices.

Let us put an end to divisiveness.

Let us have a moratorium on contentious issues.

Let us bind ourselves with bonds of trust and friendship.

We want an India which we all feel part of, in whose future we all have a stake and we want to enter the new millennium with confidence; not with divisive feelings.

This is our call for reconciliation and it is part of our commitment to the minorities.

## **AGENDA FOR GOVERNANCE**

### **A COMMITMENT TO GOOD GOVERNANCE**

1. Our first commitment to the people is to give a stable, honest, transparent, and efficient government capable of accomplishing all round development. For this, the government shall introduce time bound programmes of needed administrative reforms including those for the police and other civil services.

### **ECONOMY**

2. We will continue with the reform process, give it a strong Swadeshi thrust to ensure that the national economy grows on the principle that India shall be 'built by Indians'; reappraise and revitalize reform through giving primacy to removal of unemployment and to accelerate development of infrastructure, particularly energy and power production. We will bring GDP growth to the 7-8% bracket, and control deficit fiscal and revenue. We will examine the possibility of enacting a Fiscal Responsibility Act. We will take all such steps as would expedite implementation of policies and programmes in accordance with our national interests and give to the entire national development efforts a humane face with total eradication of poverty as the ultimate goal. For this 'Berozgari Hatao' (eradicate unemployment) is our call. Swadeshi is not

reinventing the wheel. It means that we will facilitate the domestic industry to gain enough muscles to compete with the multinationals in local and global markets. We want domestic companies to flourish and acquire a Trans National status. At the same time the country cannot do without FDI because besides capital stock it brings with it technology, new market practices and most importantly employment. Our target is to achieve at least \$ 10 billion per year which will commensurate with our growth objectives. The old leftist approach sought complete state control of industry while the rightist approach wanted to leave everything to the market. We reject both. Government and industry must work together to achieve key objectives aimed at enhancing the dynamism of the market with effective and efficient regulatory mechanisms. In fact the issue is not about capitalism or socialism, nor is it about market or less state. It is about better society, about improving the way citizens can demand and obtain all sorts of public goods. It is about dignity for all. We firmly resolve that poverty should be relegated to history like slavery, colonialism, small pox and cholera and we should meet the challenge of mobilising resources for that by undertaking the challenge of restructuring priorities and mainstreaming these priorities into new programmes of pro-poor growth and redistribution towards poverty eradication. That is how we plan to eradicate absolute poverty within this generation within the first decades of 1st century - and we strongly feel that it is feasible and affordable intact. It is a moral imperative which we will not miss.

3. We will carefully analyse the effects of globalization, calibrate its process by devising a timetable to suit our national conditions and requirements so as not to undermine but strengthen the national economy, the indigenous industrial base and the financial and service sectors.

4. We will earmark 60% of the plan funds for and effect public investment in agriculture, rural development, irrigation and by diverse incentives, including tax shelters, achieve a quantum leap in agricultural production so that agriculture, horticulture, forestry, food processing, fisheries and so on become the vehicles for



growth resulting in an enhancement of the purchasing power of the people. Effective crop insurance schemes will be introduced. Special efforts will be made in Animal Husbandry, Dairying, particularly in respect of cow and its progeny. This is one of the routes to generating employment, thus eradicating hunger and poverty in rural as well as urban areas. Subsidies of all kinds will be implemented in such a manner that maximize benefits to all sections of the agricultural population. Development of medium and small-scale irrigation projects shall receive priority attention; emphasis for investment will be in accordance with the potential development.

5. We will adopt a National Water Policy which provides for effective and prompt settlement of disputes and their time-bound implementation. We will examine and take time-bound steps to link Ganga-Cauvery rivers. Setu Samundram Canal Project will also be undertaken.

6. We will increase the national savings to 30% of the GDP in the next five years by appropriate incentives and through motivation; encourage Foreign Direct Investment in core areas so that it usefully supplements the national efforts and discourage FDI in non-priority areas.

7. We will institute a comprehensive study of the financial, technological and social security requirements of the self-employed and unincorporated sector; also constitute a Development Bank to promote this largest segment of the national economy which, too, has great employment and self-employment potential. Further, in addition to financial support institutions we will bring into being other institutional systems for providing services, technology and marketing facilities for artisans, the small-scale village, khadi, powerloom, handloom, handicrafts and such other industries. This and the agriculture sectors are an untapped source with unlimited scope for generation of employment.

8. We will give a major thrust to infrastructure development, particularly energy and power, by recommending public expenditure in the sector. Towards this we will

access long term funds in the national and international markets, remove administrative bottlenecks, reverse the slowdown in this critical area of national economy thus giving a fresh impetus to growth. Private sector participation will be encouraged.

9. We will undertake a review of all laws and regulations relating to industry so as to free it from bureaucratic control; institute a system of voluntary compliance with laws, including tax laws; ensure speedy redressal of industrial sickness; arrange for meaningful interaction between industry and government and revive the capital market as a viable and transparent mechanism for raising capital. We will also expedite comprehensive reform of the PSUs, including restructuring, rehabilitation divestment.

#### **TRADE AND COMMERCE**

10. We will focus on specific products in specific growth areas for export and announce specific packages for horticulture and floriculture. We intend to strongly support attempts to build a system of trade and economic cooperation through expanded Global System of Trade Preferences (GSTP) among developing countries. We would also assert more robustly India's national interests, especially at the forthcoming review conference of the WTO, scheduled for November, 1999. A healthy commodity exchange system will be established to be managed in an autonomous way.

#### **LABOUR**

11. We will make labour, both organized and unorganized, an equal proud partner in the production of the nation's wealth and in its progress. Laws relating to equal pay for equal work for men and women shall be strictly implemented.

#### **ERADICATION OF UNEMPLOYMENT**

12. Recognizing the right to work of every citizen, the main thrust of the new government will be: 'Berozgaari Hatao' (eradicate unemployment). As against the present trend of jobless growth, our government will measure growth by generation of gainful employment. Our new investment and institutional thrust to agriculture, the self-

employed, the unincorporated sector, infrastructure development and housing will act as vehicles for massive employment creation at all levels.

13. The alliance will embark upon a strategic pro-poor policy in terms of which those living below the poverty line are not to be pitied but treated as a net resource replete with their own ideas and experience well in tune with local conditions. Every effort will be made to provide them work locally and ensure that schemes for their welfare are competently and honestly administered. They themselves will be treated as participants and facilitators in the noble venture. The services NGOs well versed in this field and preferably originating locally, will also be enlisted wherever considered necessary.

#### **FOOD SECURITY AND PRICE STABILITY**

14. We will ensure food security for all, create a hunger free India in the next five years and reform and improve the Public Distribution System so as to serve the poorest of the poor in rural and urban areas. We will also ensure price stability by all appropriate means and necessary legislation.

#### **HEALTH AND DRINKING WATER**

15. We will spare no efforts to ensure that potable drinking water is available to all villages in the next five years. Age old and traditional methods of water utilization, both rural and urban areas, will receive urgent attention.

#### **EDUCATION FOR ALL**

16. We are committed to a total eradication of illiteracy. We will formulate and implement plans to gradually increase the governmental and non-governmental spending on education upto 6% of the GDP, thus to provide education for all. We will implement the constitutional provision of making primary education free and compulsory upto 5<sup>th</sup> standard. Our aim is to move towards equal access to and opportunity of educational

standards upto the school leaving stage. We shall strive to improve the quality of education at all levels - from primary schools to our universities.

### **HOUSING FOR ALL**

17. Shelter is a basic human requirement that needs to be met on a priority basis. We are, therefore, committed to evolving a National Housing and Habitat Policy in consultation with state governments, aimed at providing housing for all. Towards this end, we shall facilitate construction of 20 lakh additional housing units annually. As in other programmes, the emphasis will be on the benefit to the poor and the deprived.

### **EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN**

18. We will legislate for the reservation of 33% of the seats in Parliament and State Assemblies for women; also institute plans for providing free education for girls upto college level, including professional courses, so as to better empower women. We will also set up a Development Bank for women entrepreneurs in the small scale and tiny sectors.

### **HARNESSING YUVA SHAKTI**

19. The youth of our country constitute a majority of our population. They are the strength of the family, village, locality and the community. They are also the future of our nation. We will take all necessary steps to mobilize this most idealist, inspired and energetic section of our society in the mission of nation building. For this purpose, we shall build national consensus for the creation of a National Reconstruction Corps aimed at environmental protection, ecological tasks, reclamation of waste land, including afforestation and for spreading literacy. We will have a time bound programme for promotion of sports.

## **CHILDREN**

20. We will present a National Charter for Children. Our aim is to ensure that no child remains illiterate, hungry, or lacks medical care. We will take measures to eliminate child labour.

## **POPULATION**

21. We are committed to achieving population stabilization by 2010 through improved access to primary health services, universalisation of primary education, delivery of contraceptive services to Mohalla/Ward/ Basti level and through betterment of educational and socio-economic position of women.

22. Schemes for providing income generating training to widows will be worked out in cooperation with the state governments.

23. India today has a much larger population of senior citizens and their numbers are expected to rise substantially. It will be our endeavour to assure them that they continue to remain esteemed and valuable members of society.

## **CONSTITUTIONAL AND LEGAL REFORMS**

24. We shall appoint a commission to review the constitution of India not only in the light of experience and developments since 1996 but indeed, of the entire post-independence period and to make suitable recommendations.

25. We are convinced that there is a clear case for devolution of more financial and administrative powers and functions to the states. We will take suitable steps to ensure harmonious centre state relations in the light of the recommendations of the Sarkaria Commission and also effect decentralization right upto the grass root level by activating and involving Panchayats and local bodies. States of the Union where the percentage of population below the poverty line has increased during the last five decades shall receive special attention. A Backward Area Commission for each state of

the Union to identify least developed areas and recommend comprehensive measures for their development shall be instituted. A committee will be set up to study the feasibility of treating all 19 languages included in Schedule 8 of the constitution as official languages. We will examine problems of border states for amelioration and take measures for ensuring a fixed term ( 5 years) for all elected bodies including legislatures. We will also examine replacing the present No Confidence Motion with the German system of "Constructive Vote of Non-Confidence"

26. We will introduce necessary electoral reforms on the basis of the recommendations of the Goswami Committee, the Indrajit Gupta Committee and the Law Commission Report so as to deal with the malaise of defections, corruption and criminalisation of politics, and to prevent electoral malpractices.

27. Revitalise NE Council ensure territorial integrity of the states of the NE; special developmental, administrative and security related programmes.

28. We will set up a National Judicial Commission which will recommend judicial appointments in High Courts and Supreme Court and draw up a code of ethics for the judiciary. We will enact legislation to provide an eligibility criteria that the high offices of state legislative, executive and judicial are held only by naturally born Indian citizens. We will establish a National Register of citizens. We will also introduce a multi-purpose identity card for all citizens.

29. We will undertake all necessary legislative and administrative measures to ensure the right of the franchise of the Armed Forces through proxy voting and or any other methods.

## **CORRUPTION**

30. We will enact the Lok Pal Bill with adequate powers to deal with corruption charges against anyone, including the Prime Minister. In the administration of justice,

we shall not allow discrimination between the rich and the poor, the empowered and the powerless; restore the majesty of law, and the objectivity of the state.

### **NEW STATES**

31. We will give full statehood to Delhi and also create Uttranchal, Vanachal and Chhattisgarh as new States.

### **NATIONAL SECURITY**

32. In today's unipolar world it is of paramount importance that India constantly maintains and strengthens the state of preparedness, morsile and combat effectiveness of our Armed Forces.

33. The recently established National Security Council will advise the government in this regard and also in the establishment of a credible nuclear deterrence. These are the minimum requirements in this recently inaugurated era of global inequality and increased vulnerability. The NDA will correct the imbalance and budgetary neglect of defence needs during the last decades by successive governments thus ensuring adequacy of budgetary allocations. We will take effective measures for eliminating all pensionary anomalies. We will revamp the entire system of welfare of exservicemen as a tribute to those that laid down their lives for the country.

### **INTERNAL SECURITY**

34. We are committed to ensuring the safety and security of all citizens in all parts of the countty. For reaching this goal, we will take effective steps to create a riot free-order and a terrorism-free India.

### **INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS**

35. In the past 13 months, the government demonstrated its capability to secure for India a place, role and position in the global arena, commensurate with its size and importance. We have also shown that our desire for peace and friendship should not be

interpreted as weakness but as a firm resolve that aggression shall not be permitted to succeed. We have effectively engaged with the international community and obtained a high degree of understanding. This engagement process shall be developed to improve India's standing in the international community.

We will promote and strengthen regional groupings on the lines of SAARC and ASEAN reorient our diplomacy to pursue our economic, commercial goals and energy security goals. We will strongly support any attempt to build a system of trade and economic cooperation through an expanded global system of trade preferences (GSTP) among developing countries. We will seek to assert more robustly India's national interests, especially at the forthcoming review conference of the WTO, scheduled for December, 1999. We are committed to making the voice of India as the voice of the developing world.

### **GENUINE SECULARISM**

36. We are committed to establishing a civilized, humane and just civil order; which does not discriminate on grounds of caste, religion, class, colour, race or sex. We will truly and genuinely uphold and practice the concept of secularism consistent with the Indian tradition of 'Sarva Panth Samadara' (equal respect for all faiths) and on the basis of equality of all. We are committed to the economic, social and educational development of the minorities and will take effective steps in this regard.

### **SCs, STs AND BACKWARDS CLASSES**

37. The interests of Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and Backward Classes will be adequately safeguarded by appropriate legal, executive and societal efforts and by large scale education and empowerment. We will provide legal protection to existing percentages of reservation in government employment and educational institutions at the centre and state level. If required, the Constitution will be amended to maintain the system of reservation. We will continue to offer all assistance to the SCs, STs and Backward Classes to ensure their speedy socio-economic development. We will remove



the last vestiges of untouchability from our society. Further, we will present a National Charter for Social Justice (Samajik Nyay) based on the principle of social harmony (Samajik Samarasata). We are committed to extending the SC/ST reservations for another 10 years. Reservation percentages, above 50% as followed by certain states shall be sanctified through necessary legislative measures.

### **ENVIRONMENT**

38. We will establish an appropriate legal framework for the protection of the environment and unveil a National Environment Policy to balance between development and ecology. A Vanvasi Fund for the benefit of Vanvasis shall be established. To discourage poaching of Wild Life a wild life Anti Poaching Authority shall be established. The Ganga and Yamuna rivers cleaning programmes shall be revamped and revitalized. Similar schemes for other water bodies shall also be initiated.

### **PRASAR BHARTI**

39. We will review the Prasar Bharati Act. We will also enact a comprehensive Broadcasting Bill to regulate private broadcasting and to protect Indian interests. We will restrict foreign equity holding in private television broadcasting to 20% and prevent cross holding to avoid emergency of monopolies in the media.

### **SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY**

40. For sustainable national development and the long overdue transformation of India into a modern, prosperous and knowledge driven nation, we will ensure integration of efforts in the field of science and technology with development programmes in various socioeconomic sectors. We will further speed up the modernization of National Laboratories, strengthen RSGD and establish new as well as strengthen existing centers of excellence, so that they continue to constitute an invaluable national asset and also become totally immune to policy fluctuations elsewhere.

## **INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY**

41. A new revolution is sweeping the globe that of Information Technology. We believe that Information Technology is an important vehicle for future development. We are committed to ensuring that India is full and equal partner in its global progress; indeed, that India can be a software superpower. We will for that purpose unveil a National Informatics Policy with short, medium and long term perspective.

## **A NEW NORM FOR GOVERNANCE BY CONSENSUS**

42. Finally, we are convinced that a nation of nearly 100 crore people representing a sixth of humanity cannot be governed on the arithmetic alone of majority and minority. Governance must become unifying not divisive, in its practice. It is the mindless manner of the domination of the majority that has led to bitterness, hostility and confrontation and has even made the opposition and ruling parties like permanent adversaries. This destructive trend of politics of negativism and political untouchability which has distorted our body politics in the last few decades, calls for an immediate correction. We will therefore, strive to develop national consensus on all major issues confronting the nation by involving the opposition parties and all sections of the society in dialogue. We will also try for a consensual mode of governance as far as practicable.

## **CONCLUSION**

This National Agenda is a sincere and solemn covenant aimed at changing the content and culture of governance of this great nation, freeing it of the triple curses of hunger (bhookh), fear (bhay) and corruption (bhrashtachar) and transforming it into a new India that is prosperous, strong , self-confident and at peace with itself and the world. We appeal for the cooperation of all parties and all sections of the society in this great endeavour.

**\*Available at <http://www.bjp.org>**

## **APPENDIX - 4**

### **UNITED PROGRESSIVE ALLIANCE: COMMON MINIMUM PROGRAMME 2004\***

#### **INTRODUCTION**

The People of India have voted decisively in the 14<sup>th</sup> Lok Sabha elections for secular, progressive forces, for parties wedded to the welfare of farmers, agricultural labour, weavers, workers and weaker sections of society, for parties irrevocably committed to the daily well-being of the common man across the country.

In keeping with this mandate, the Congress, its pre-poll allies that include the RJD, DMK, NCP, PMK, TRS, JMM, LJP, MDMK, AIMMIM, PDP, IUML, RPI(A), RPI (G) and KC(J) have come together to form a United Progressive Alliance (UPA). The UPA government supported by the Left parties will have six basic principle of governance.

The UPA government supported by the left parties, will have six basic principles:

1. To preserve, protect and promote social harmony and to enforce the law without fear or favour, to deal with all obscurantist and fundamentalist elements who seek' to disturb social amity and peace.
2. To ensure that the economy grows at least 7-8% per year in a sustained manner over a decade and in a manner that generates employment so that each family is assured of a safe and viable livelihood.
3. To enhance the welfare and well being of farmers, farm labour, and workers, particularly those in the unorganized sector and assure a secure future for their families in every respect.
4. To fully empower women politically, educationally, economically and legally.
5. To provide for full equality of opportunity, particularly in education and employment for ST, SC, OBCs and religious minorities.

6. To unleash the creative energies of our entrepreneurs, businessmen, scientists, engineers and all other professionals and productive forces of society.

The UPA makes a solemn pledge to the people of our country: to provide a government that is corruption-free, transparent, and accountable at all times, to provide an administration that is responsible and responsive at all times.

## **EMPLOYMENT**

The UPA government will immediately enact a National Employment Guarantee Act. This will provide a legal guarantee for at least 100 days of employment. To begin with an asset, creating public works programmes every year at minimum wages for at least one able bodied person in every rural, urban, poor and lower middle class household. In the interim, a massive food for work programme will be started.

The UPA government will establish a National Commission to examine the problems faced by enterprises in the unorganized, informal sector. The commission will be asked to make appropriate recommendations to provide technical, marketing and credit support to these enterprises. A National Fund will be created for this purpose.

The UPA government will revamp the functioning of the Khadi and Village Industries Commission (KVIC) and launch new programmes for the modernization of coir, handlooms, powerlooms, garments, rubber, cashew, • handicrafts, food processing, sericulture, wool development, leather, pottery and other cottage industries.

The UPA government will give the highest investment, credit and technological priority to the continued growth of agriculture, horticulture, aquaculture, floriculture, afforestation, dairying and agro-processing that will significantly add to the creation of new jobs.

Alongwith vastly expanding credit facilities for small scale industry and self-employment, the UPA government will ensure that the services industry will be given all support to fulfill its true growth and employment potential. This includes software and

all IT-enabled services, trade, distribution, transport, telecommunications, finance and tourism.

The textile industry will be enabled to meet new challenges imposed by the abolition of quotas under the international multi-fibre agreement in January 2005. Given its special ecological importance world-wide and within the country, the jute industry will receive a fresh impetus in all respects.

## **AGRICULTURE**

The UPA government will ensure that public investment in agricultural research and extension, rural infrastructure and irrigation is stepped up in a significant manner at the very earliest. Irrigation will receive the highest investment priority and all on-going projects will be completed according to a strict time schedule.

The rural co-operative credit system will be nursed back to health. The UPA government will ensure that the flow of rural credit is doubled in the next three years and that the coverage of small and marginal farmers by institutional lending is expanded substantially. The delivery system for rural credit will be reviewed. Immediate steps will be taken to ease the burden of debt and high interest rates on farm loans. Crop and livestock insurance schemes will be made more effective.

The UPA government will introduce a special programme for dryland farming in the arid and semi-arid regions of the country. Watershed and wasteland development programmes will be taken up on a massive scale. Water management in all its aspects, both for irrigation and drinking purposes, will receive urgent attention.

The UPA administration will ensure the fullest implementation of minimum wage laws for farm labour. Coraipressive protective legislation will be enacted for all agricultural workers. Revenue administration will be thoroughly modernized and clear land titles will be established.

The UPA government will bring forward a constitutional amendment to ensure the democratic, autonomous and professional functioning of co-operatives.

Controls that depress the incomes of farmers will be systematically removed. Farmers will be given greater say in the organizations that supply inputs to them.

The UPA government will ensure that adequate protection is provided to all farmers from imports, particularly when international prices fall sharply.

The UPA government will ensure that government agencies entrusted with the responsibility for procurement and marketing will pay special attention to farmers in poor and backward states and districts. Farmers all over the country will receive fair and remunerative prices. The terms of trade will be maintained in favour of agriculture.

The UPA government will take steps to ensure that dues to all farmers including sugarcane farmers will be cleared at the earliest.

## **EDUCATION, HEALTH**

The UPA government pledges to raise public spending in education to at least 6 percent of GDP with at least half this amount being spent on primary and secondary sectors. This will be done in a phased manner.

The UPA government will introduce a cess on all central taxes to finance the commitment to universalize access to quality basic education. A National Commission on Education will be set up to allocate resources and monitor programmes.

The UPA government will take immediate steps to reverse the trend of communalization of education that had set up in the past five years. It will also ensure that all institutions of higher learning and professional education retain their autonomy. The UPA will ensure that nobody is denied professional education because he or she is poor.

Academic excellence and professional competence will be the sole criteria for all appointments to bodies like the Indian Council for Historical Research, Indian Council for Social Science Research, University Grants Commission, National Council for Educational Research and Training etc. Steps will be taken to remove the communalization of the school syllabus that has taken place in the past five years. A review committee of experts will be set up for this purpose.

A national cooked nutritious mid-day meal scheme, funded mainly by the central government, will be introduced in primary and secondary schools. An appropriate mechanism for quality checks will also be set up. The UPA will also universalize the Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) scheme to provide a functional anganwadi in every settlement and ensure full coverage for all children. The UPA government will fully back and support all NGO efforts in the area of primary education.

Proper infrastructure will be created in schools for NCC, NSS, physical development, sports and cultural development of all students.

The UPA government will raise public spending on health to at least 2-3 percent of GDP over the next five years with focus on primary health care. A national scheme for health insurance for poor families will be introduced. The UPA will set up public investment in programmes to control all communicable diseases and also provide leadership to the National AIDS Control Effort.

The UPA government will take all steps to ensure availability of life-savings drugs at reasonable prices. Special attention will be paid to the poorer sections in the matter of health care. The feasibility of reviving public sector units set up for the manufacture of critical bulk drugs will be re-examined so as to bring down and keep a check on the prices of drugs.

## **WOMEN AND CHILDREN**

The UPA government will take the lead to introduce legislation for one third reservations for women in Vidhan Sabhas and in the Lok Sabha. Legislation on domestic violence and against gender discrimination will be enacted.

The UPA government will ensure that at least one-third of all funds flowing into panchayats will be earmarked for programmes for the development of women and children. Village women and their associations will be encouraged to assume responsibility for all development schemes relating to drinking water, sanitation, primary education, health and nutrition.

Complete legal equality for women in all spheres will be made a practical reality, especially by removing discriminatory legislation and by enacting new legislation that gives women, for instance, equal rights of ownership of assets like houses and land.

The UPA government will bring about a major expansion in schemes for micro-finance based on self-help groups, particularly in the backward and ecologically fragile areas of the country.

The UPA government is committed to replicating all over the country the success that some southern and other states have had in family planning. A sharply targeted population control programme will be launched in the 150 odd high fertility districts. The UPA government recognizes that states that achieve success in family planning cannot be penalized.

The UPA government will protect the rights of children, strive for the elimination of child labour, ensure facilities for schooling and extend special care to the girl child.



## **FOOD AND NUTRITION SECURITY**

The UPA will work out, in the next three months, a comprehensive medium term strategy for food and nutrition security. The objective will be to move towards universal food security over time, if found feasible.

The UPA government will strengthen the public distribution system (PDS) particularly in the poorest and backward blocks of the country and also involve women's and ex-servicemen's cooperatives in its management. Special schemes to reach foodgrains to the most destitute and infirm will be launched. Grain banks in chronically food scarce areas will be established. Antyodaya cards for all households at risk of hunger will be introduced.

The UPA government will bring about major improvements in the functioning of the Food Corporation of India (FCI) to control inefficiencies that increase the food subsidy burden.

Nutrition programmes, particularly for the girl child, will be expanded on a significant scale.

## **PANCHAYATI RAJ**

The UPA government will ensure that all funds given to states for implementation of poverty alleviation and rural development schemes by Panchayats are neither delayed nor diverted. Monitoring will be strict. In addition, after consultations with states, the UPA government will consider crediting elected Panchayats with such funds directly.

Devolution of funds will be accompanied by similar devolution of functions and functionaries as well. Regular elections to Panchayat bodies will be ensured and the amended Act in respect of the Fifth and Sixth Schedule Areas will be implemented.

The UPA government will ensure that the Gram Sabha is empowered to emerge as the foundation of Panchayati Raj.

### **SCHEDULED CASTES, SCHEDULED TRIBES**

The UPA will urge the states to make legislation for conferring ownership rights in respect of minor forest produce, including Tendu Patta, on all those people from the weaker sections who are working in the forests.

All reservation quotas, including those relating to promotions, will be fulfilled in a time bound manner. To codify all reservations, a Reservation Act will be enacted.

The UPA government will launch a comprehensive national programme for minor irrigation of all lands owned by Dalits and adivasis. Landless families will be endowed with land through implementation of land ceiling and land redistribution legislation. No reversal of ceilings legislations will be permitted.

The UPA administration will take all measures to reconcile the objectives of economic growth and environmental conservation, particularly as far as tribal communities dependence on forests are concerned.

The UPA is concerned with the growth of extremist violence and other forms of terrorist activities in different states. This is not merely a law-and-order problem, but a far deeper socio-economic issue which will be addressed more meaningfully than has been the case so far. False encounters will not be permitted.

The UPA government will immediately review the overall strategy and programmes for the development of tribal areas to plug loopholes and to work out more viable livelihood strategies. In addition, more effective systems of relief and rehabilitation will be put in place for tribal and other groups displaced by development projects. Tribal people alienated from land will be rehabilitated.

The UPA government is very sensitive to the issue of affirmative action, including reservations, in the private sector. It will immediately initiate a national dialogue with all political parties, industry and other organizations to see how best the private sector can fulfill the aspirations of Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe Youth.

Eviction of tribal communities and other forest dwelling communities from forest areas will be discontinued. Co-operation of these communities will be sought for protecting forests and for undertaking social afforestation. The rights of tribal communities over mineral resources, water resources, etc. as laid down by law, will be fully safeguarded.

### **SOCIAL HARMONY, WELFARE OF MINORITIES**

The UPA is committed to the implementation of the places of worship (Special Provisions Act, 1992). On Ayodhya, it will await the verdict of the courts, while encouraging negotiations between parties of the dispute for an amicable settlement which must, in turn, receive legal sanction.

The UPA government will enact a model comprehensive law to deal with communal violence and encourage each state to adopt that law to generate faith and confidence in minority communities.

The UPA government will amend the constitution to establish a commission for minority educational institutions that will provide direct affiliation for minority professional institutions to central universities.

The UPA will promote modern and technical education among all minority communities. Social and economic empowerment of minorities through more systematic attention to education and employment will be a priority concern for the UPA.

The UPA will establish a national commission to see how best the welfare of socially and economically backward sections among religious and linguistic minorities,

including reservations in education and employment, is enhanced. The commission will be given six months to submit its report.

Adequate funds will be provided to the National Minorities Development Corporation to ensure its effective functioning. The UPA government will examine the question of providing constitutional status to the Minorities Commission and will also strive for recognition and promotion of Urdu language under Articles 345 and 347 of the constitution.

The National Integration Council will be restructured and revived so as to fulfill its original objectives. It will meet at least twice a year.

## **INFRASTRUCTURE**

The UPA attaches the highest priority to the development and expansion of physical infrastructure like roads, highways, ports, power, railways, water supply, sewage treatment and sanitation. Public investment in infrastructure will be enhanced, even as the role of the private sector is expanded. Subsidies will be made explicit and provided through the budget.

The review of the Electricity Act, 2003 will be undertaken in view of the concern expressed by a number of states. The mandatory date of June 10, 2004 for unbundling and replacing the State Electricity Boards will be extended. The UPA government also reiterates its commitment to an increased role for private generation of power and more importantly power distribution.

Railways constitute the core of our infrastructure. Public investment for its modernization, track renewal and safety will be substantially increased. Railway reforms will be pursued.

The UPA government commits itself to a comprehensive programme of urban renewal and to a massive expansion of social housing in towns and cities, paying particular attention to the needs of slum dwellers. Housing for the weaker sections in

rural areas will be expanded on a large scale. Forced eviction and demolition of slums will be stopped and while undertaking urban renewal, care will be taken to see that the urban and semi-urban poor are provided housing near their place of occupation.

The UFA will pay special attention to augmenting and modernizing rural infrastructure consisting of roads, irrigation, electrification, cold chain and marketing outlets. All existing irrigation projects will be completed within three to four years. Household electrification will be completed in five years.

## **WATER RESOURCES**

The UFA government will make a comprehensive assessment of the feasibility of linking the rivers of the country starting with the south bound rivers. This assessment will be done in a full} consultative manner. It will also explore the feasibility of linking sub-basins of rivers in states like Bihar. The UFA will take all steps to ensure that long pending inter-state disputes on rivers and water-sharing like the Cauvery water dispute are settled amicably at the earliest, keeping in mind the interests of all parties to the dispute.

To put an end to the acute drinking water shortage in cities, especially in southern states, desalination plants will be installed all along the Coromandel Coast starting with Chennai. Special problems of habitations in hilly terrains will be addressed immediately.

Providing drinking water to all sections in urban and rural areas and augmenting availability of drinking water sources is an issue of the topmost priority. Harvesting rain water, desilting existing ponds and other innovative mechanisms will be adopted.

## **REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT, CENTRE STATE RELATIONS**

The UPA government is committed to redressing growing regional imbalances both among states as well as within States, through fiscal, administrative, investment and other means. It is a matter of concern that regional imbalances have been accentuated by

not just historical neglect but also by distortion in plan allocations and central government assistance. Even in the Tenth Five Year Plan, states like Bihar, Assam and UP have received per capita allocations that are much below the national average. The UPA government will consider the creation of a Backward states Grant Fund that will be used to create productive assets in these states. The central government will also take proactive measures to speed up the industrialization of the eastern and northeastern regions.

A structured and transparent approach to alleviate the burden of debt on states will be adopted at the earliest, so as to enable them to increase social sector investments. Interest rates on loans to states will be reduced and the share of states in the single divisible pool of taxes, enhanced.

All non-statutory resource transfers from the central government will be weighted in favour of poor and backward States but with performance parameters as well. A special programme for social and physical infrastructure development in the poorest and most backward districts of the country will be taken up on a priority basis. The UPA government will take special measures to ensure that regions of India like in the east where the credit: deposit ratio is lagging, is improved substantially.

The UPA government will review the issue of payment of royalties to states in the area of minerals.

From time to time, previous governments have announced special economic packages as, for example, for the North-East, for Bihar and for JStk. For Bihar, Shri Rajiv Gandhi had announced a special development package in 1989 and subsequently another package was announced at the time of its division in 1999 to make up for the loss of revenue. These packages will be implemented expeditiously.

The UPA government will make the National Development Council (NDC) a more effective instrument of cooperative federalism. The NDC will meet at least twice a year and in different states. Immediately, the NDC will take up the issue of the financial

health of states and arrive at a national consensus on specific steps to be taken in this regard. The Inter State Council will also be activated. All centrally sponsored schemes except in national priority areas like family planning, will be transferred to states.

The UPA government will consider the demand for the formation of a Telangana State at an appropriate time after due consultations and consensus.

The Sarkaria Commission had last looked at the issue of centre state relations over two decades ago. The UPA government will set up a new commission for this purpose keeping in view the sea changes that have taken place in the polity and economy of India since then.

Long pending schemes in specific states that have national significance, like the Sethu Samudaram project, flood control and drainage in north Bihar (that required cooperation with Nepal as well) and prevention of Erosion in Padma Ganga and Bhagirathi flood control in West Bengal will be completed expeditiously. A flood prone Area Development Programme will be started and the central government will fully support flood control works in inter-state rivers. All existing schemes for drought-prone area development will be reviewed and a single major national programme launched.

#### **JAMMU AND KASHMIR, NORTH EAST**

The UPA government is pledged to respecting the letter and spirit of Article 370 of the constitution that accords a special status to JSGK. Dialogue with all groups and with different shades of opinion in J86K will be pursued on a sustained basis, in consultation with the democratically elected state government. The healing touch policy pursued by the state government will be fully supported and an economic and humanitarian thrust provided to it. The state will be given every assistance to rebuild its infrastructure quickly. New efforts will be launched to bring investments in areas like power, tourism, handicrafts and sericulture.

The UPA government is determined to tackle terrorism, militancy and insurgency in the north-east as a matter of urgent national priority. All north-eastern states will be given special assistance to upgrade and expand infrastructure. The North-Eastern Council will be strengthened and given adequate professional support. The territorial integrity of existing states will be maintained.

### **ADMINISTRATIVE REFORMS**

The UPA will set up an Administrative Reforms Commission to prepare a detailed blueprint for revamping the public administration system. E-governance will be promoted on a massive scale. The Right to Information Act will be made more progressive, participatory and meaningful. The Lok Pal-Bill be enacted into law.

The UPA government will take the leadership role to drastically cut delays in High Courts and lower levels of the judiciary. Legal aid services will be expanded. Judicial reforms will be given a fresh momentum.

As part of its commitment to electoral reforms, the UPA will initiate steps to introduce state funding of elections at the earliest.

### **INDUSTRY**

The UPA will take all necessary steps to revive industrial growth and put it on a robust footing, through a range of policies including deregulation, wherever necessary. Incentives to boost private investment will be introduced. FDI will continue to be encouraged and actively sought, particularly in areas of infrastructure, high-technology and exports and where local assets and employment are created on a significant scale. The country needs and can easily absorb at least two to three times the present level of FDI inflows. Indian industry will be given every support to become productive and competitive. All regulatory institutions will be strengthened to ensure that competition is free and fair. These institutions will be run professionally.



The UPA government will set up a National Manufacturing Competitiveness Council to provide a continuing forum for policy dialogue to energise and sustain the growth of manufacturing industry like food processing, textiles and garments, engineering, consumer goods, pharmaceuticals, capital goods, leather and IT hardware.

Household and artisanal manufacturing will be given greater technological investment and marketing support. In the past few years, the most employment intensive segment of small-scale industry (SSI) has suffered extensively. A major promotional package for the SSI sector will be announced soon. It will be freed from the Inspector Raj and given full credit, technological and marketing support. Infrastructure upgradation in major industrial clusters will receive urgent attention.

Competition in the financial sector will be expanded. Public sector banks will be given full managerial autonomy. Interest rates will provide incentives both to investors and savers, particularly pensioners and senior citizens. The UPA government will never take decisions on the Employees Provident Fund (EPF) without consultations with and approval of the EPF Board. Regulation of urban cooperative banks in particular and banks in general. LIC and GIC will continue to be in the public sector and will continue to play their social role. In addition, the social obligations imposed by regulatory bodies on private banks and private insurance companies will be monitored and enforced strictly.

## **LABOUR**

The UPA government is firmly committed to ensure the welfare and well being of all workers, particularly those in the unorganised sector who constitute 93 percent of our workforce. Social security, health insurance and other schemes for such workers like weavers, handloom workers, fishermen and fisher women, toddy tappers, leather workers, plantation labourers, beedi workers etc. will be expanded.

The UPA rejects the idea of automatic hire and fire. It recognizes that some changes in labour laws may be required but such changes must fully protect the interests

of workers and families and must take place after full consultation with trade unions. The UPA will pursue a dialogue and industry and trade unions will be consulted on the issue before coming up with specific proposals. However, labour laws other than the Industrial Disputes Act that create an Inspector Raj will be re-examined and procedures harmonized and streamlined.

The UPA government firmly believes that labour-management relations in our country must be marked by consultations, cooperation and consensus and not by confrontation. Tripartite consultations with trade unions and industry on all proposals concerning them will be actively pursued. Rights and benefits earned by workers, including the right to strike according to law, will not be taken away or curtailed.

## **PUBLIC SECTOR**

The UPA government is committed to a strong and effective public sector whose social objectives are met by its commercial functioning. But for this, there is need for selectivity and a strategic focus. The UPA is pledged to devolve full managerial and commercial autonomy to successful, profit making companies operating in a competitive environment. Generally profit making companies will not be privatized.

All privatizations will be considered on a transparent and consultative basis. The UPA will retain existing "navaratna" companies in the public sector while these companies raise resources from the capital market. While every effort will be made to modernize and restructure sick public sector companies and revive sick industry, chronically loss making companies will either be sold off or closed, after all workers have got their legitimate dues and compensation. The UPA will induct private industry to turn around companies that have potential for revival.

The UPA government believes that privatization should increase competition, not decrease it. It will not support the emergence of any monopoly that only restricts competition. It also believes that there must be a direct link between privatization and

social needs like, for example, the use of privatization revenues for designated social sector schemes.

Public sector companies and nationalized banks will be encouraged to enter the capital market to raise resources and offer new investment avenues to retail investors.

## **FISCAL POLICY**

The UPA government commits itself to eliminating the revenue deficit of the centre by 2009, so as to release more resources for investments in social and physical infrastructure. All subsidies will be targeted sharply at the poor and the truly needy like small and marginal farmers, farm labour and the urban poor. A detailed roadmap for accomplishing this will be unveiled in Parliament within 90 days. The UPA government will not cut deficit by reducing or curtailing growth of investment and development outlays.

The UPA government is pledged to the early introduction of VAT after all the necessary technical and administrative homework has been completed, particularly on issues like the integration of service sector taxation and compensation to states. It will initiate measures to increase the tax GDP ratio by undertaking major tax reforms that expand the base of tax payers, increase tax compliance and make the tax administrations more efficient. Tax rates will be stable and conducive to growth, compliance and investment. Special schemes to unearth black money and assets will be introduced.

The UPA government will take effective and strong measures to control the price hike of essential commodities. Provisions to deal with speculators, hoarders and blackmarketers under the Essential Commodities Act will not be diluted in any way.

## **CAPITAL MARKETS**

The UPA government is deeply committed, through tax and other policies, to the orderly development and functioning of capital markets that reflect the true fundamentals of the economy. Financial markets will be deepened. FIIs will continue to

be encouraged while the vulnerability of the financial system will be stopped. Interests of small investors will be protected and they will be given new avenues of safe investment of their savings. SEBI will be further strengthened. Strictest action will be taken against market manipulators and those who try to deliberately engineer market panic.

## **ECONOMIC REFORMS**

The UPA reiterates its abiding commitment to economic reforms with a human face that stimulates growth, investment and employment. Further reforms are needed and will be carried out in agriculture, industry and services. The UPA's economic reforms will be oriented primarily to spreading and deepening rural prosperity, to significantly improving the quality of public systems and delivery of public services and to bringing about a visible and tangible difference in the quality of life of ordinary citizens of our country.

## **DEFENCE, INTERNAL SECURITY**

The UPA government will ensure that all delays in the modernization of the armed forces are eliminated and that all funds earmarked for modernization are spent fully at the earliest. The UPA will set up a new Department of Ex-Servicemens' Welfare in the Ministry of Defence. The long pending issue of one-rank, one pension will be re-examined.

The UPA government will make the National Security Council a professional and effective institution.

The UPA government is committed to maintaining a credible nuclear weapons programme while at the same time it will evolve demonstrable and verifiable confidence building measures with its nuclear neighbours. It will take a leadership role in promoting universal nuclear disarmament and work for a nuclear weapons free world.

The UPA has been concerned with the manner in which POTA has been grossly misused in the past two years. There will be no compromise in the fight against terrorism but given the abuse of POTA that has taken place, the UPA government will repeal it, while existing laws are enforced strictly.

The UPA government will take the strictest possible action, without fear or favour, against all those individuals and organizations who spread social discord, disturb social amity, propagate religious bigotry and communal hatred. The law of the land will be enforced effectively.

### **SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY**

The UPA government will follow policies and introduce programmes that strengthen India's vast science and technology infrastructure. Science and technology development and application missions will be launched in key areas, covering both global leadership and local transformation. The UPA government will mobilize the skills and expertise of Indian scientists, technologists and other professionals working abroad for institution building and other projects in the country.

### **ENERGY SECURITY**

The UPA government will immediately put in place policies to enhance the country's energy security particularly in the area of oil. Overseas investments in the hydrocarbon industry will be actively encouraged. An integrated energy policy linked with sustainable development will be put in place.

### **FOREIGN POLICY, INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS**

The UPA government will pursue an independent foreign policy keeping in mind its past traditions. This policy will seek to promote multi-polarity in world relations and oppose all attempts at unilateralism.

The UPA government will give the highest priority to building closer political, economic and other ties with its neighbours in south Asia and to strengthening SAARC. Particular attention will be paid to regional projects in the area of water resources, power and ecological conservation. Dialogue with Pakistan on all issues will be pursued systematically and on a sustainable basis. The UPA will support peace talks in Sri Lanka that fulfill the legitimate aspirations of Tamils and religious minorities within the territorial integrity and solidarity of Sri

Lsmka. Outstanding issues with Bangladesh will be resolved. Intensive dialogue will be initiated with Nepal for developing water resources to mutual advantage.

Trade and investment with China will be expanded further and talks on the border issue pursued seriously. Relationships with east Asian countries will be intensified. Traditional ties with west Asia will be given a fresh thrust. The UPA government reiterates India's decades old commitment to the cause of the Palestinian people for a homeland of their own. Steps will be taken to withdraw Indian mercenaries from Iraq while further recruitment for this purpose will be banned.

Even as it pursues closer engagement and relations with the USA, the UPA government will maintain the independence of India's foreign policy position on all regional and global issues. The UPA is committed to deepening ties with Russia and Europe as well.

In keeping with the stance adopted by the late Shri Murasoli Maran at Doha, the UPA government will fully protect the national interest, particularly of farmers, in all WTO negotiations. Commitments made earlier will be adhered to, even as efforts are mounted to ensure that all agreements reflect our concerns fully particularly in the area of intellectual property and agriculture. The UPA government will use the flexibility afforded in existing WTO agreements to fully, protect Indian agriculture and industry. The UPA government will play a proactive role in strengthening the emerging solidarity of developing countries in the shape of G-20 in the WTO.

## **OFFICIAL LANGUAGE**

The UPA government will set up a committee to examine the question of declaring all languages in the Eight Schedule of the constitution as official languages. In addition, Tamil will be declared as a classical language.

## **A FINAL WORD**

This is a Common Minimum Programme (CMP) for the UPA government. It is, by no means, a comprehensive agenda. It is a starting point that highlights the main priorities, policies and programmes. The UPA is committed to the implementation of the CMP. This CMP is the foundation for another CMP - Collective Maximum Performance.

**\*Common Minimum Programme of the United Progressive Alliance (Document), Mainstream, June 5, 2004, pp. 6-13.**

## APPENDIX - 5

### COALITION GOVERNMENT - AN EXERCISE IN POLITICAL FUTILITY

#### Parliamentary Election held in March 1977 (6<sup>th</sup> Lok Sabha)

Total Seats	543	
Congress	153	
<b>Coalition Ministry headed by Morarji Desai</b>		
Janata Party	271	
+CFD	28	299
C.P.I	7	
C.P.M	22	
Akali Dal	8	
D.M.K	1	
AIADMK	19	
Muslim League	2	
Peasants and Workers	5	
Republican Party	2	
Others	12	
<b>Total Membership of the Coalition - 328</b>		

**Note:** - Janata Party was a United party of parties opposed to the Congress. The Janata Party included the Jana Sangh, Bhartiya Lok Dal, Socialist Party, Congress (O) and the Congress for Democracy. The Jana Sangh had the largest contingent of MPs in the Janata Party with three members in the Cabinet.

The C.P.I, was an ally of the Congress.

**Source:** - Dr. D. Sunder Ram, *Coalition Politics in India Search for Political Stability* (Jaipur: National Publishing House, 2000), Pp.191 - 193.



## APPENDIX – 6

### UNITED FRONT COALITION-1996

Parties	Seats
Janata Dal	46
TMC (M)	20
DMK	17
SP	17
TDP	16
AGP	5
AICC (T)	4
MPVC	1
KCP	1
MAG	1
CPI	12
RSP	5
Forward Bloc	3
CPI (M)**	32
INC**	140
<b>Total</b>	<b>320</b>

\*\* Supported UF Coalition Ministry from outside

**Source:** Election Commission of India, Statistical Report on General Elections 1996, To The Eleventh Lok Sabha, Vol.1, New Delhi, 1996, p. 1-12.

## APPENDIX – 7

### BJP-LED COALITION MINISTRY (NDA) -1998

Parties	Seats
BJP	182
SAP	12
AIADMK	18
HVP	1
JP	1
PMK	4
SAD	8
SHS	6
BJD	9
LS	3
MDMK	3
TC	7
TRC	1
<b>Sub-Total</b>	<b>255</b>
<b>Post-Electoral Coalition</b>	
HLD	4
AC	2
SDF	1
MSCP	1
TDP**	12
IND#	5
Anglo Indian##	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>282</b>

# (Buta Singh, Maneka Gandhi, S.S. Kainth, Lallungmuana, S.K. Bwiswmuthiary)

## On the recommendation of the new Government, two members from the Anglo Indian Community were nominated by the President under Article 331 of the Constitution: Lt. Gen. Foley and Dr. Mrs. De Souza. Both voted for the confidence motion.

\*\* On the recommendation of the new Government, two members from the Anglo Indian Community were nominated by the President under Article 331 of the Constitution: Lt. Gen. Foley and Dr. Mrs. De Souza. Both voted for the confidence motion.

**Source:** Election Commission of India, Statistical Report on General Elections 1998: To the Twelfth Lok Sabha, vol. I, Pp. 49-56.

**APPENDIX – 8**  
**BJP-LED COALITION MINISTRY (NDA) -1999**

<b>Parties</b>	<b>Seats</b>
Bharatiya Janata Party	182
Telugu Desam Party	29
Janata Dal (United)	21
Shiv Sena	15
Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam	12
Biju Janata Dal	10
All India Trinamool Congress	8
Indian National Lok Dal	5
Pattali Makkal Katchi	5
Marumalarchi Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam	4
Shiromani Akali Dal	2
Himachal Vikas Congress	1
Loktantrik Congress Party	2
M.G.R. Anna D.M. Kazhagam	1
Manipur State Congress Party	1
<b>BJP + Allies</b>	<b>298</b>

**Source:** [www.zeenews.com](http://www.zeenews.com)

## APPENDIX – 9

### CONGRESS-LED COALITION MINISTRY (UPA) -2004

Parties + Alliance	Seats Won 2004	Vote Share (%)
<b>Congress + Allies</b>		
INC + RJD + DMK + NCP + PMK + TRS + JMM + MDMK + LJNSP + JKPDP + RPI(A) + MUL + RPI + AC + KEC(M) + IUML	222	35.82
<b>BJP + Allies:</b>		
BJP + SHS + BJD + SAD + JD(U) + TDP + AICT + NPP + MNF + ADMK	189	35.91
<b>Left Parties:</b>		
CPI(M)+CPI+FB+RSVP	61	8.34
<b>Other Regional Parties + Independents:</b>		
SP + BSP + RLD + JD(S) + AGP + SJP(R) NC + NLP + MIM + Indep. + Others	71	19.93

Source: - K.C. Suri, "Democracy Economic Reforms & Election Result in India",  
*Economic & Political Weekly*, Vol. XL, No. 5, December 18, 2004, p. 5427

**APPENDIX – 10**  
**BJP-LED COALITION MINISTRY-2019**

<b>Party name</b>	<b>Seats Won</b>
BJP	303
SHS	18
JD (U)	16
LJP	6
SAD	2
AD (S)	2
AJSU	1
NPP	1
AIADMK	1
RLTP	1
MNF	1
NDPP	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>353</b>

Source: <https://www.indiatoday.in/elections/lok-sabha-2019/party-alliance-details>  
(Accessed on 19.10.2019)

## APPENDIX – 11

### LISTS OF COALITION GOVERNMENT AT THE CENTRE

Sl.No	Prime Minister	Duration of the Coalition
1	Shri Morarji Desai	24.3.1977 to 28.7.1979
2	Shri Charan Singh	28.7.1979 to 14.1.1980
3	Shri Vishwanatti Pratap Singh	2.12.1989 to 10.11.1990
4	Shri Chandra Shekhar	10.11.1990 to 21.6.1991
5	Shri Atal Behari Vajpayee	15.5.1996 to 28.5.1996
6	Shri H.D. Deve Gowda	1.6.1996 to 21.4.1997
7	Shri A.B. Vajpayee	19.3.1998 to 2004
8	Shri Manmohan Singh	2004 to 2014
9	Shri Narendra Modi	2014- To date

## **APPENDIX – 12**

### **CONFIDENTIAL**

#### **AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE INDIAN NATIONAL CONGRESS (I) AND THE MIZO NATIONAL FRONT, MIZORAM**

The Government of India under the leadership of Shri Rajiv Gandhi has brought about a situation wherein the long years of disturbed conditions in Mizoram are being brought to an end. The Memorandum of Settlement is being signed between the Government of India and Shri. Laldenga, President of Mizo National Front, to give shape to this effort to usher peace and prosperity in Mizoram within the framework of the Indian Constitution. Shri Laldenga has pledged to bring the MNF into the mainstream of the Indian polity and irrevocably commit it to strive for a strong and united India.

In order to further to strengthen this resolve and to enable a smooth and orderly transition the Indian National Congress (I) and the MNF headed by Shri Laldenga agree to form the coalition Government. This decision shall be implemented soon after the members of the MNF, who are underground, lay down their arms and join the national mainstream.

1. On a date agreed to between Shri Laldenga and the Government of India, Shri Lal Thanhawla, the present Congress (I) Chief Minister will submit his resignation and Shri Laldenga will be elected the leader of the Government of Mizoram and be sworn in as the Chief Minister there.
2. Shri Lal Thanhawla, the present Chief Minister, shall be sworn in as the Deputy Chief Minister.
3. In addition to the Deputy Chief Minister, four members of the Congress (I) party shall be made Minister of the new Government.
4. In addition to the Chief Minister, three members of the MNF party will be made Ministers.

5. The names of the Ministers will be nominated by the representative Political Parties and the Chief Minister will propose them to the Lieutenant Governor.
6. All issues concerning the formation and induction of this new Government will be decided mutually by the Chief Minister and the Deputy Chief Minister.
7. In order to smoothen the function of the coalition Government, a coordination committee will be constituted consisting of the following:-
  - a) Shri Laldenga - Chairman,
  - b) Shri Lal Thanhawla - Vice- Chairman,
  - c) Two members of the Congress Party;
  - d) Two members of the MNF Party.

This committee will take into consideration all matters concerning the Party and the Government, which either of the Political Parties may deem necessary to bring for its consideration in order to help smooth functioning of the Government and to bring better coordination between Congress (I) and MNF.

8. This coalition Government will continue to function till such date when the President is satisfied that normalcy has returned and the holding of elections has become feasible.
9. In the even any difference arising between the two parties, they would seek the help of the Hon'ble Prime Minister.

Sd/-

Laldenga

President

Mizo National Front

Sd/-

Arjun Singh

Vice – President

Indian National Congress

**25<sup>th</sup> June, 1986**





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### **D. List of People Interviewed, Time and Place:**

Brig. T.Sailo (L), founder President of People's Conference in Mizoram on Sept 30, 2008 at his residence

C.Chawngkunga, General Secretary of MPCC on May 25, 2029 at Congress Bhavan,  
Aizawl

Lal Thanhawla, President of Mizoram Pradesh Congress Committee (MPCC) & Ex-  
Chief Minister of Mizoram on March 8, 2019 at Congress Bhavan

PB Lalsawmliana, Secretary, Coordination Committee of MPCC & ZPM for Lok Sabha  
Election, 2019 on March 21, 2020 at Congress Bhavan, Aizawl

Thanbanglova, founder of Zoram Kuthnathawktu Pawl (ZKP) on Oct 3,2008 at UDA  
Office, Aizawl

Zodintluanga, CLP Leader & MPCC Treasurer on June 4, 2019 at his residence.



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