

**COALITION POLITICS AND PATTERN
OF PARTY COMPETITION : A STUDY OF
UTTAR PRADESH AND BIHAR, 1967 - 1995**



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CERTIFICATE

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(Dr. Sudha Pai)
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Chairperson

DEDICATED TO

SHAFQUIN NISA

who showed what sacrifice is

PREFACE AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Political process in Indian states has always been an area of interest for enquiry. Despite variations in their characteristics, party systems in the states have always presented a competitive situation despite the dominance of the Congress Party at the Centre. The Fourth Assembly Elections, 1967, however, heralded a period of 'non-Congressism' which manifested itself in the form of oppositional unity. This, in turn, brought an end to the Congress rule in several States and its place was taken over by coalitions of parties. The post-1967 period is conspicuous not only for the displacement of the Congress but also for coalitional instability and patternless party interaction.

Alliances, coalitions, fronts, splits, mergers, defections, etc. characterised inter-party as well as intra-party interactions. However, within these situations, realignment of political forces and political polarization could also be discerned. The breakdown of the Congress dominant position was necessitated because of the politicization and mobilization of the backward/upwardly mobile peasant castes in the two states, particularly. The strategy of horizontal cohesiveness which brought intermediate caste groups on one platform provided the basis of non-Congress coalition governments. The division within

the Congress has created a situation of breakdown of the 'consensus' which the Congress failed to evolve both at the organisational level and ideological-policy level. Thus, the period of late sixties and early seventies was conspicuous by breakdown of national consensus, mobilization and entry of new section of society (BCs) into the politics of the states thereby adding new dimensions to political conflict, etc. Owing to these changes political instability was introduced into the system which got prolonged because of defections, factionalism, divergent policy orientations of parties making it impossible to 'minimize their policy distances'. Thus, coalitional instability, fluid party competition, patternlessness marked coalition behaviour.

The eighties and nineties are also conspicuous by entry of new sections of society like OBCs, SCs, etc. into the political process of the states. The breakdown of the Nehruvian national consensus has created a situation of fluidity and political forces are in the process of realignment. As a result, coalitions and realignments have come to characterize these states. Political parties compete to construct electorally viable social coalitions.

The present enquiry is located within the above premise and seeks to explore linkages between party systems and coalition behaviour as well as how coalition politics

affects evolution of party system through integration, polarization, realignment or disintegration of parties. Factors like mobilization and entry of new sections of society into politics and their assertion, breakdown of the national consensus, factionalism, divergent policy orientations of parties, competition amongst parties to institutionalise, etc., have bearing both on party competition and coalition politics. The following chapters seek to focus on these inter-linkages and their consequence for political conflict and party system. An attempt is also made to provide a comparative perspective of the two states which in 1990s show varying trends in party system and coalition politics vis-a-vis relative stability is concerned. The selection of these two states for study is premised on the fact that party systems of both the states have evolved within the framework of one-party dominance Congress system after independence. More so, the political process in these two states are reflective of the transformation and reconfiguration which Indian politics is undergoing especially in the context of decline and deinstitutionalization of the Congress.

In writing this dissertation, I have been greatly helped by my supervisor, Dr. Sudha Pai, whom I owe my

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ABBREVIATIONS

| | |
|----------|--|
| BCs | - Backward Castes |
| BJP | - Bhartiya Janata Party |
| BJS/JS | - Bhartiya Jana Sangh |
| BKD | - Bhartiya Kranti Dal |
| BKKP | - Bhartiya Kamgar Kisan Party |
| BLD | - Bhartiya Lok Dal |
| BSp | - Bahujan Samaj Party |
| CFD | - Congress For Democracy |
| CPI | - Communist Party of India |
| CPI (M) | - Communist Party of India (Marxist) |
| CPI (ML) | - Communist Party of India (Marxist-Leninist) |
| DSSSS | - Dalit Shoshit Samaj Sangharsh Samiti |
| FBL | - (All India) Forward Bloc |
| HJH | - Hul Jharkhand |
| INC | - Indian National Congress |
| IND | - Independents |
| IPF | - Indian People's Front |
| JAP | - Janata Party (Bihar) |
| JC | - Jana Congress |
| JD | - Janata Dal |
| JKD | - Jana Kranti Dal |
| JKP | - Jharkhand Party |
| JMM | - Jharkhand Mukti Morcha |

| | |
|--------------|---------------------------------------|
| JNP/JNP (JP) | - Janata Party |
| JNP (SC) | - Janata Party (Secular-Charan Singh) |
| LKD | - Lok Dal |
| LTC | - Lok Tantric Congress |
| OBCs | - Other Backward Castes |
| PSP | - Praja Socialist Party |
| PVD | - Progressive Vidhayak Dal |
| RPI | - Republican Party of India |
| SCs | - Scheduled Castes |
| SHD | - Shoshit Dal |
| SOC | - Socialist Party |
| SP | - Samajwadi Party |
| SSP | - Samyukta Socialist Party |
| SVD | - Samyukta Vidhayak Dal |
| SWA | - Swatantra |

CHAPTER-1

INTRODUCTION

After the Fourth General Elections, political process in the Indian states culminated in the breakdown of the one-party dominant system. In eight states,¹ non-Congress coalitions of diverse parties came to power. The states of Uttar Pradesh and Bihar stood prominently so far as instability and fluidity of coalitions and fragmentation of party system is concerned. Between 1967 and 1971-72, nine ministries were formed in Bihar and five in Uttar Pradesh. Different combinations of parties tried to provide durable governments, but owing to diversity amongst parties and shifting loyalties of different factions through splits, mergers and alignments, it failed.

The breakdown of the 'Congress System' and resulting party system has been variously described by different observers. While for some "the Congress dominated multi-party system have been replaced in North India by a highly complex system in which parties, factions and individuals all play important role",² for others, "the

1. The eight states were: Bihar, Haryana, Kerala, Madras, Punjab, Orissa, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal.
2. Brass, Paul R., *Caste, Faction and Party in Indian Politics*, Vol.1, Delhi, Chanakya, 1985, p. 99.

trend is towards a multi-polar polarization".³ Moreover, both intra-party factionalism and proliferation of political parties through fragmentation became rampant. Shifting loyalties through what James Walch⁴ calls 'unpolarized disintegration' and fragmentation of party units provided 'patternless politics'. As it will be discussed below, understanding of the post-1967 coalitional period has largely been through factional model whereby factional loyalty and its shift from one combination to another become prime explanatory variable.⁵ Nonetheless, it would be worth to see the limitations of this explanatory variable for explaining coalitions in a period when the 'Congress system' has declined and has given way to an intense multi-party competition.

Political process and party competition has travelled a long journey from 1967 to 1995 both at all-India level and in the states of Uttar Pradesh and Bihar. These changes are consequent not only upon the erosion of the Congress support base and inroads by other parties into it but also upon the mobilization of hitherto excluded sections. More so,

3. Iqbal Narain, "Coalition Politics in India and the Political System: Crisis of Compatibility", *Political Science Review*, 10 (1-2), January-June 1971, pp. 30-50.
4. Walch, James, *Faction and Front : Party System in South India*, New Delhi, Young Asia Pub., 1976, p. 58.
5. See Brass, Paul R., "Coalition Politics in North India", *American Political Science Review*, LXII (4), December 1968, pp. 1174-1191.

"electoral democracy has played a critical part in promoting the growth of autonomous lower caste/class politics mediated through a range of parties and organisations seeking to construct discrete political constituencies on the basis of a well-defined Dalit or OBC political discourse."⁶ In fact, Congress version of factional coalition has fallen apart giving way to coalition of parties seeking to represent different social constituencies. The problem of instability in Uttar Pradesh in recent times must be seen in terms of parties competing to institutionalise their support bases. Various parties trying to define their support bases get caught in overlapping social constituencies like Dalits, OBCs, minorities, etc. As a result, coalition politics becomes an exercise in identifying a party with either a hitherto excluded section or with one which has got alienated. The coalitional strategies of the BJP with the BSP and the Congress with the BSP in Uttar Pradesh are exercises in this direction. While the BJP is trying to make a pro-Dalit image by making alliance with the BSP, the Congress is trying to win sections of Dalits who have deserted it. As a matter of fact, this has provided the BSP with a status of being 'the real' representative and custodian of the Dalit interest.

6. Hasan, Zoya, "Congress and Consensus", *The Hindu*, 7 January 1997.

The period of coalition of 1967-71, however, again gave way to Congress dominance, nevertheless, this time 'dominance with a difference'. This difference came from the vertical split which the Congress Party experienced in 1969 which, in turn, necessitated a redefinition of the party in terms of cohesiveness and ideological and programmatic clarity.⁷ With the opposition becoming more assertive, added with Lohia's thesis of backward caste/class unity, it became difficult to carry on with the earlier strategy of factional coalition within the rubric of the 'Congress system'. More so, the opposition itself was getting differentiated between the right oriented BJS, Swatantra, Congress (O), etc., and the communists - CPI, CPI(M), etc., and the socialists of Lohiaite variety standing at left-to-the-centre. Besides, there emerged state-based parties with middle caste/rich peasant following of which Charan Singh's BKD later named BLD stands prominent.

The culmination of the post-coalition political process in the 1970s was the coming together of major non-communist opposition parties to combine into a party called Janata Party. This 'combine' consisted of five major parties - Congress (O), Bhartiya Lok Dal, Socialist Party, Bhartiya

7. Ram Joshi and Desai, Kritidev, "Dominance with a difference: Strains and challenges", *Economic and Political Weekly* (Annual Number), February 1973, pp. 186-196.

Jana Sangh and C.F.D. Despite the fact that these constituents came under the name of one party, their erstwhile political identity continued to pose problem for compatibility. More so, each constituent unit sought to establish its own control over the party. To corroborate with C.P. Bhambhri, "the factional struggle in the Janata Party was around five well-organised constituent groups which were competing fiercely for strengthening their control over the party."⁸ Even within the party the BLD and the BJS were working in tandem to either eliminate or subdue other constituents. More so, "the election results had shown that the Janata Party in Uttar Pradesh was basically dominated by two strong factions, erstwhile BLD and the Jana Sangh, and because of their strong position they would have ultimate say in state politics."⁹ The BLD was the largest constituent so far as seats were concerned. As a result, the BLD group bagged the seat of the chief minister in both the states. Within the Janata 'combine' these groups were behaving as separate coalitional partners. Their inter-group competition and controversy over the issue of dual membership of Jana Sangh members of Janata Party and

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8. Bhambhri, C.P., *Janata Party: A Profile*, New Delhi, National Publishing House, 1980, pp. 39-40.
 9. Saxena, Kiran, "The Janata Party politics in India: A case study of U.P. (1977-79)", in Sunder Ram, D. (Ed.), *Readings in the Indian Parliamentary Opposition*, New Delhi, Kanishka, 1996, pp. 258-259.

the RSS at the same time belied any prospect of a unified party. In consonance with this dynamics, it is more appropriate to treat 'Janata' experiment as a 'combine'/'coalition' rather than a party with broader agreement on 'goals and principles'. The internal behaviours of the constituent units resembled coalitional behaviour whereby all tried to protect their goals separate from any collective objective. The disintegration of the Janata Party and emergence of the BJP, the Lok Dal, the JNP (SC), etc., retrospectively proved the coalitional nature of the Janata Party.

Nonetheless, the 1977 Janata experiment has given rise to what has been termed as "a highly competitive two-party situation".¹⁰ While in Bihar the "Janata coalition"¹¹ got 66 per cent of seats and the largest opposition, the Congress got 17.6 per cent, in Uttar Pradesh they got 82.8 per cent and 11.05 per cent respectively. This shows emergence of a two-party 'situation' as well as electoral benefit of oppositional unity.

10. Ram Joshi and Desai, Kritidev, "Towards a more competitive party system in India", *Asian Survey*, 18 (11), November 1978, p. 1092.

11. Harry Blair designates the Janata Party as 'Janata coalition'. See Blair, Harry W., "Electoral support and party institutionalisation in Bihar: Congress and the Opposition (1977-85)", in Sisson, R. and Roy, R. (Eds.), *Diversity and Dominance in Indian Politics*, New Delhi, Sage, 1990, pp.123-167.

The year 1980, however, again witnessed the disintegration of the Janata 'coalition' into its constituent units though with metamorphosed names. The Congress Party as Congress (Indira) came back with a majority of 52.2% and 72.7% of seats in Bihar and Uttar Pradesh respectively. The largest opposition, the Janata Party (Secular) of Charan Singh got 13% and 13.9% of seats in Bihar and Uttar Pradesh respectively. This shows that the Congress Party returned to dominate both at the all-India and at the state-level. Nevertheless, while some observers call it "restoration of Congress dominance",¹² others argue that given certain changes in Congress' regional distribution of the party support base and shift in the support base of minorities and the SCs, 1980 cannot be seen as 'restoration'.¹³

1980s witnessed various changes in party system both at the all-India level and at the state-level. The rise of the BJP with its 'Hindutva' agenda and a simultaneous shift of the Congress to 'right-to-the-centre'¹⁴ in order to

12. Weiner, Myron, "Congress Restored: Continuities and Discontinuities in Indian Politics", *Asian Survey*, 22 (4), April, 1982, pp. 339-355.
13. Rudolph, L.I. and Rudolph, S.H., "Transformation of Congress Party: Why 1980 was not a restoration", *Economic and Political Weekly*, May 2, 1981, pp. 811-818.
14. Manor, James, "Parties and Party System", in Kohli, Atul (Ed.), *India's Democracy*, New Delhi, Orient Longman, 1991, p. 80.

neutralise the erosion of upper caste Hindu vote has been paralleled with the rise of parties competing to represent various sections of the OBCs and the Dalits. The decline of the Congress and its virtual elimination from Bihar and Uttar Pradesh goes parallel with certain other features associated with party system in these two states. The rise of the Bhartiya Janata Party, competition between the Janata Dal, the Samajwadi Party, the Samata Party and the BSP to represent OBC-Dalit social base and relative strong position of a single party, the Janata Dal in Bihar by forging a social coalition of Yadavas and Muslims are important features that characterize party competition in the 1990s. The party system is also characterized by "regionalisation" and "federalisation" whereby national parties get limited to certain regions and states. It is also important to note that different state party systems have emerged or are emerging.¹⁵ In fact, regionalisation of national parties and rise of regional and state parties make political system more competitive at the state level. Nevertheless, party system in these states is fragmented though competitive as a result of which no clear direction is visible so far as

15. For recent trends in emerging party system in India, see Manor, James, "Regional Parties in Federal Systems: India in Comparative Perspective", in Arora, B. and Verney, D. (Eds.), *Multiple Identities in a Single State: Indian Federalism in a Comparative Perspective*, New Delhi, Konark, 1995, pp. 103-35, and Pai, Sudha, "Transformation of the Indian Party System", *Asian Survey*, XXXVI (12), December, 1996, pp. 1170-83.

alignment of parties is concerned. Coalitions often are short lived giving rise to unstable and fluid situation.

In 1990s, though Bihar presents a picture of relative stability under the Janata Dal, in Uttar Pradesh, fragmented multi-partyism has given rise to a situation whereby coalition governments seem inevitable. The BJP, the Congress, the BSP, the SP and the Janata Dal led NF stand to play in coalition politics. Since 1993, various combinations, according to their electoral strength and manoeuverability, are trying to give stable coalitions. But due to fragmentation of party system and polarization and ideological rift, it has failed. The SP-BSP coalition of 1993-95 is considered to have heralded an era of 'social coalition' between the OBCs and the Dalits.¹⁶ However, this failed to consolidate, partly owing to the OBC-Dalit contradiction and partly, due to BJP's intervention which seeks to break any such consolidation. The BJP-BSP alliance helps the BJP by breaking the OBC-Dalit consolidation on the one hand and by alienating the minorities from the Dalits on the other.¹⁷

It can be seen that Party system in these two States has largely been in close interaction with the all-India

16. Chowdhry, N.K., *Assembly Elections, 1993*, Delhi, Shipra, 1994, p. 56.

17. "Doubts over new U.P. alliance" (BSP-BJP), *The Hindu*, Friday, March 21, 1997.

dynamics of Party system. Broadly speaking, Party competition in these States after 1967 can be categorised in certain models.¹⁸ Between 1967-71, a coalitional model of interaction prevailed. Between 1971-77, the one-party dominance competitive model came to prevail but again 1977-79 witnessed emergence of a two-Party situation which again reverted to one-Party dominance in 1980s. This mode of competition lasted till 1989 after which again coalitional mode of competition has prevailed. Nevertheless, the situations in Bihar and Uttar Pradesh show some differences after 1989 so far as consolidation and 'integration' of Party system is concerned. This study of coalition making and Party competition in the States of Uttar Pradesh and Bihar between 1967-95 seeks to focus more on those periods in which Congress has to alternate power within 'a more differentiated structure of Party competition'. The periods of 1967-71, 1977-79 and post-1989 are one of 'a more differentiated structure of Party competition' whereby coalitions or combines alternate power with the Congress.

Nevertheless, none of the States in India presents any common pattern of Party competition and coalition behaviour. In fact, to agree with Sudha Pai, "There is no pattern of

18. Ram Joshi and Desai, Kritidev, "Towards a More Competitive Party System in India", *Op. cit.*

politics where the States are concerned, but many".¹⁹ In fact, in most of the cases in Pre-1989 phase each State presented its own Party system "despite a common pattern of Congress dominance". With the decline of the Congress, the situation has become more complicated. James Manor puts it, thus "India has not one Party system but many. There is of course a national system, but each of the twentyfive States and seven Union Territories also has its own system".²⁰ As a consequence of varying Party systems in States, party interaction, party competition, coalition and alliance-making also show varying patterns. This, however, poses problems for comparison and generalisation of State politics.²¹ Nevertheless, owing to the presence of regional parties and State-based parties, in addition to national parties, political process in Indian states presents a high degree of party competition than is the case at the all-India level. In fact, as one moves downward from national to State level, party competition becomes intense.

19. Pai, Sudha, "Towards a theoretical framework for the study of State Politics in India : Some Observations", *IJPS*, 50 (1), January-March, 1989, pp.1-16.

20. Manor, James, "Regional Parties in Federal Systems: India in Comparative Perspective", in Arora, Balveer and Verney, Douglas (eds.) *Multiple Identities in a Single State: Indian Federalism in Comparative Perspective*, *Op. cit.*, p.112.

21. Pai, Sudha, "Towards a Theoretical Framework for the Study of State Politics in India: Some Observations", *Op. cit.*

Thus, degree of competition, integration, polarization or fragmentation becomes an entry point for comparison of State politics. Given the common pattern of one party dominance prevailed in the States of Uttar Pradesh and Bihar, it is interesting to see how coalition and alliance making politics mediates competition, polarization, integration or fragmentation. Coalition as a means of party integration provides opportunity to avoid oppositional fragmentation. Nevertheless, the role played by the Congress between 1967-71 in working and breaking of coalitions must be reckoned with.

The study of coalition politics and party competition in the two States seeks to analyse development of party system in these States and the role played by coalition politics in structuring party competition. In fact, coalition politics through oppositional unity and the replacement of the Congress have occurred simultaneously. The evolution of the party system provides an important point of comparison. While many Indian States present a situation of bipolar party systems,²² (some like Uttar Pradesh and Bihar are still in a fluid situation. The -----

22. Manor, James, "Regional Parties in Federal System", in Arora, B. and Verney, D. (eds.), *Multiple Identities in a Single State*, *Op. cit.* Also see Pai, Sudha, "From One Party Dominance to Multi-Partyism: Regionalising Trends in the Development of Indian Multi-Party System", in Bhatnagar, S. and Pradeep Kumar, (Eds.), *Some Issues in Contemporary Indian Politics*, New Delhi, Ess ESS Pub., 1997, pp. 151-198.

decline of the Congress and erosion of its social bases in these States, though puts the BJP and different constituents of the 'centre-left bloc' to borrow Manor's term, in competition, still parties are lacking in consolidated social bases. As a result, they are trying to secure various sections as their bases which in most cases overlaps.

As it will be analysed below, coalition politics structures and gives new direction to party competition. The 'one-party dominance' system fails to explain party competition when coalition politics mediates party interaction. Nevertheless, Paul Brass's analysis of coalition politics in North Indian States of Uttar Pradesh, Bihar and Punjab in 1968²³ under the rubric of factional model ends up extending the same explanatory variables and arguments which informs the understanding of the 'Congress system'. It seeks to understand party competition and coalition politics through factional struggle and inter-factional competition. As a result, it fails to grasp the structural difference between a faction and a party.²⁴ Understanding of the Congress in terms of inter-party factionalism is extended to explain coalitional behaviour.

23. Brass, Paul R., "Coalition Politics in North India", *Op. cit.*

24. Lasswell, Harold, "Faction", *Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences*, Vol.6, 1931, p. 49.

As a result, inter-party competition is likened with inter-factional competition. It reduces party system as 'mode and form of coexistence of parties', to borrow Duverger's phrase, to a mere factional system. Consequently, other variables like policy differences amongst parties their ideological orientations are relegated as of little explanatory value.

Coalition politics and search for coalitional partner is not merely self-seeking power game. It is informed by inter-party contradictions also. These contradictions may arise out of various factors like political or ideological polarization,²⁵ or search for stability, i.e., minimum winning size,²⁶ or policy differences²⁷ amongst parties, or competition to institutionalise within insufficiently differentiated ideological space,²⁸ and overlapping social constituencies. Factional model of understanding of politics characterises it as "highly complex and unstable pattern of group interaction and a bewildering

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25. Iqbal Narain, *Twilight or Dawn: Political Change in India (1967-71)*, Agra, Shivalal Agarwala & Co., 1972.
26. Riker, W.H., *Theory of Political Coalitions*, Yale University Press, 1962, p. 125.
27. Deswaan, Abraham, *Coalition Theories and Cabinet Formation*, Amsterdam, Elsevier, Scientific Publishing Co., 1973.
28. Iqbal Narain and Mathur, P.C., *Politics in Changing India*, New Delhi, Rawat, 1994, p. 6.

unpredictability in any one's group behaviour."²⁹ Factionalism explains fragmentation and fluidity of party system by taking defection, opportunity, etc. as explanatory variables and ignores any other factor mentioned above. Thus, it would be more profiting to take other factors like policy differences amongst parties, their effort to secure social bases, etc., into consideration in order to explain coalitional behaviour and party competition.

The following chapters would deal with the study of coalition politics and its relationship with party system as well as the bearing social bases has on parties and their coalition behaviour. An attempt would also be made to provide a comparative view of the two States under study regarding party system, social bases of parties and their coalition behaviour. This would help in explaining how the two States both under one-party dominant system, have travelled on the trajectory of the party system and the differences they show at present.

29. Nicholson, Norman K., "The Factional Model and the Study of Politics", *Comparative Political Studies*, 5(3), 1972, p. 291.

CHAPTER-2

APPROACHES TO UNDERSTANDING OF COALITION POLITICS AND PARTY SYSTEM IN INDIAN STATES: SURVEY OF LITERATURE

The political and electoral changes after 1967 elections heralded a new phase of a party system, particularly at the state level. Along with this, there was also growing interest in 'state politics'. Different approaches were presented to analyse and understand state politics.¹ Nevertheless, coalitions and the emerging pattern of party competition drew the attention of a large number of analysts and political observers. For many, the changes after 1967 elections were symptomatic of "the end of the one-party dominance and transition to a period of polarization, coalitions and perhaps disintegration."²

However, the understanding of coalition behaviour and party competition has largely been linked with the approaches applied for understanding Indian party system. Notwithstanding the application of the 'one-party dominance

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1. For a comprehensive review of different approaches and phases in the understanding of State politics, see Pai, Sudha, "Towards a Theoretical Framework for the Study of Politics in India: Some Observations", *Op. cit.*
 2. Walch, James, *Faction and Front: Party Systems in South India*, *Op. cit.*, p. 26.

framework developed by Rajni Kothari and Morris Jones,³ for understanding all-India party system, it was not applied to the State party systems prior to 1967 changes.⁴ The framework developed by Kothari and Morris-Jones of one-party dominance-competitive system, what Kothari calls the 'Congress system', pays special attention to groups and factions operating within the dominant party. The operational dynamics of factions within the Congress is supposed to determine and structure party competition and mode of interaction between the dominant party and the opposition. In fact, factional model largely informs the understanding and analysis of party interaction. There is no gain saying that this factional model largely underpins the understanding and explanation of coalition politics also.⁵ Coalitional behaviour is explained through factional interaction and power-seeking motive is added to explain defections. Thus, coalitional instability is explained through factional rivalry, inter-factional rather than inter-party conflict, defections and power-seeking motives.

3. Kothari, Rajni, "The Congress 'System' in India", *Asian Survey*, 4(12), December 1964; Morris-Jones, W.H., "Dominance and Dissent: Their inter-relationship in the Indian party system", *Government and Opposition*, 1: August, 1966.

4. Pai, Sudha, n.1.

5. Brass, Paul R., "Coalition politics in North India", *American Political Science Review*, 64(4), December 1968, and Kothari, Rajni, *Politics in India*; New Delhi, Orient Longman, 1970, pp. 181-188.

The study of Paul R. Brass and Bruce Bueno de Mesquita of post-1967 coalitions in Indian States⁶ reflects the application of factional model and variables like scramble for power, opportunism, defection, factionalism, etc., for explaining coalition behaviour and party competition. Since works applying ideological and spatial framework for understanding the nature of Indian party system are absent, barring a few exceptions, understanding of coalition politics in terms of polarization, ideological and policy differences amongst parties is also absent. The study of Subrata Kumar Mitra on coalition politics in four Indian States of Bihar, Punjab, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal, however, finds variables like power-oriented opportunism, etc., insufficient to account for coalitional instability during 1967-71. He, in fact, takes up 'power vs. ideology' debate for a fuller explanation.⁷ Some analysts and observers also treat the changes as culmination "of the process of polarization of political forces both in quantitative and qualitative terms."⁸ An attempt is made

6. Brass, Paul R., "Coalition Politics in North India", *Op. cit.*, 1968 and Bueno de Mesquita, Bruce, *Strategy, Risk and Personality in Coalition Politics: The Case of India*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1975.

7. Mitra, Subrata Kumar, *Governmental Instability in Indian States: West Bengal, Bihar, Uttar Pradesh and Punjab*, Delhi, Ajanta Publishers, 1978.

8. Iqbal Narain, *Twilight or Dawn: Political Change in India*, *Op. cit.*, p. 71.

here to survey some of the important studies on party system and coalition politics by putting them into two broader categories - Factional and Spatial Models. This will enable to see explanatory values of variables used as well as their validity in the present context where various changes have taken place in the party system.

2.1. FACTIONAL MODEL, PARTY SYSTEM AND COALITION POLITICS

As stated above, study and understanding of the Indian party system underpins the study of coalition behaviour also. The perspective of the 'Congress system' or the one-party dominant system developed by Kothari and Morris-Jones largely relies on factional model for explaining intra- and inter-party interaction. Party competition is sought to be explained through 'factional consensus' within the Congress and the linkage of opposition with different like-minded factions therein. For understanding coalition politics within the rubric of factional competition, scholars rely on Congress-centric perspective of party competition and nature of inter-party interaction.

The main emphasis within the 'Congress system' approach is on explaining intra-party competition based on inter-factional rivalry within the Congress Party. Since factions are treated as representing various interests which reflect those interests that the opposition outside the Congress stands for, a communicative link is established between factions within the Congress and different

opposition parties outside it. Thus, a multi-party competition is so structured in a one-party dominant system as to reflect in the form of multi-factional competition. Inter-factional competition becomes more important than inter-party competition, rendering the latter less significant for designating the Indian party system as a 'competitive' party system. Accordingly, all opposition parties ranging from the left to the right notwithstanding their spatial location, are operating merely as 'parties of pressure' where each of them are located around the Congress having a communicative link with like-minded factions within the Congress. In this mode of party competition, intra-party factional competition reflects as well as controls inter-party competition. Thus, the Congress being a 'party of consensus' and a 'grand coalition'⁹ represents a model of competitive party system.

Nevertheless, the nature of competition in this 'system' to borrow Morris-Jones' phrase, is 'competition without alternation'. According to Morris-Jones, "the opposition parties neither alternate with Congress in the exercise of power nor do they share power in any coalition form; rather they operate by conversing with sections of

9. Kothari, Rajni, *Politics in India, Op. cit.*, p. 183.

Congress itself."¹⁰ Gopal Krishna also argues on similar lines, thus, "the Indian party system permits competition without it leading to the periodic displacement of the ruling party."¹¹ This model becomes a less effective frame for understanding party competition when alternation of power become a reality in 1967-71, 1977-79 and post-1989 periods when the 'Congress system' has declined and a multi-party competition mediated through coalition politics has emerged. The one-party dominant system has declined both at the all-India level and at the State level. In fact, State parties, regional parties and all-India parties of non-Congress variety which, themselves have got regionalised either have replaced the Congress or are competing with it in various States.¹²

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10. Morris-Jones, W.H., "Dominance and Dissent: Their inter-relationship in Indian party system", in Barker, Rodney, (Ed.), *Studies in Opposition*, London, Macmillan, 1971, p. 287.
 11. Gopal Krishna, "One-party Dominance: Development and Trends", in *CSDS Occasional Paper-1: Party System and Election Studies*, Allied Publishers, 1967, p. 22.
 12. For a discussion on the nature of party system in India and transformation in recent times, see Pai, Sudha, "Transformation of the Indian Party System", *Asian Survey*, XXXVI (12), December 1996, pp. 1170-83, and "From One-party Dominance to Multi-partyism: Regionalising trends in the Development of the Indian Party System", in Bhatnagar, S. and Kumar Pradeep, (Eds.), *Some Issues in Contemporary Indian Politics*, New Delhi, Ess Ess Pub., 1997, pp. 151-198; and Manor, James, *Op. cit.*, 1995.

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The understanding of the party system in factional terms leads to explanation of coalitional behaviour in terms of factional alignments and shift of factional loyalties. Paul Brass's study of coalitions in the North Indian States of Bihar, Uttar Pradesh and Punjab during 1967-68 heavily draws on this model. His generalisation that "north Indian political parties operate in systems in which inter-party ideological divisions are less decisive in the formation and break of governments than intra-party divisions"¹³ is symptomatic of this understanding. Brass focuses on the presence of unattached members, factional rivalry, opportunistic defections as responsible for coalitional instability. For him, intra-party factionalism leads to shifting of group loyalties, in turn, making and breaking of coalitions. Alignments and break up as well as new alignments reflect factional loyalty-shift rather than any ideological orientation or policy division.

Brass in his study "extends the factional approach from the study of the Congress to the study of the party system as a whole."¹⁴ He attributes splits and defections in terms of factionalism. Brass's framework treats a party or a new formation which comes out of the Congress as mere faction

13. Brass, Paul R., "Coalition Politics in North India", in Brass, Paul R., *Caste Faction and Party in Indian Politics*, vol.1, Delhi: Chanakya Pub., 1985, p. 98.

14. Walch, James, n.2, p. 64.

outside the parent organisation. For example, the Charan Singh's Jana Congress which was launched as a fullfledged party after coming out of the Congress, is treated as a faction and its coalitional behaviour as transfer of factional loyalty. Brass, thus, treats factions within the Congress as partners of coalitions. In fact, to corroborate with James Walch, coalitional behaviour is an inter-party behaviour,¹⁵ and coalitions should not be viewed as merely conglomerates of factional interests which Brass depicts of 1967-68 coalitions. A distinction between a faction and party must be maintained. Intra-party divisions and inter-party divisions both are equally important for explaining coalition behaviour and governmental instability. Party system as mode of interaction of parties must take inter-party competition into consideration.

Moreover, factionalism is generally associated with an important analytical concept, i.e., defection. Factionalism as intra-party competition results in party incohesiveness and 'unpolarized disintegration'. Factional system represents "a political system (or sub-system) characterized by the informal competitions of a plurality of amorphous segments (factions)."¹⁶ Being instrumental in their orientation, factions depict unpredictable pattern of

15. *ibid*, p. 66.

16. Nicholson, Norman K., "Factional Model and the Study of Politics", *Op.cit.*, p. 292.

interaction. Thus, factionalism and defection become significant analytical variables in Brass's study. Given their instrumental orientation, variables like opportunism, benefit of office, self-seeking power, etc., are deployed to analyse and explain coalition behaviour and intra-coalition interaction of constituent units. The study of Bueno de Mesquita deploys variables like power, privileges attached with offices, etc., to explain coalition politics in Indian States. To Bueno de Mesquita, "benefits such as access to the machinery of government, patronage and exposure to media were sufficiently appealing to help these parties put aside their ideological differences."¹⁷ Thus, ideologically disparate coalitions are explained in terms of their opportunistic orientations. Moreover, Subhash C. Kashyap also depicts relationship between factionalism and defection.¹⁸

Nevertheless, defection as analytical variable fails to distinguish between individual and group behaviour. It "seems to include split, merger, floor-crossing by individuals and groups".¹⁹ Thus, a structural distinction

17. Bueno de Mesquita, Bruce, *Strategy, Risk and Personality in Coalition Politics: The Case of India*, *Op.cit.*

18. Kashyap, Subhash C., *The Politics of Defection: The changing contours of political power structure in the State Politics in India*, Delhi, National, 1969.

19. Walch, James, n.2, p. 68.

between faction and party (formed after split) is blurred. Moreover, defections after 1967 elections could be attributed to be a phenomena occurring at the middle of the ideological spectrum. Neither the communists on the left nor the Jana Sangh on the right was involved in such activities. To corroborate with James Walch, "defection politics was concentrated to the 'middle' of ideological spectrum. The two communist parties on the left and the Jana Sangha on the right were not 'seriously' involved in this type of activity."²⁰ As a consequence defection does not represent an analytical tool applicable for the entire system. Most of all it can explain "a disintegration and a realignment of the political centre."²¹ Thus, "the intra-party divisiveness", "looseness", and "fluidity" as depicted by Brass was not a characteristic of the party system as a whole.²²

Moreover, there are also differing views on the 'content of factional conflict'. While for Brass, factionalism is a matter of power and patronage, for Ramashray Roy, "factionalism in Bihar must be understood in terms of long-standing conflict between the Kayasthas, and

20. *ibid*, pp. 68-69.

21. *ibid*, p.69.

22. *ibid*, p.69.

the Rajputs and the Bhumihars".²³ Here, factionalism reflects caste rivalry and effort by one caste or a combination of caste groups to consolidate over others. Nevertheless, for Brass, factions "cross-cut caste and class divisions" and are "like a political party"²⁴ at least in this sense. Factions seen in this sense and being involved in the "patronage politics of power and prestige, as conceived by Brass, "Performs certain integrative functions"²⁵ for the party. But as a logical conclusion it also catapults disintegration which is 'unpolarized disintegration'. Thus, defection i.e., unpolarized disintegration as an analytical variable is drawn from factional model. As pointed above, this model can't be applied to the whole party system. Most of all, in a situation where separate parties have emerged in recent times to construct and forge discrete political constituencies denouncing the earlier version of "catch-all-strategy", it does not help to explain coalitional behaviour of parties through factional model.

23. Roy, Ramashray, "Politics of Fragmentation: The Case of the Congress Party in Bihar", in Iqbal Narain, (Ed.), *State Politics in India*, Meerut, Meenakshi, 1967, p. 418.

24. Brass, Paul R., *Factional Politics in an Indian State: The Congress Party in Uttar Pradesh*, Bombay, Oxford University Press, 1966 (Berkeley, University of California Press).

25. Walch, James, n.2, pp. 62-63.

New parties are trying to construct and institutionalise within specific social constituencies based on certain narratives like religious nationalism, secular nationalism, social justice, etc.²⁶ Coalition behaviour also reflects this competition for institutionalisation whereby political alliance is seen as broadbasing the social support base. In fact, coalition behaviour of parties largely reflects a search for realignment in order to provide "an alternative national consensus" after the Nehruvian model has declined.²⁷ This, however, is more true for the all-India parties which nevertheless, closely interact with State and region-based parties. Moreover, in these changed circumstances it would be important to see the relationship between intra-party factionalism and inter-party competition. It would be worth to ask whether intra-party factionalism declines with increase in inter-party competition, as pointed out by Brass earlier.²⁸

26. Varshney, Ashutosh, "Three Master Narratives of Indian Politics", *Seminar* (Annual Number), January 1997, pp. 449.

27. Pai, Sudha, "Transformation of the Indian Party System", *Op.cit.*, pp. 1174-75.

28. Brass, Paul R., *Factional Politics in an Indian State: The Congress Party in Uttar Pradesh*, *Op. cit.*, p. 233.

2.2. SPATIAL MODEL OF PARTY COMPETITION AND COALITION POLITICS

While factional model emphasises on organizational factors of indiscipline, group loyalty, defection etc. as explanatory variables for explaining coalitional behaviour of parties, the spatial model insists on positioning of parties on a spectrum of "socio-economic progressiveness"²⁹ and different policy formulations. Explanation of coalitional behaviour and pattern of interaction amongst parties seeks to take policy and programmatic differences into consideration for durability or breakdown of coalitions. Parties are arranged on a political spectrum from left to right which, in turn, helps in locating broad policy orientations of parties. In fact, ideological diversity and policy differences are important factors for accounting for coalitional stability or instability.³⁰ The study of Subrata Kumar Mitra of coalition governments of Bihar, Punjab, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal during 1967-71 takes up the 'ideology vs power' debate and finds variables like power-oriented opportunism, defection etc. alone insufficient to account for coalitional instability. Mitra's central argument is that notwithstanding

29. Sirsikar, V.M., *Indian Political Parties*, New Delhi, Meenakshi Prakashan, 1984.

30. Warwick, Paul, "Ideological diversity and government survival in Western European Parliamentary Democracies", *Comparative Political Studies*, 25(3), October, 1992, pp.332-361.

factionalism and external (Central government) intervention in State politics as factors affecting stability of governments in States, breakdown of national consensus during the sixties contributed to instability.³¹ According to him, the "growing radicalism" "manifesting in non-Congressism" led to breakdown of consensus build around "the national programme of democratic socialism, planning, secularism and non-alignment". Political forces and political opinion were ranged from one side to the other of this dimension where Congress "stood in the middle of the distribution. Now, with the advocacy of non-Congressism by Lohiaites, the consensus got disturbed because "the issue space now contained a subset of issues in which the Congress rather than being in the middle with Parties all around it, was on one extreme, with opposition parties far away from it". Mitra continues, "in spatial terms this led to an ideological space that was not completely structured anymore, resulting in chronic instability".³² This series of unstable coalitions-building came to an end when a new, left-leaning consensus emerged out of the fifth general elections. According to Mitra, the instability of the coalitional period owes much to the absence of "a commonly agreed policy to work on", and to the fact that "some

31. Mitra, S.K., *Governmental Instability in Indian States* Op. cit., Preface.

32. Mitra, S.K., *ibid*, p.135.

parties previously in the opposition and now partners in ruling coalitions, were still closer to Congress than to each others in policy terms. Thus, instability was much because of 'unstructured ideological space' than anything else. Nevertheless, Mitra also adds factionalism to this as a factor of instability.

Iqbal Narain while explaining the political change of the period of 1967-71 noted that "the trend is towards multi-polar polarization".³³ According to him, coalition politics of this period represented a 'situation of political change in which major political parties are at one and the same time trying to fill jointly the political vacuum created by the Congress eclipse and also to forge a viable independent identity to avail themselves singly of the newly created prospects of alternation of power. Thus, eclipse of the Congress provided an opportunity to alternate power in cooperation with other parties within the opposition fold, at the same time there was competition to dominate by parties. This situation is also evident in recent times when parties forge coalitions but are still in search of stable realignments for viable alternatives. This also explains unstable coalitions.

Moreover, Iqbal Narain in order to locate the trajectory of coalition politics of the period of 1967-71,

33. Iqbal Narain, n.8.

divides the phase into three stages according to their broader characteristics and nature.

- i) Anti-Congress non-ideological phase (1967-69);
- ii) Anti-Congress Programmatic phase (1969-mid-term to Congress split); and
- iii) Politico-Programmatic phase (1969-70).

Following the above trajectory of coalition politics between 1969-71, it can be discerned that it was one of evolution towards such realignment of political forces where political polarization was taking place for providing an alternative to the Congress. Nevertheless, the period witnessed fluidity and flux to such an extent that no meaningful polarization was visible. Iqbal Narain's hypothesis that "political coalition need not necessarily obstruct the process of ideological polarization" could not be verified in such fluid situations as was the case in Uttar Pradesh and Bihar in 1967-71. No clear pattern of coalitional behaviour emerged in these States, partly because of fluidity and partly because no single party was dominant enough to direct any pattern. Factionalism, defection and shifting loyalties always intervened in party interaction at the middle of the political spectrum. Policy differences and ideological diversity between the left, socialists and

the Jana Sangh also proved to be crucial factor in undoing of the Common Minimum Programme.³⁴

2.3. FRAMEWORK OF ANALYSIS

This study proposes to analyse and explain the nature of coalition politics and pattern of party competition between 1967-95 in the States of Uttar Pradesh and Bihar. Party system, i.e., mode of interaction between parties is largely mediated by coalition and front making strategies in an one-party dominant system or a fragmented party system in order to alternate power. While coalition and front making strategies play significant role in structuring party competition when the opposition is fragmented as was the case during 1967-71, it becomes crucial in a situation when the dominant party has declined and when parties are searching for viable alternatives of different orientations as in the case after 1989.

Both the States of Bihar and Uttar Pradesh present a case of fragmented party system despite attempts at integration through coalitions. With the decline of the one-party dominant system and with the erosion of the Congress base, a competitive but fragmented party system has come up. As a result of fragmentation of party system and factionalism, unstable coalitions become rampant. This, in

34. Aiyar, Jayanthi S., "The Politics of Coalition Governments", *Journal of Constitutional and Parliamentary Studies*, IV (3), July-September, 1970, pp. 371-393.

turn, belies any hope of pattern in coalition behaviour and party competition. In fact, in the absence of a patterned trend of party-interaction and inter-party competition, factions, parties, coalitions, fronts and some times unattached members all play significant role in the party system. Nevertheless, for the sake of clarity, it is essential to grasp the distinction between faction and party, between party as a collection of factions and coalition as a collection of parties, and also between coalition and front despite a large area of overlap between the two.³⁵ Since this study seeks to analyse coalition politics and party competition, it requires the analysis of bearing of coalitional behaviour on party interaction.³⁶

Parties as units of interaction in a competitive politics 'implies divisions or cleavage', having certain social bases and goods or ideological orientation. Party system involves "the competitive interaction patterns amongst party units". Thus, party system refers to what Duverger says "the forms and modes of their (parties) coexistence".³⁷ The nature and pattern of interaction

35. Waltch, J., n.2, p. 16.

36. Singh, M.P., "Models of Coalition Behaviour", *Indian Journal of Political Science*, XXXVI (2), April-June, 1977.

37. Duverger, Maurice, *Political Parties: Their Organisation and Activity in Modern State* (2nd English ed.), New York, Wiley, 1965.

amongst parties inform party competition. Accordingly, degree and intensity of competitiveness amongst parties can be known in a system. Defining party system as "competitive interaction patterns amongst parties"³⁸ implies analysing the nature and degree of competitive interaction amongst the parties. Indian party system has been described as 'one-party dominant' competitive system. Hence one-party dominance exists in a multi-party system. The nature and degree of competitiveness between parties differ in this system from a multi-party or a two-party system. In fact, the factional model applied for the study of Indian party system by virtue of being Congress-centric treats parties other than the Congress as mere 'factions' within the party system. Hence, the very nature of competition is reduced to a level where 'party system' as defined by Harry Eckstein, seems to be absent and becomes 'factional system'. This requires differentiating parties with their policies, goals, social bases, etc., from factions as mere opportunistic self-seeking groups.

Factions being constituent groups of a larger unit (political parties in this case), are 'amorphous segments' working for the advancement of specific interests or interests of particular persons. To quote Lasswell, "the faction arises in the struggle for power and represents a

38. Eckstein, Harry, "Party Systems", in *International Encyclopedia of Social Sciences*, pp. 436-53.

division on details and not on principle".³⁹ Thus factions do not disregard the "collective goal" of the party and also agree with the broader principles of the party. Nevertheless, they seek to promote interests of a particular group. Moreover, the definition given by Lasswell, leads to a structural difference between a party and a faction. As Lasswell notes, "the term (faction) itself drops out of usage when certain lines of cleavage have become rather permanent factors of the political life of a group; these divisions are accepted as parties."⁴⁰ Thus, split of a faction from a party and its existence outside entails it to be an independent party with its policies and goals.

Even factions may represent caste or other divisions and/or may be socially homogeneous. As noted by Ramashray Roy, factionalism in Bihar is on caste lines.⁴¹ While both Brass and Kothari see the rebel Congress groups who have formed independent parties as a continuation of intra-party factionalism, it is interesting to ask "if the major sources of socio-economic conflict...affect the pattern of factional

39. Lasswell, Harold D., "Faction", in *Encyclopaedia of Social Sciences*, p. 49.

40. *ibid*, p.49.

41. Roy, Ramashroy, "Politics of Fragmentation: The Case of the Congress Party in Bihar", in Iqbal Narain, *State Politics in India*, *Op. cit.*

conflict."⁴² In fact, to account for the role played by the Jana Congress of Charan Singh, later named as Bhartiya Kranti Dal (BKD), and parties like the Shoshit Dal, the Lok Tantrik Congress Dal, etc., in Uttar Pradesh and Bihar coalition politics during 1967-71, the structural difference between party and faction is helpful than treating them merely as factions outside the Congress. In fact, with various changes taking place in the party system like decline of the Congress emergence of various regional groups with claim of representing specific social segments and social coalitions, the nature of party interaction and competition cannot be captured within the framework of factional interaction alone.

Coalitions, alliances, fronts all represent 'forms and modes' of coexistence of parties and their unstable nature in these two States reflect fluidity and flux in the party system. Coalitions, alliances, fronts, all represent specific form of party competition whereby despite basic cleavage in the party system, some parties come together by 'putting their resources in a collective bargaining situation'. Inter-party coalition is affected by factors like policy differences amongst parties, difference in their social bases, chances of respective parties to further their

42. Carras, Mary C., *The Dynamics of Indian Political Factions: A Study of District Councils in the State of Maharashtra*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1972.

good, experience which a party has of its earlier coalition with other parties.⁴³

Though there is a large area of overlap between coalition, alliance and front, their nuanced difference must be noted. Coalition refers to coming together of parties to form governments while alliance is effected primarily for electoral purpose. A front is a coalition or an alliance with a programmatic basis of convergence either for electoral purpose or for the purpose of government formation.⁴⁴ A coalition with a Common Minimum Programme represents a front whereby efforts are made for programmatic convergence of parties to minimize their policy differences. Thus, a programmatic coalition represents an attempt at 'policy distance minimization'.

Studies of coalitions and coalitional behaviour in these States have largely used the factional framework for analysis using variables like defection, opportunism and self-seeking alliance. This approach largely ignores many aspects of coalition as well as party system. Defection is used as primary causal variable for accounting coalitional instability largely ignoring the role of ideological and policy differences between parties. Game Theoretic

43. Mehrson, Carol A., "Expectations and Informal Rules in Coalition Formation", *Comparative Political Studies*, 27 (1), April, 1994, pp. 40-79.

44. Walch, J., n.2. pp. 16-17.

perspective⁴⁵ attributes durability of coalitions to 'minimum winning size' and ignores ideological or policy level incompatibility of parties. Abraham Deswaan, however, relates stability of coalitions with "policy distance minimization" by parties.⁴⁶ The theory of policy distance minimization implies that "an actor strives to bring about that coalition which he expects to adopt through its decision-making process the policy that is as close as possible to its most preferred policy".⁴⁷ In fact, as number of parties increases within a coalition so does diversity and policy differences. Given the heterogeneous character of coalitions formed in UP and Bihar where parties following different policies and sometimes opposed to each other came together, they could not continue to agree on certain issues and fell apart. Durable coalitions require less diversity as well as agreement on certain crucial issues hence political polarization.

45. Riker, W.H., *The Theory of Political Coalitions*, New Delhi, Oxford and IBH, 1970; Gamson, William, "A Theory of Coalition Formation", *American Sociological Review*, 26, August, 1961; Dodd, L.C., "Party Coalitions in Multi-Party Parliaments: A Game Theoretic Analysis", *American Political Science Review*, 68 (3), 1974, pp. 1093-1117.

46. Deswaan, Abraham, *Coalition Theories and Cabinet Formations*, Amsterdam, Elsevier, 1973.

47. Deswaan, Abraham, quoted in M.P. Singh, "Models of Coalition Behaviour", *Indian Journal of Political Science*, XXXVI (2), April-June, 1977, p. 176.

As noted above, defection is related with factionalism and opportunistic power-seeking shift of loyalties of groups which, in turn, result in fluid situation and 'patternless politics'. It is also largely true that defection is a "disintegration and a realignment of the political centre". Thus, defections represented, barring exceptions, fluidity of the political centre. Though scramble for power, opportunistic motivations may trigger defections, an alternative hypothesis may be presented. Given the fact that most of the parties try to institutionalise or occupy the centre of the political spectrum, it results in intense competition. Provided "insufficiently differentiated space" in ideological and policy terms at the Centre or between the left-to-the-centre and the right-to-the-centre of the political space, it becomes difficult for such parties "to retain their separate organisational identity in a situation in which ideological and policy contours of parties overlap and transcend organisational structures."⁴⁸ In this situation, change of organisational loyalty does not lead to a complete shift from one ideological orientation to another. Thus, it can be said that competition for institutionalisation or to occupy their organisational identity in an 'insufficiently differentiated ideological

48. Iqbal Narain and Mathur, P.C., *Politics in Changing India*, Op.cit., p.6.

space' explains defection and organisational incohesiveness at the political centre.

The decline of the Congress system and the gradual abandonment of the Nehruvian model of national consensus has created a political and ideological vacuum in 1990s.⁴⁹ As a result, efforts are on by political parties both at the all-India level and at the regional and state level to forge a new/an alternative consensus. Since all-India parties closely interact with state and regional parties, it also reflects in coalition politics at the state level. The attempt to forge an alternative consensus catapults various attempt at realignment amongst parties, break up of the alignments and forging a new one. Parallel with this is the effort by parties to forge social alliances in order to have social bases for electoral gains. With the break up of the earlier social coalition enjoyed by the Congress and with the emergence of new forces based on specific constituencies, there is intense competition amongst parties to institutionalise by gaining support of a broad based social coalition.

The Congress has declined rapidly in North India particularly in Uttar Pradesh and Bihar. This has given opportunity to other parties to gain the support of those who hitherto had been the part of Congress social coalition.

49. Pai, Sudha, n.12.

The BJP is trying to consolidate the upper caste Hindu vote and at the same time advocate community based unity so that it can gain the vote of lower castes. The Janata Dal, the Samajwadi Party, the Samata Party etc. are trying to secure bases amongst the middle caste of Yadavs, Koeris, Kurmis, Jats etc. of these States. The BSP is projecting itself as the sole champion of the 'Dalits'. Nevertheless, all the parties are trying to make inroad into the specific support base of other parties. Moreso, they want to win the support of some of the common social constituencies without which they can't be electorally successful. All parties are trying to win the Dalits, some section of the OBCs and the Muslims except for the BJP in the last case.

With fragmentation in the party system and when efforts are on to forge what Sudha Pai calls 'an alternative national consensus'⁵⁰ around issues such as secularism, state intervention in economic development, nationalism and social justice, alignment and realignment of political forces is still in a period of flux and instability. As a result, coalitions and alliances are short-lived and unstable. In fact, coalitions also reflect the fluidity and uncertainty both at the level of national consensus and of non-permanent social support bases. Explanation of coalitional experiments of late 1980s and 1990s can't be

50. *ibid.*

done merely by resorting to variables like power-seeking opportunism, defection etc. The party system itself has moved from the Congress-centric nature of competition to a stage where different parties compete to occupy the space for itself or with a combination of parties. The post-1989 coalitional experiments very much reflect the fissures at the social level from below and breakdown of the 'national consensus' from above. Coalitional fluidity reflects the fluidity of social relations.

Moreover, a shift in the party system i.e. modes and forms of co-existence of parties has its own bearing on coalition politics. Different periods of coalition politics after 1967 require different explanatory frameworks while anti-Congressism as an integrating factor and factionalism as an disintegrating factor provide explanation for 1967-71 period of coalitions, it fails in a period where Congress itself has declined. There is a need to apply a multi-variable framework for explaining coalition politics and party competition in the States. Variables like factions, defection, policy differences amongst parties, competition amongst parties to institutionalise and secure stable social constituencies and to provide national consensus, combined together help in explanation of coalition politics in these States.

CHAPTER 3

PARTY SYSTEM AND COALITION POLITICS: UTTAR PRADESH (1967-1995)

Party system in Uttar Pradesh till 1967 was characterised by 'one-party dominance' after which it became 'highly competitive'¹ with no party obtaining majority of seats. Moreover, the post-1967 period of high competition was also characterised by 'coalitional instability' and 'fluidity in inter-party interaction. Nevertheless, the Congress regained its dominance after 1971 which lasted till 1977 to be challenged by the emergence of a virtual 'two-party situation'. The post-Emergency witnessed the defeat of the Congress at the hands of the combined opposition under the banner of the Janata Party. The 1980s, however, again catapulted the Congress into dominant position. In 1980s, however the Congress has undergone a 'transformation' regarding its social 'rainbow coalition' as well as its regional spread,² and started facing new political forces in the late 1980s. As a consequence, political process in Uttar Pradesh in late 1980s and in -----

1. Burger, Angela S., *Opposition in a Dominant Party System: A Study of the Jana Sangh, the PSP, the Socialist Party in Uttar Pradesh*, Bombay, Oxford University Press, 1969.
2. Rudolph, L.I. and Rudolph, S.H., "Transformation of Congress Party: Why 1980 was not a Restoration", *Economic and Political Weekly*, May 2, 1981, XVI (18), pp. 811-818.

1990s has witnessed not only the decline of the Congress coupled with rise of new political forces but also instability and fluidity in party-interaction whereby "parties are constantly undergoing a process of realignment". Fluidity in the party system, unstable coalitions, caste and communal mobilization, etc., characterise present political process in the State.

3.1. PARTY SYSTEM IN UTTAR PRADESH : FROM DOMINANCE TO FRAGMENTATION, 1967-1995

The pre-1967 period of one-party dominance provided 'stable' pattern of inter-party interaction whereby the Congress as the dominant party secured more than 56% of seats in all the three assembly elections before 1967 without however, securing majority of votes. The accompanying Table-3.1 reveals the difference between the Congress and the next largest party. It is obvious that the difference between seats secured by the Congress and the next largest (opposition) party is very high.

TABLE-3.1: PERCENTAGE OF SEATS OF THE CONGRESS AND THE NEXT LARGEST PARTY BEFORE 1967

| Years | Congress | Largest Opposition |
|-------|----------|--------------------|
| 1952 | 90.7 | 4.65 (PSP) * |
| 1957 | 66.5 | 10.2 (PSP) * |
| 1962 | 57.9 | 11.4 (BJS) * |

Source: Compiled from Shankar Bose and V.B. Singh, *Data Handbook, State Assembly Elections, 1952-1985*.

* represents the name of the next largest parties.

In a multi-party system, characterisation of party system as 'one-party dominant' or 'highly competitive' may take cognizance of the seats secured by largest party as well as its interactive relationship with other parties of the system.³ According to the seat criteria, when a single party is able to secure more than 55% of seats, it is to be characterised as 'one-party dominant system' and when any party fails to secure a majority of seats, it is to be characterised as 'highly competitive' party system.⁴ By applying this criteria for determining degree of party competitiveness, the party system in Uttar Pradesh can be characterised as 'one-party dominant' system. After the Fourth General Elections, however, coalition politics mediated the party system. During the period, no party was able to secure a majority of seats thereby rendering the party system as highly competitive.

3. While the criteria of interactive-relationship of the dominant party with other parties (as developed by Kothari and Morris-Jones) has been reviewed in the previous chapter, here the concern would be to look at the seat criteria of dominance as proposed by Angela S. Berger. See Berger, Angela S., *Opposition in a Dominant Party System*, Op. cit., pp. 5-6.
4. Angela BURger proposes to measure degree of party competitiveness through percentage of seats secured by parties. Accordingly, if a single party secures 56% or more seats, a multi-party system becomes an 'one-party dominant' system; when no party secures a majority, it becomes a 'highly competitive' system; and it is 'moderately competitive' if a single party secures between 51 - 55% of seats. See, BURger, Angela S., *Opposition in a Dominant Party System*, Op. cit., pp. 5-6.

Moreover, it is also interesting to note that the difference between the seats obtained by the Congress and the next largest party has decreased after 1967. This shows trends towards increased party competition. Nonetheless, it is not only the coalitional period of 1967-71 that witnessed Congress versus non-Congress bilateral competition, but thereafter also non-Congress opposition has gained ground. More so, the relationship between the Congress and the next largest opposition regarding their seats is not a zero-sum game. While the Congress secured 46.8%, 49.5%, 50.7% of seats in 1957, 1969 and 1974 respectively, which shows a gain by the Congress, the next largest opposition got 23% (BJS), 23% (BKD) and 25% (BKD) of seats respectively for the same years. Thus, it can be inferred from above that even though the Congress managed to secure its relatively strong position, a creditable opposition has started emerging after 1967 within the framework of dominance.⁵

Table-3.2 makes it clear that party competition between 1967 and 1974 has increased. In 1967 elections the competition was amongst the Congress, the SSP and the BJS in the legislative arena, in 1969 the Congress competed with the BKD and the BJS and in 1974 again same parties

5. A similar conclusion has been drawn by Bashiruddin Ahmed and V.B. Singh in case of Madhya Pradesh. See, "Dimensions of Party System Change: The Case of M.P.", *Economic and Political Weekly*, Annual Number, February 1975.

TABLE-3.2: PERCENTAGE OF SEATS SECURED BY THE CONGRESS AND THE NEXT LARGEST OPPOSITIONS

| | Year | | |
|---------------------------|------------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| | 1967 | 1969 | 1974 |
| Congress | 46.8 | 49.5 | 50.7 |
| Largest Opposition | 23 (BJS) * | 23 (BKD) * | 25 (BKD) * |
| Second Largest Opposition | 10.35 (SSP) * | 11.5 (BJS) * | 14.4 (BJS) * |

Source: Compiled from Shankar Bose and V.B. Singh, *Data Handbook, State Assembly Elections, 1952-1985*.

* represents the name of parties.

prevailed. The table also reveals the fact that the percentage of seats secured by the Congress, the first largest opposition and the second largest opposition has constantly increased between 1967 and 1974. Hence, notwithstanding, the logic of the first-past-the-post electoral system of votes-seats differential, it can be concluded that the post-1967 period in the evolution of the party system in Uttar Pradesh witnessed three way party competition within the framework of Congress dominance.

It is appropriate to note that the criteria of measuring party competition by legislative strength is helpful in taking defections into consideration. Defections, by reducing or increasing strength of parties in the legislature affect party competition by shifting balance

from one side to another. This would be difficult if percentage of votes is taken as criteria of determining party competition which, of course, would be helpful in studying degree of institutionalisation of parties. Thus, number of seats of different parties is taken as criteria for studying party competition and share of votes as basis of institutionalisation.

The following Table-3.3 reveals party strength in three elections and also how split, defections, etc., changed their strength, hence party competition in the legislative arena. The period of 1967-76 is characterised by existence of multiple parties, defections, splits, alliances and coalitions. The coming out of Charan Singh from the Congress in 1967 and launching of the Jana Congress added a new dimension to the gathering momentum of non-Congressism. The split of the Congress into Congress (R) and Congress (O) in 1969 added yet another dimension whereby Congress (O) becomes part of the non-Congress coalition.

In 1969 mid-term elections, the Congress won 211 seats which subsequently decreased to 112 after the split in 1969 when 99 MLAs shifted their loyalty with the Congress (O). But Congress (R) regained its strength to around 200 by the end of 1970 mainly because of defections and its strength soared to 271 before the 1974 elections. In fact, the

TABLE-3.3: PARTY POSITION IN U.P. ASSEMBLY, 1969-74
(No. of Seats)

| | 1967 | Mid-term 1969 election | Pre- 1974 position | 1974 |
|---------------------------|------|------------------------------|--------------------------|------|
| Congress/ Congress (R) | 199 | 211 | 271 | 215 |
| Congress (O) | -- | * | 48 | 10 |
| BJS | 98 | 49 | 39 | 61 |
| SSP | 44 | 33 | 15 | 5 |
| BKD | -- | 98 | 42 | 106 |
| Swatantra | 12 | 5 | 1 | 1 |
| CPI | 14 | 4 | 4 | 16 |
| CPM | 1 | 1 | 1 | 2 |

Source: V.B. Singh, "An Analysis of 1974 Elections", *Economic and Political Weekly*, Special Number, August 1974, pp. 1421-28. Compiled from Shankar Bose and V.B. Singh, *Data Handbook, State Assembly Elections, 1952-1985*.

* after split in the Congress in November 1969, Congress (O) had 99 seats.

performance of the Congress in 1971 Parliamentary elections "triggered off another spate of defection to it from other parties".⁶ The main losers were the Congress (O) and the BKD. As obvious from the above table, the Congress (O) went down to 38 from 99 while the BKD to 42 from 98 between 1969

6. Singh, V.B., "Changing Pattern of Inter-Party Competition in Uttar Pradesh : An Analysis of the 1974 Elections", *Economic and Political Weekly*, Special Number (No.32-34), August 1974, p. 1423.

and 1974. There were some defections from the Jana Sangh and the SSP also. Nevertheless, the BKD and the Jana Sangh fared well in the 1974 elections occupying second and third positions respectively. Thus, it can be inferred that despite inter-elections fluidity as between 1967 and 1969 and also between 1969 and 1974, each election has catapulted a three party competitive situation in Uttar Pradesh. The three largest parties together account for nearly 80 per cent of seats, while, the third largest among them accounts for not less than 10 per cent of seats. Hence, within the coalitional instability on the one hand and Congress dominance on the other, the post-1967 party system in Uttar Pradesh is marked by three cornered competition till 1977.

Between 1967 and 1977, the Congress/Congress (R), the BKD, the Jana Sangh occupied important position in party competition. Any understanding of coalition politics of this period would take into consideration the role played by these parties. The Congress (O), the BKD, the SSP, the Jana Sangh, etc., provided the basis of anti-Congress or non-Congress coalitions. But at the same time, the Congress/Congress (R) also played a critical role by intervening into these coalitions. It is interesting to see how presence or absence of a 'centre' party which also appears to be the largest one, i.e., the Congress affects coalitional stability. Some observers are of the view that

the absence of such a party contributed to coalitional instability."⁷

The year 1977 marked a watershed not in the history of non-Congressism but also for the evolution of party competition in the state. Formation of the Janata Party at the all-India level by merging of the Congress (O), the BLD, the Jana Sangh and the CFD and socialists heralded a similar situation in Uttar Pradesh regarding inter-party interaction. Hitherto, the Congress was facing the Jana Sangh and the BKD separately which proved beneficial for the Congress. This was because of the fact that after 1967 "the politically actuated non-Congress votes were divided between the two opposition parties, the BKD and the Jana Sangh".⁸ In 1977, the coming together of these parties with other formations under one platform called the Janata Party, changed the nature of inter-party competition. As mentioned earlier, the period between 1967-77 has witnessed a three-party system in Uttar Pradesh. In 1977, the situation, however, changed into a direct competition between the Congress and the Janata Party.

7. Walch, James, *Faction and Front: Party Systems in South India*, New Delhi, Young India Publishing, 1976, p.66.

8. Singh, V.B., n.6, p.1425.

The elections of 1977 catapulted what has been described as a "two-party situation".⁹ Notwithstanding the intra-party factional alignment and competition amongst the BLD, the Congress (O), the CFD and the Jana Sangh, within the Janata Party, the inter-party competition witnessed a bilateral contest between the Congress and the Janata Party. The Janata Party and the Congress secured 47.8% and 31.9% of votes and 82.8% and 11% of seats respectively. Thus, together they accounted for 94% of the Assembly seats and nearly 80% of total votes. This makes the situation into a two-party system though proved to be short-lived giving way to Congress dominance with the Janata coalition disintegrating into its erstwhile constituents. Nevertheless, the Janata coalition was an attempt to include heterogeneous and diverse elements ranging from the right to the centre to the socialists. The attempt to combine diverse elements and factions was both a handicap as well as a boon. Handicap because it carried seeds of disintegration and boon because it promised to transcend the limit posed by polarised particular caste based mobilization. By including different groups it mobilized varied sections of people and obtained majority of seats.

9. Ram Joshi, and Desai, Kritidev, "Towards a More Competitive Party System in India", *Asian Survey*, XVIII (11), November 1978, pp. 109-116.

The post-Janata period in the evolution of the party system in the State can be broadly divided into two phases. After 1980 till mid-1980s, the party system witnessed the return of the Congress dominance though in a 'transformed' way.¹⁰ In 1980, the Congress secured 72.7% of seats while in 1985 it got 63.3% of seats, while the next largest party, the Janata Party (secular-Charan Singh) got 13.9% of seats in 1980 and the LKD, 19.8% in 1985. Till 1985 elections, the Congress managed to maintain its dominant position.

However, the situation has changed after mid-1980s, "Since the mid-1980s the party system in the state has become unstable and fluid, and parties are undergoing a process of realignment."¹¹ This can be traced to factors not only confined to the decline of the Congress but also to the rise of new political forces owing to both caste and communal mobilization. This period also witnesses mobilization of dalits by a particular political formation, the BSP which proclaims to be committed to their cause.

Three major stages can be identified so far as social/electoral mobilization in the State is concerned: "upto the mid-1960s (after independence) the upper caste remained dominant in politics and the middle and backward

10. Rudolph, L.I. and Rudolph, S.H., n.2.

11. Pai, Sudha, "Trends in the Party System", *Mainstream*, June 15, 1996, p. 9.

castes did not play an important role".¹² But after mid-1960s, caste and peasant based mobilization became important. Rich middle castes like Jats, Yadavs, Kurmis, Lodhs, Gujars, Koeris, etc., came to occupy an important role in the electoral process. This variety of social/electoral mobilization provided infrastructure for agrarian-based politics such as BKD/BLD and also to Lohiate socialists.¹³ Mobilization of these segments of the society became an integral part of the politics of non-Congressism based on Lohiate strategy. It is interesting to note that Charan Singh who articulated the interest of the rich-peasants and the upwardly mobile castes played vital role in the coalition politics and "formed innumerable alliances all of which were aimed at challenging Congress supremacy".¹⁴ Thus, the post mid-1960s, witnessed massive mobilization of backward castes and rich peasants. Thus, the first phase dominated by the upper castes was added by the second phase bringing the backward upwardly mobile castes and rich peasants into the political process.

12. Pai, Sudha, "Emergence of New Social Forces in Uttar Pradesh", *Mainstream*, December 18, 1993, p. 3.

13. Hasan, Zoya, "Power and Mobilization: Patterns of Resilience and Change in Uttar Pradesh Politics", in Frankel, F.R. and Rao, M.S.A., (Eds.), *Dominance and State Power in Modern India: Decline of a Social Order*, Delhi, Oxford University Press, Vol.11, 1989.

14. *ibid*, p. 180.

The third phase of social/electoral mobilization is marked by an independent and 'conscious'¹⁵ mobilization of the hitherto excluded sections of dalits from politics. The BSP proclaims to represent the interest of this section. In fact, BSP's social base largely consists of dalits. Thus, emergence of a party particularly oriented to the articulation of interests of this section of society adds a new dimension to the existing political conflict. Ever since its emergence in 1984, th BSP, however, has been trying to forge a broader social coalition bringing the SCs, the STs, minorities and backward castes at one platform.¹⁶ The politicisation of dalits and their political mobilization has rendered political conflict more intense with high degree of party competition. Thus, competition rather than 'dominance' has become the characteristic feature of political process in the second half of 1980s and 1990s in Uttar Pradesh. This change has been affected by the completion of circle of politicisation and mobilization of the three strata of society into political process.

15. This phase of mobilization must be differentiated from their 'vertical mobilization' as part of Congress 'social coalition' when they played a subordinate role. The effort of the Republican Party also failed precisely because of Congress strong presence.

16. Pai, Sudha, n.12, p.4.

The decline of the Congress and its 'rainbow social coalition'¹⁷ of 'upper castes-Harijans-minorities' has led to simultaneous rise of the BJP which relies on upper caste and non-Yadav backward castes as well as the backward castes-Dalit and minority based parties like the SP, the BSP and the Janata Dal. After mid-1980s, the BJP has resorted to a strategy of mobilization which is based on *hindutva* and aims at creating a multi-caste homogeneous vote base. This is aimed at consolidating the Hindu vote base cross-cutting the caste barrier or internal differentiation. Thus party competition in Uttar Pradesh has also become an arena of competing strategies of mobilization vis-a-vis, caste and religion. Nevertheless, these competing doctrines has made compromise at the political level in the form of coalitions between the BSP and the BJP. The explanation can partly be BJP's attempt to endear itself to the dalits and partly BJP and BSP common objective to neutralise Mulayam Singh and his Samajwadi Party. While the BJP wants to decimate the Samajwadi Party in order to monopolize the Yadav and non-Yadav OBC votes, the BSP is aiming at neutralising the

17. A recent study reveals that though the Congress social base has shrunk in the State, it still retains its diversity and 'rainbow' character. In 1996 Lok Sabha Elections, out of 8.1% of votes the Congress obtained, 28% came from upper castes, 12% from Yadavs, 27% from non-Yadav OBCs, 21% from SCs and 11% from Muslims. See Chandra, Kanchan and Parmar, Chandrika, "Party Strategies in the Uttar Pradesh Assembly Elections, 1966", *Economic and Political Weekly*, February 1, 1997, p.215.

SP's attempt to make in-roads into dalit vote base. Within these competing strategies to consolidate a larger support base, the parties in Uttar Pradesh are engaged in the battle of elimination and survival. None of the parties is able to secure majority hence making the party system 'highly competitive'. As a result, coalition politics characterises the present political process. The inter-party competition has become intense owing to competition to consolidate overlapping support bases. For example, parties like the BSP, the SP, the BJP, the Congress and the Janata Dal all compete to win SCs. Likewise, the BSP, the SP, the Congress, the Janata Dal, etc., compete to win minority votes. Even coalitions, their break up and realignment reflect this competition to a large extent.

In Uttar Pradesh, party situation between 1985 and 1995 has been fluid and unstable. It presents a highly competitive multi-party system. Parties like the declining Congress, the *hindutva*-based BJP, the dalit-based BSP and the OBC-based SP and Janata Dal compete with each other. Since, no party is able to muster majority to form government single-handedly, alliances and coalitions have been forged both at electoral and legislative-governmental levels. Instability and fluidity characterises the party system and coalitional interaction. The accompanying table reveals relative party position of different parties between 1989 and 1996.

TABLE-3.4: PARTY POSITION IN U.P. ASSEMBLY

| | Congress | BJP | SP | BSP | JD |
|------|----------|-----|------|-----|-----|
| 1989 | 94 | 57 | - | 13 | 208 |
| 1993 | 28 | 176 | 109* | 67* | 27 |
| 1996 | 33# | 174 | 110 | 67# | 7 |

* In 1993, SP-BSP had electoral alliance.

In 1996, Congress-BSP had electoral alliance.

Source: For 1989 *CSDS Data sheet*; for 1993, Butler, D., Lahiri, A. and Roy, P., *India Decides : Elections 1952-95*, p.296; for 1996, *Frontline*, November 1, 1996, p.9.

From 1989 to 1996, the Congress and the Janata Dal show declining trends, the SP, the BSP and the BJP stand to be the main contestants. The above table illustrates the position of Parties in different assemblies. Moreover, a more pronounced picture emerges when looked from the point of share of votes regarding decline or increase of support base of different Parties. The Congress Party has lost its support base in successive elections from 27.9% in 1989 to 14.7% in 1993 further down to 8.14% in 1996. Within a span of ten years, Congress vote share has declined from 39.3% in 1985 to a mere 8.14% in 1996. Important cause for this is the break-up of the Congress social coalition of 'Brahman-Harijan-Muslim' and transfer of their loyalty to other Parties. The Congress classic social coalition has been effectively replaced by 'BCs/OBCs-SCs-Muslims'

combine.¹⁸ It is this combine that becomes the arena of contest amongst Parties like the SP, the BSP and the JD. The BJP, however, aims to intervene in this coalition and break it up on the one hand and consolidate its hindutva vote bank adding from this social combine on the other.¹⁹ This is to be achieved by political coalition with Parties like the BSP at the present moment.

The JD also shows a trend of decline. Its vote share has declined from 29.75% in 1989 to 11.6% in 1993.²⁰ But the SP which originally came out of the JD has shown increase in its vote share. From 18% in 1993 its share has increased to 20.8% in 1996. Similarly, the BSP has grown remarkably increasing its share from 9.5% in 1989 to 10.7% in 1993 to 20.6% in 1996. Nevertheless, the BJP is the largest beneficiary of the decline of the Congress. It has increased its share from 11.6% in 1989 to 33.4% in 1996. Thus, it is clear that post-1985 period in U.P. presents a multi-Party situation but at the same time a progressive decline of the Congress and the Janata Dal. Three Parties - the BJP, the BSP and the SP are competing to consolidate their respective positions. Moreover, Parties like the Congress, the Samata Party, the Janata Dal and the two

18. Pai, Sudha, n.12.

19. Chandra, Kanchan and Parmar, Chandrika, n.17, pp. 214-221.

20. Data for 1996 for the JD is not available.

Communist Parties as well as the newly formed BKKP are available for alliance and coalition. Broadly speaking, while the BJP-Samata Party combine represents one pole, the United Front including JD, SP, CPI, CPIM, BKKP, etc. represents another pole. The Congress and the BSP are floating partners. Thus, there is a possibility of emergence of a 'polarised party competition' whereby inter-party competition would be tri-polar or bi-polar though within coalition model.²¹

At present, however, there is fluidity in social support base of Parties; added with this, the breakdown of the 'national consensus' based on Nehruvian model has rendered Party interaction patternless. The BSP, however, has attempted alignments with the SP, the BJP and the Congress in turn. Thus, coalition politics in Uttar Pradesh in the nineties is a reflection of absence of a clear cut social support base of Parties as well as their search to provide an alternative national consensus.²² It would be appropriate to note that the study of Subrata K. Mitra of 1967-71 coalitions in several States leads to the conclusion

21. A bi-polar or tri-polar party system is to be differentiated from a bi-party or three-party system. While the latter has two or three alternating Parties, the former has more than two or three Parties but all coalescing around two or three poles. This is done through alliances, coalitions or Fronts.

22. Pai, Sudha, "Transformation of the Indian Party System", *Asian Survey*, XXXVI(2), December, 1996, p.1174.

that governmental instability was mainly related with the breakdown of the national consensus. The Congress in the late sixties had failed to forge a consensus²³ and had lost the 'median position' as a result of which "opposition Parties could displace the Congress but could not find a commonly agreed policy to work on".²⁴ The split in the Congress Party and shift of the Congress/Congress(R) to the left-to-the-centre restored the Congress to its median position. In the nineties, the breakdown of the Congress has created a situation of breakdown of the national consensus. Thus, it can be said that the breakdown of the national consensus has largely led to unstable and fluid party interaction hence patternless coalition also. Nevertheless, the political situation of late Sixties and early Seventies are quite different from late Eighties and early Nineties, both in terms of irretrievable decline of the Congress as well as the emergence of new social forces.

It would be seen that party competition and coalition politics in Uttar Pradesh has a close interaction not only

23. This occurred not only because of the internal dynamics of the Congress but also because of emergence of new social groups.

24. Mitra, Subrata K., Governmental Instability in Indian States : West Bengal, U.P., Bihar, Punjab; Delhi, Ajanta, 1978.

with factional behaviour, as was emphasised by Brass²⁵ in case of 1967-68 coalitions but also with specific social bases on the one hand and the national consensus on the other. A close linkage between the state politics and the national political process, earlier because of the presence of the dominant Congress and now because of the presence of state level parties at the union Government level, has a close bearing with national consensus.²⁶ The phases of breakdown of national consensus has also coincided with the phases of coalitions and fluid party interactions. It is also important to note that phases of coalition politics in the State vis, late Sixties and first half of Nineties also coincide with the mobilization and entry of new social forces, the backward castes and the dalits respectively in the political process.

While the 1960s and early 1970s witnessed the emergence of the OBCs, rich peasants and upwardly-mobile middle

25. Brass, Paul R., "Coalition Politics in North India", in Brass, Paul R., *Caste, Faction and Party in Indian Politics*, Delhi, Chanakya Pub., 1985, Vol.1, pp. 97-135.

26. Different studies have tried to explore linkage between 'national consensus' and pattern of inter-party competition. For example, see, Mitra, Subrata K., n.24, 'Preface' and Pai, Sudha, n.22, pp.1174.

castes,²⁷ the late 1980s and 1990s witnessed mobilization and entry of dalits in the political process.²⁸ In short, it can be said that fluidity and instability in the party system and patternlessness in inter-party competition is very much a function of its close interaction with mobilization and assertion of certain social groups who hitherto have played marginal role. Moreover, once fluidity has been thus introduced into the political process because of the breakdown of the national consensus and entry of new social forces it can either be accentuated or prolonged by the factor of factionalism. But factionalism on its own cannot be a primary factor of instability.²⁹ Party system in Uttar Pradesh has travelled a long journey from 1967 to the Nineties and dominance has given way to competition. Nevertheless, this competition is patternless and is characterised by coalitional instability. The following section deals with the trajectory which coalition politics in the state has followed as well as its interaction with party system.

27. Hasan, Zoya, *Dominance and Mobilization: Rural Politics in Western Uttar Pradesh (1930-1980)*, New Delhi, Sage Pub., 1989; Pai, Sudha, *Uttar Pradesh: Agrarian Change and Electoral Politics*, Delhi, Shipra Publications, 1993.

28. Ramaseshan, Radhika, "Dalit Politics in U.P.", *Seminar*, 425, January 1995, pp. 70-74.

29. Paul Brass, however, insists on the primacy of factional rivalry as the causal factor in instability in the political system. See, Brass P., n.25, pp. 97-135.

3.2. POLITICS OF COALITION AND PARTY COMPETITION (1967-1995)

The gathering momentum of non-Congressism climaxed in the form of defeat of the Congress Party in the Fourth Assembly Elections in 1967 in Uttar Pradesh, along with other States. This brought though for a short while, the break down of the one-party dominant Congress system. As stated earlier, the 1960s witnessed the mobilization and entry of Backward and rich-upwardly mobile intermediate castes into the political process. The necessary ground for this had been created by the Lohiate socialists. The late Sixties and early Seventies also witnessed "politicisation of the rich peasantry" in the State.³⁰ The ground work has been prepared by the truncated and half-hearted land reform as well as the introduction of the green revolution. This phenomena is most pronounced in the western part of the state which obviously provided base for Charan Singh's political platforms. There is no gain saying that Charan Singh after leaving the Congress in 1967 launched a separate party and played crucial role in coalition politics of the State. His party under different names like Jana Congress, BKD, BLD and LKD played vital role in inter-party competition.

30. Brass, Paul R., "The Politicisation of the Peasantry in a North Indian State", *Journal of Peasant Studies*, July 1980, 7, pp. 395-456 and September 1980, 8, 3-36; Pai, Sudha, n.27 and Hasan, Zoya, n.27.

The background of the coalition politics was the thesis of 'non-Congressism' based on oppositional unity. Ram Manohar Lohia, the high priest of this thesis propounded that Congress having secured less than 50% of votes had managed to get majority seats because of oppositional fragmentation. Hence a 'non-Congress' oppositional unity (excluding the Communists)³¹ would deny this benefit to the Congress. Thus, in electoral terms the dominance of the Congress was perceived to be more a function of oppositional fragmentation than Congress's positive gains.³²

Nevertheless, realization of Lohia's thesis of oppositional unity into electoral success required adjustment between different Parties ranging from the Communists (CPI, CPM), to the Socialist (SSP, PSP), to the right wing parties (Swatantra, Jan Sangh) which differed in their policy perspectives and preferences. The Communists favoured "a front of left and democratic parties, groups and elements" to the exclusion of the Jan Sangh and the Swatantra.³³ On the other hand, the Jan Sangh and the Swatantra were averse to any alliance with the Communists. Moreover, the SSP favoured a broader electoral agreement

31. Lohia was critical of the Communists and decried their 'politics of Fronts' because, according to him, Fronts put premium on fragmentation and acts contrary to unification and merger. See Limaye, Madhu, *Birth of Non-Congressism : Opposition Politics (1947-75)*, Delhi, B.R. Pub. Corporation, 1988, p.101.

32. *ibid*, pp.79-104.

33. *ibid*, p.107.

amongst all opposition parties without regard to their left or right orientations. Within these conflicting signals an all-opposition alliance failed to take off. Eventually, the SSP, the PSP, the CPI, the CPM and the RPI agreed to enter into electoral pact while the Jan Sangh and the Swatantra forged separate electoral alliance.³⁴ Moreover, the PSP had problems with the SSP and at one stage, the former had rejected Lohia's concept of non-Congressism by denouncing any alliance with anti-democratic and anti-socialist forces.³⁵ The fourth General Elections resulted in the Congress getting 199 seats, the Jan Sangh - Swatantra combine 110 seats and the SSP, PSP, CPI, CPM, RPI alliance obtaining 79 seats. The independents secured 37 seats.

The non-Congress opposition parties³⁶ together has a strength of 189 added to which were 37 independents who held the balance. On March 5, 1967, all opposition parties (excluding the CPM with one seat) along with the 27 independents announced the formation of the Samyukta Vidhayak Dal Front with 33-point Common Minimum Programme

34. Rao, K.V., "Coalition Experiment in U.P. : 1967-68 and 1970"; in Karunakaran, K.P. (ed.), *Coalition Governments in India : Problems and Prospects*, IIAS, Simla, 1975, p.304.

35. Limaye, Madhu, n.31, p. 107.

36. Included the Jan Sangh, the Swatantra, the SSP, the PSP, the CPI, the CPM and the RPI.

which was later reduced to a 19-point programme.³⁷ However,

37. List of the 19-point Programme

1. To abolish the Land Revenue, Land and Building Tax, and Profession and Business Tax.
2. Free education up to High School.
3. To accept the principle of 'equal pay for equal work' and remove the disparity of pay and other service conditions between the teachers of Government and Private Schools.
4. Separation of Judiciary and Executive without delay.
5. To stop the system of appointing Honorary Magistrate.
6. To accept the demands of State Government employees.
7. To link the dearness allowance with cost of living index.
8. To abolish the use of automatic machines, which increases unemployment.
9. To raise the minimum salary of primary school teachers to Rs.150/- per month.
10. To release the students and other political prisoners immediately.
11. To make judicial enquiries of the recent firings and to appoint a permanent tribunal which should enquire into each and every firing in the State in future.
12. To remove English from every branch of the State administration and to introduce Hindi in its place.
13. To announce a definite scheme for maintaining parity among the prices of all cereals, agricultural commodities and other consumer goods produced in the factories.
14. To give facility and priority to the farmers in getting power connections for agricultural purposes.
15. To arrange cheap, easily available and beneficial means of irrigation to the farmers immediately.
16. To reduce the irrigation rates.
17. To distribute the cultivable fallow and barren lands to poor communities like agricultural labourers, landless farmers, Harijans, etc., on priority basis.
18. To frame some suitable scheme for safeguarding the interests of scheduled castes and tribes and other

despite the combined strength of the opposition being 215, the Congress with 199 seats was invited to form government. The Congress government with C.B. Gupta as the Chief Minister continued from March 14, 1967 to April 1, 1967 and suffered a defeat on the motion of thanks to the Governor, owing to the 16 MLAs of the Congress led by Charan Singh voted against the motion. Charan Singh subsequently left the Congress and floated a new party called Jana Congress which later on became the part of the SVD ministry.

It would be appropriate to note the differences between Charan Singh and the C.B. Gupta ministry. Besides the denial of coveted agriculture portfolio to Charan Singh by C.B. Gupta, the former also resented government's decision to impose a surcharge of 50% on the land revenue in Uttar Pradesh.³⁸ In fact, Charan Singh was trying to articulate the interest of the rich peasant proprietors particularly, the Jats of Western U.P. The formation of the Jana Congress by Charan Singh after leaving the Congress and the rise of the BKD/BLD as the largest opposition in the Assembly was reflection of politicisation and rise of upwardly mobile

...Continued...

backward classes for their social and economic development.

19. To make suitable amendments in the Land Acquisition Act to safeguard the interest of land owners.

See Verma, M.S, *Coalition Government : U.P.'s first Experiment*, Calcutta, Oxford & IBH, 1971, p.106.

38. Zoya Hasan, n. 13, p.180.

peasant castes. Charan Singh faced no dilemma in joining the SVD for the simple reason that both the Jana Congress and the SVD were directed against the Congress Party.

While on the eve of the fourth General Elections, the Party competition was tri-lateral, amongst the Congress, the Jana Sangh-Swatantra combine and the SSP-PSP-CPI-CPM-RPI combine, after the elections it became bilateral, all opposition parties coming together. Moreover, the Jana Congress formed by the breakaway group of the Congress led by Charan Singh joined the SVD in order to form government. Thus, the first coalition government led by Charan Singh came into being.³⁹ Though the non-Congress opposition parties came together to form government, they had earlier disagreed on the issue of fighting the elections on a common platform. Thus, despite their forging a Common Minimum Programme, their policy preferences remained diverse. As a result of multiplicity of Parties with wider policy differences coming together, seeds of instability were sown therein. The Common Minimum Programme was aimed to minimize their policy distances which is a prerequisite for coalition stability in an ideologically diverse coalition.⁴⁰ Maximum

39. The first coalition government included parties like Jana Congress, SSP, PSP, Jana Sangh, Swatantra, CPI, RPI and also 27 independents.

40. Deswaan, Abraham, "Coalition Theories and Cabinet Formation", op.cit.

the policy distance between parties of a coalition, greater the chance of instability.

Meanwhile, it is appropriate to point out that the Charan Singh's Jana Congress secured not only the post of the Chief Ministership but also seats in the ministry disproportionate to its strength. This however, can theoretically be explained by the fact that bargaining and pay off of coalition partners depends not only on their strength but also on their capacity to lead the coalition to the desired goal.⁴¹ Charan Singh's Jana Congress created a situation whereby government formation was possible, hence its bargaining capacity increased. Nevertheless, the disproportionate benefit was also a cause of ripple amongst the other constituents particularly the Jana Sangh etc. More so, Charan Singh's Jana Congress was not a part of the formulation of the 19-point Common Minimum Programme, hence later on disagreed on its several issues. The existence of 27 independent MLAs with the SVD also introduced uncertainty. There were also cases of shifting of loyalties by groups from one party to another. Thus, from the very beginning it started with problems which created intra-coalition strains.

Major areas of differences amongst different parties owing to opposite policy orientations started surfacing.

41. Riker, W.H., The Theories of Political Coalitions ,
Op. cit.

The first point of the CMP was related with abolition of land revenue, land and building tax and profession and business tax. The SSP and the CPI constituents of the SVD were constantly pressing the Chief Minister to implement this item of the CMP. Charan Singh, however, was not ready to abolish land revenue unless an alternative source of revenue was found. subsequently, in July 1967, he conceded to grant fifty per cent exemption of land tax on land holding upto 6.25 acres. Both the SSP and the CPI were dissatisfied with the decision which resulted into SSP & CPI ministers resigning from the government.⁴²

In order to locate the policy preferences of Charan Singh's Jana Congress/BKD, it would be apposite to point out Charan Singh's policy orientations vis-a-vis agricultural issues. Charan Singh an opponent of Co-operative farming⁴³ never supported a reduced ceiling of land. During the second tenure as Chief Minister in 1970, he had severely condemned the 'land grab' movement launched by the SSP and the CPI. He also opposed nationalisation of sugar industry and takeover of wholesale trade in wheat by the Congress government in 1971. In fact, Charan Singh BKD/BLD "was

42. However, a compromise was struck later on and the ministers returned to the government.

43. Charan Singh had opposed Nehru's resolution on co-operative farming in 1959 Nagpur Session of the Congress.

clearly identified with the substantial landed interest".⁴⁴ With this orientations, Charan Singh had major policy differences with the SSP and the CPI within the SVD coalition ministry regarding issues like implementation of land ceiling, distribution of land to the weaker sections, etc.

The SVD government also witnessed strains because of Jana Sangh's differing policy preferences. The CMP had stipulated checking of price rise of cereals amongst other items. The government embarked on levying and collecting 500,000 tons of food grains from the farmers. The central executive of the Jan Sangh opposed this policy. There was also controversy regarding the question of Urdu being made as the second language of the State. Although, it was not a part of the 19-point CMP, some of the constituents of the coalition favoured Urdu being made the second language of the State. The Jan Sangh threatened to quit if this policy was followed. As stipulated by the CMP, Hindi was to be substituted for English in all official works. The Jan Sangh and the SSP ministers demanded that all official correspondence should exclusively be carried in Hindi. This created tension amongst other constituents especially the CPI which supported Urdu also. The PSP and the RPI were also dissatisfied over the issue of implementation of the

44. Hasan, Zoya, n.13, p. 182.

CMP. Nevertheless, the climax reached when the Swatantra withdrew its support from the government and resumed its freedom of action to consider each issue on merit. In September 1967, Ram Manohar Lohia, the SSP leader called upon the SSP ministers in U.P. to lead the resistance against land revenue collection from small landholders.⁴⁵ In October 1967, 5 ministers of the SSP and 2 of CPI resigned, thereby leaving the SVD with the Jana Congress, the Jan Sangh, the PSP, the RPI and the independents.⁴⁶

Thus, the trajectory of the Charan Singh led SVD coalition government in U.P. reveals the fact that between April, 1967 to February 1968, when his government fell, inter-party strain on certain policy preferences within the coalition proved to be the major cause of intra-coalitional strain and its failure. The failure of the constituent to resolve disputes over sharing of portfolios also created strains. The Jan Sangh ministers of co-operative and local self-government were alleged by other constituents to have used their offices for specific gain for the Jan Sangh through favouritism. Charan Singh reshuffled the Jan Sangh

45. *The Statesman*, 26 September 1967, quoted in Srivastava, Saraswati, "Uttar Pradesh : Politics of Neglected Development", in Iqbal Narain (ed.), *State Politics in India*, Delhi, Meenakshi Prakashan, 1976, pp.323-369.

46. Although they returned to the government after a compromise, again however, they resigned - the CPI on the issue of detention of government staff and the SSP on the issue of Official Language (Amendment) Act.

portfolios which led to Jan Sangh ministers joining the SSP in demanding Charan Singh's resignation. The issue of leadership change reached a new pitch creating strain within the coalition. The BKD, the Swatantra, the RPI, the independents supported Charan Singh's leadership, while the SSP, the PSP and the CPI were divided and the Jana Sangh was uncompromising. As a result, Charan Singh resigned on February 18, 1968.

It can be inferred that instability of the first coalition government can be attributed to many causes. Firstly, despite their CMP, the SVD constituents failed to implement it due to disagreement on issues like land tax, land ceiling Act, food procurement policy, the language issue etc. It is important to note that with different policy preference by parties are related issues of support base of different sections of the people. Charan Singh, for example, did not want to compromise the interests of rich peasant castes;⁴⁷ the SSP and the CPI etc. were trying to address to the social constituencies of small and marginal landholders as well as the Urdu speakers amongst others; the Jan Sangh stood for right-oriented policy. The failure to minimize their policy distances relates to attempt by different parties to gain or retain their social support bases. In fact, the ideological and policy orientations

47. Hasan, Zoya, n.13, p.182.

played important role in their failure to carry^{on} according to the CMP. There was also lack of coordination between Charan Singh and other parties because Charan Singh not being a part of the formulation of the CMP, failed to appreciate it.

Secondly, each party was trying to use power and ministry for its own sake at the cost of other coalition partners. The Jan Sangh ministers, for example, were allegedly using the ministries of local self-government and co-operative for their own purpose through favouritism. This created a lot of strain within the coalition finally bringing a rupture within the ministry.

Thirdly, the SSP resorted to agitational politics on the issue of abolition of land tax and the official language (Amendment) Bill. This created constant tension within the coalition.

Fourthly, although there were 27 independents and 17 MLAs of Charan Singh's Jana Congress, who could have proved to be a cause for instability, however did not initiate instability. The role played by the Jana Congress should be construed as a search "to articulate the discontent of the rich and middle peasants in the upper Doab...which was the most politicised region in the State",⁴⁸ and not merely as opportunistic alliance resorted by the defectors devoid of any linkage with social support base.

48. *ibid*, p. 180.

After nearly eleven months of President's rule which had been imposed after the fall of the Charan Singh ministry, mid-term elections were held in February 1969 amid multiplicity of parties contesting the elections. Charan Singh's ~~Group~~ Bhartiya Kranti Dal (BKD) was a new addition over the 1967 contestants. The results of the 1969 elections reflected the fragmented party system in the State. The following table reveals how position of different parties changed in the Assembly between 1967 and 1969

TABLE-3.5: RELATIVE PARTY POSITIONS BETWEEN 1967 AND 1969
(Seats)

| Parties | 1967 Elections | 1969 Elections | Gain/Loss |
|--------------------------------|----------------------|----------------|-----------|
| Congress | 199 | 211 | + 12 |
| JS | 98 | 49 | - 49 |
| SSP | 44 | 33 | - 11 |
| SWA | 12 | 5 | - 7 |
| CPI | 13 | 4 | - 9 |
| CPM | 11 | 11 | - |
| RPI | 10 | 1 | - 9 |
| PSP | 11 | 3 | - 8 |
| BKD/JC | (After split) 17) | 98 | - |
| Independents/ Other Parties | 37 | 20 | - 17 |

Source: Compiled from Shankar Bose and V.B. Singh, *Data Handbook, State Assembly Elections, 1952-1985*.

elections. The relative positions of different parties reveals gain by the Congress and the rise of the BKD and loss by all other parties. This also shows how seats changed hands from one party to another. According to one analysis, nearly 287 seats (67.6%) changed hands while only 138 (32.4%) seats out of the total of 425 remained as earlier.⁴⁹ This shows lack of committed base for parties and their shifting inter-elections fortunes, hence instability in the party system. This shift can also be attributed to the fact that a large number of parties try to institutionalize themselves within not only insufficiently differentiated ideological space but also overlapping support bases. As a result shift occurs from one party to another.

A comparison of 1967 elections and 1969 elections reveals the fact that inter-party competition on the occasion of elections differed on the two occasions. While, on the occasion of 1967 elections inter-party competition was more or less tri-lateral because of alliances between the Jana Sangh and the Swatantra on the one hand and the PSP, the SSP, the RPI, the CPI and the CPM on the other with Congress as the third contestant. On the occasion of the 1969 elections, inter-party competition became more fluid

49. Srivastava, Saraswati, "Uttar Pradesh: Politics of Neglected Development", in Iqbal Narain (Ed.), *Op. cit.*, p. 343.

because of the absence of electoral alliance between different parties. One of the factors which can account for aversion of parties to forge electoral alliances in 1969 can be their bitter experiences with each other in the previous coalition.⁵⁰ This also created problem for forging a post-electoral coalition of parties of the erstwhile SVD. The problem of leadership between the BKD and the Jana Sangh and the SSP was contributory factor for delay in reviving the SVD. The mutual antagonism between the Jana Sangh and the Communists also added to this so far as inclusion of one into the SVD would lead to the exclusion of the other.

With the failure of the opposition to revive the SVD and form government, the Congress under the leadership of C.B. Gupta formed its government on February 26, 1969. Meanwhile, the non-Congress opposition revived its effort to forge a coalition. The SSP and the BKD took initiative to revive the SVD with a Common Minimum Programme.⁵¹ However, though the Jana Sangh expressed its desire to participate, it made it conditional on the exclusion of the communists. The CPI, on the other hand, declared that it would not participate in any coalition with which the Jana Sangh was

50. Carol A. Mershon maintains that previous experiences with coalition parties go into determining future coalition behaviour. See Mershon, Carol A., "Expectations and Informal Rules in Coalition Formation", *Comparative Political Studies*, 25(1), April 1994, pp. 40-79.

51. Srivastava, Saraswati, n.49, p.344.

associated. As a result of these mutual differences attempt to revive the SVD failed.

As stated above, the post-1969 election period was one of multi-party fluid interaction. Added to this came a vertical split in the Congress party in November 1969 between the Congress(R) and Congress(O). While the Congress(R) continued to align with Indira Gandhi, the Congress(O) came to be identified with the opposition. As a result of the split, inter-party competition took a new turn. Congress(O) siding with the opposition had around 99 MLAs while the rest remained with the Congress(R). This created new opportunities of realignment for parties, particularly the BKD which had 98 MLAs. The Chief Minister, C.B. Gupta aligned with the Congress(O), hence his ministry got reduced to a minority in November, 1969. However, the Jan Sangh and the SSP agreed to support him⁵² who continued till February 10, 1970.

Meanwhile, Charan Singh had been shifting his commitment between Congress(R) and Congress(O), finally to settle for an alliance with Congress(R). As a result, Charan Singh formed government on conditions that Congress(R) would support the BKD government without participation and would join the government after sometime. The Congress(R) became part of the ministry only on April

52. Rao, K.V., n.34, p.311.

19, 1970. Thus, two largest parties, the Congress(R) and the BKD formed a coalition government. Nevertheless, difference between the coalition parties came to the fore over several issues. Regarding the question of abolition of land revenue, the Congress(R) demanded abolition on holdings upto 6.25 acres; on the other hand, Charan Singh agreed for holding upto 3.125 acres. The Congress(R) legislators also complained that the BKD was 'consolidating itself' by reducing Congress(R) influence.⁵³ The hesitation shown by Charan Singh on the issue of nationalisation of sugar industries also led to resentment amidst Congress(R).⁵⁴ The Congress(R)-BKD coalition was carrying on^{on} the assumption that the BKD would merge with the Congress(R).⁵⁵ Nevertheless, negotiation to that effect broke down creating uncertainty in both camps. For it was widely felt that merger of the BKD with Congress(R) would give political stability to the State. The growing strain started becoming apparent and Kamlapathi Tripathi, the Congress(R) leader accused the government of getting deviated from agreed line

53. On May 23, 1970, 40 MLAs of the Congress(R) from U.P. submitted a memorandum to Mrs. Gandhi complaining to this effect. Srivastava, Saraswati, n.49, p.347.

54. Many sugar manufacturers were sympathisers of the BKD and the Congress(O) and most of the cane cultivators were supporters of the BKD. By following the policy of nationalisation, BKD would have suffered, Rao, K.V., n.34, p. 316.

55. Jagjivan Ram has expressed this prospect, see *The Hindustan Times*, April 16, 1970.

of policy. As a result, Charan Singh also retorted by saying that Congress(R) should either "quit the ministry or cease snipping at him".⁵⁶ Further developments like BKD's MPs decision to vote against the Privy Purse Bill in the Parliament, and Charan Singh's removal of 13 Congress(R)'s ministers accentuated the strain which, in turn, led to withdrawal of support by the Congress(R) from the government on September 24, 1970.

Nevertheless, the Congress(O), the Jan Sangh and the Swatantra rallied to support Charan Singh after the Congress(R)'s withdrawal of support from the ministry. Thus, break-up of BKD-Congress(R) coalition provided the Congress(O), the Jan Sangh and the Swatantra with opportunity to align with the BKD. However, the two opposition parties - the SSP and the CPI remained hostile to the BKD. During the BKD-Congress(R) coalition government, the SSP and the CPI had launched the 'land grab' movement. Charan Singh's handling of the situation which led to arrest of more than 6000 persons reveals BKD's orientation which tend to benefit "larger proprietors rather than small peasants and landless labourers".⁵⁷ Moreover, despite support given by the Congress(O), the JS and the Swatantra to Charan Singh, the Governor asked him to resign and kept

56. *The Statesman*, August 13, 1970.

57. Hasan, Zoya, n.13, p. 182.

the assembly in suspension which paved the way for the third coalition government.

After the fall of the BKD-Congress(R) coalition, five parties - the BKD, the Congress(O), the Jan Sangh, the Swatantra, the SSP started their attempt to revive the SVD. Parties other than the BKD opposed Charan Singh's leadership. As a result, T.N. Singh, an M.P. was accepted as the leader. Meanwhile, the SVD had formulated a 9-point programme which included amongst others, the withdrawal of professional tax and abolition of land revenue on holding upto 6.25 acres.⁵⁸ T.N. Singh expressed his commitment to the 9-point programme of the SVD as well as to abide by its policies. The SVD with a strength of 246 in the Assembly⁵⁹ formed the government on October 18, 1970. The coalition government abolished the professional tax and land revenue upto 6.25 acres in November 1970. Nevertheless, there were ripples on the issue of the SSP insisting that the Preventive Detention and the Student Union Ordinances promulgated by Charan Singh during the BKD-Congress (R) tenure should be withdrawn. However, the problem started when T.N. Singh failed to win his seat in a bye-election. He being not a member of the Assembly did not qualify for the post after six months. Thus, the SVD coalition was

58. Srivastava, Saraswati, n.49, p. 349.

59. SVD constituents had following seats - Congress(O)-86, JS-43, SSP-28, Swt.-4, BKD-85, see *ibid.* p.350.

again faced with the problem of leadership, which eluded unanimity. Furthermore, an impressive victory by the Congress (R) in mid-term Lok Sabha elections had triggered defections from the SVD which reduced the government to minority.⁶⁰ The government got defeated on the motion of thanks to the Governor and fell down on March 30, 1971.

Between 1967 and 1971, three coalition governments were formed, two by the SVD led by Charan Singh and T.N. Singh respectively and one by BKD-Congress (R) led by Charan Singh. While the SVD coalition can be categorised as "ideologically heterogeneous governmental coalitions" the BKD-Congress (R) coalition was "major-party dominant governmental coalition" which was centrist in nature.⁶¹ It is obvious that the SVD governments were ideologically diverse containing parties with different policy orientations. Despite their effort at forging a Common Minimum Programme, they failed to pull together. Added to this was the phenomena of organisational fluidity which resulted in defections and shifting of loyalties. However, it is problematic to argue that defection itself initiated instability. In fact, fluidity and instability introduced

60. Nine ministers also resigned. According to the Speaker's statement, on March 27, 1971, the SVD had 191 seats and the Congress (R) - 212. See, *ibid*, p. 351.

61. Iqbal Narain, *Twilight or Dawn : Political Change in India (1967-71)*, Agra, Shivrul Agarwala & Co., 1972, pp. 138-139.

by factors like mobilization and entry of new social groups in the political process and the breakdown of the 'national consensus' created a situation whereby defections and

TABLE-3.6: CHANGING POSITIONS OF PARTIES DUE TO DEFECTIONS SPLIT BETWEEN 1969 AND 1974

| Parties | 1969 Elections | March 21, 1970 | Pre-1974 Elections |
|--------------------------------|----------------|----------------|--------------------|
| Congress/ Congress (R) | 211 | 136 | 271 |
| Congress (O) | - # | 96 | 38 |
| Jana Sangh | 49 | 44 | 39 |
| SSP | 33 | 32 | 15 |
| SWA | 5 | 4 | 1 |
| BKD | 98 | 94 | 42 |
| PSP | 3 | 3 | 3 |
| RPI | 1 | - | - |
| CPI | 4 | - | 4 |
| CPM | 1 | - | 1 |
| Independents/ Other Parties | 20 | 10 | 5 |
| Total | 425 | 419 | 419* |

Source: For 1969, Shankar Bose and V.B. Singh, *State Assembly Elections, 1952-85*; For 1970, Saraswati Srivastava, "U.P. : Politics of Neglected Development" in Iqbal Narain (Ed.), *State Politics in India, Op. cit.*, p.348. For pre-1974, V.B.Singh, "Changing Pattern of Inter-Party Competition in U.P.", *Economic and Political Weekly*, Special Number, August 1974, p. 1423.

* Six Seats were vacant.

In November 1969, Congress (O) had 99 MLAs after split.

fluidity increased. Nevertheless, defections by increasing or decreasing balances in the Assembly influenced inter-party competition to a large extent. The following table gives an idea of defections between 1969-1974. It shows defections from the Congress (O), the BKD, the SSP and the Jana Sangh to the Congress (R). ON March 21, 1970, the Congress (R) had 136 MLAs but before the 1974 elections it rose to 271 MLAs.

From 1967, party competition had become intense and the Congress was facing opposition from parties like the Jana Sangh, the BKD, the Socialist and others though separately. In 1974 elections, the Jana Sangh and the BKD had secured 14.5% and 25% of Assembly seats respectively. It had become apparent that their combined strength might upset the Congress heralding an era of two party system. With the formation of the 'Janata Party' in 1977 with the merger of five parties - the Congress (O), the Jana Sangh, the BLD, the CFD and the Socialist, a new situation had emerged in the arena of inter-party competition. In Uttar Pradesh also, party competition witnessed a similar situation. In 1974, the BKD and the SSP had joined hands to form the Bhartiya Lok Dal (BLD) in Uttar Pradesh. Nevertheless, the

`Janata coalition'⁶² remained a conglomeration of separate group whereby intra-coalitional factional rivalry and their self-interest reigned supreme.

In fact, Janata Party being a coalition of various groups witnessed intense inter-group competition because of the fact that all constituent units were trying to consolidate their respective positions in order to dominate and direct the party. "The State Assembly elections were crucial for consolidation of strength of various groups and leaders in the party, and various groups in the party struggled to promote their interest openly."⁶³ Each group viewed the elections as opportunity for extending their influences and strengthening of social bases. This resulted in stiff competition amongst constituents for getting party tickets for their supporters. The two constituents of the Janata Party - the Jana Sangh and the BLD, were trying to dominate other constituents of the coalition. According to their 1974 election performances, they had secured larger number of seats than the other constituents, hence tried to

62. The Janata Party belied the normative perspective of a party and remained a coalition of groups/parties. Many scholars employ `coalition' to characterise it. See, Hasan, Zoya, n. 57; and Blair, H., "Electoral Support and Party Institutionalisation in Bihar : Congress and the Opposition, 1977-85" in Sisson, R. and Roy, R. (Eds.), *Diverse Dominance in Indian Politics*, New Delhi, Sage, 1990, p. 130-33.

63. Bhambhri, C.P., *The Janata Party: A Profile*, Op. cit., p.40.

direct the coalition according to their wishes. In fact, the Jana Sangh and BLD were working in tandem by forging an informal alliance. This alliance largely influenced and determined the behaviour of the constituents of the Janata coalition. The election results clearly indicated that the BLD-JS were the most dominant section of the party. Although officially, their separate strength is not present, according to certain tentative assessments, the BLD-JS secured more than 250 seats⁶⁴ out of a total of 352 which the Janata coalition has got in the U.P. Assembly.

The BLD-JS alignment created a counter alignment amongst the minor constituents, like the Congress (O) and the CFD within the Janata coalition itself. This was clearly reflected in the selection of leadership. Ram Naresh Yadav backed by the BLD-JS combine defeated Congress (O)-CFD backed Ram Dhan. In June 1977, Ram Naresh Yadav formed his government. Moreover, the dominance of the BLD-JS group was also reflected in the selection of ministers. This created resentment amongst the smaller parties. At one stage, many MLAs planned to form a new party and also that they would try to form a coalition government with the Congress, the -----

64. According to different sources, a tentative strength of different groups was as follows: BLD-150, JS-107 (*Dainik Jagran*, Kanpur, June 20, 1977); BLD-JS=252 (*National Herald*), quoted in Saxena, Kiran, "Janata Party Politics in India: A Case Study of Uttar Pradesh (1977-79)", in Sundar Ram, D. (ed.), *Readings in Indian Parliamentary Opposition*, Delhi, Kanishka, 1996, p. 273.

CPI and independents."⁶⁵ The difference between the BLD-JS backed Ram Naresh Yadav and the dissidents backed by the Congress (O)-CFD and the supporters of Chandrashekhkar was growing. The issue which accentuated the situation was that of alleged attempt by the Congress (O)-CFD and Chandrashekhkar group to encourage defection from the Congress in order to strengthen their position which the BLD-JS feared would weaken their position within the Janata Party.⁶⁶

Moreover, the BLD-JS alignment witnessed a break up with the assertiveness^{of} Charan Singh's BLD through Kisan rallies. Charan Singh fully supported reservation for the backward castes, which was not favoured by the Jana Sangh, which feared that its social support base within upper castes might get eroded.⁶⁷ Owing to these deeper differences, the BLD and JS drifted from each other which of course brought the BLD closer to CFD. Now a new realignment emerged within the Janata Party. The BLD-CFD closeness resulted in the Congress (O)-Jana Sangh and Chandrashekhkar group forming another alliance. The Jana Sangh, however,

65. Reportedly, 150 MLAs were planning to quite, *ibid*, p.260.

66. *ibid*, p. 264.

67. Hasan, Zoya, n.13, pp. 185-187.

faced criticism from some sections⁶⁸ of the Janata Party for its alleged link with the RSS which however became a critical issue in defining the JS's relationship with other constituents of the Janata Party. Within these situations of alignments and counter-alignments within the Janata, the Chief Minister asked for resignation of four ministers including two each from the JS and the BLD. This annoyed the Jana Sangh and its other ministers resigned. The Jana Sangh joined the dissidents to oust Ram Naresh Yadav. In February 1979, Yadav had to quit after losing the vote of confidence.

Banarasi Das Gupta was elected the leader to head the Janata Party after the resignation of R.N. Yadav. He got support from the BLD, the Congress (O) and sections of the CFD. IN fact, his election showed cross-voting within Janata coalition vis-a-vis, different constituents. The issue of secularism vs. communalism came to the fore and the BLD-CFD group became critical of the Jana Sangh. It is pertinent to note that on the Appropriation Bill, on March 9, 1979, the Jana Sangh voted against the government but it was saved by one section of the Congress supporting the Banarasi Das Gupta government. Moreover, the changes at the national level party competition has its bearing on the

68. Leaders like Madhu Limaye and Raj Narain criticised Jana Sangh for its dual linkagewith the RSS as well as the Janata Party. See Saxena, Kiran, n.64, p.264

State level also. The division of the Janata Party into Janata and Janata (Secular) after the split created a new situation. In August 1979, the entire Cabinet of Banarasi Das Gupta resolved to join the Janata (Secular). The fall of the Janata Government at the Centre brought Mrs. Indira Gandhi into power who dissolved the Janata ruled State Governments on the pretext that a fresh mandate was required in the wake of Lok Sabha Elections and changes thereof. As a result, Banarasi Das Gupta ministry was sacked, bringing the end of the Janata experiment in the State.

From the point of view of party competition, the Janata party belied the normative perspective of a party and remained a conglomerate of its erstwhile constituents. Moreover, the two factions - the BLD and the Jana Sangh by virtue of their strength tried to dominate by forging an informal alliance amongst themselves much to the resentment of other constituents. Thus, the inter-group competition between the erstwhile parties of the Janata Party and informal alliances amongst them to counter other components provided the basis of party behaviour. The Charan Singh's BLD and the Jana Sangh drifted on the issue of reservation, the Jana Sangh faced criticism for its linkage with the RSS. This shows inter-group rivalry remained despite their coming on a single platform. In fact, the Janata experiment with its inter-group rivalry can be likened to the erstwhile SVD

experiment minus the CPI.⁶⁹ Despite merging into one party the erstwhile constituents of the Janata failed to lose their separate identity which is important for a party. As a result, after its break up they regained their previous identities though with changed names.

With the breakdown of the Janata experiment and its subsequent fragmentation led to proliferation of parties and multilateral competition. Charan Singh's new party named itself as Janata (secular-Charan Singh) which again renamed itself as Lok Dal after some time. The Bhartiya Jana Sangh (BJS) renamed itself as Bhartiya Janata Party and the socialists floated the Janata Party, Janata Party (Secular-Raj Narain), etc. This phase witnessed return of the Congress dominance though in a 'transformed' way as discussed earlier. Charan Singh's Janata Party (SC) which relied on the support base of rich peasantry of upper Doab fared well and secured 59 seats (13.9%) in 1980 and in 1985 renamed. Lok Dal secured 84 seats (19.8%). All other parties worked on the margin. It is important to note that different incarnations of Charan Singh's Party tried to forge a support base of Jats, Yadavs, Kurmis, etc., in the name of backward castes. But internal differentiation within the backward caste category put limit on caste based

69. *ibid*, p. 272.

mobilization.⁷⁰ As a result, no viable opposition could emerge and even coalition politics of opposition parties failed to provide an alternative to the Congress which has a social coalition of 'upper castes-Harijans-Minorities' etc. This was the limitation of Lohiate strategy also. The socialists who attempted to mobilize small, marginal and landless farmers also failed because of failure to forge an alliance of all like-minded parties like the PSP, the CPI, the RPI, etc. Thus, by mid-1980s, Uttar Pradesh has exhausted its potential which seemed prospective in 1970, to provide a viable party competition of two or three parties.

After 1985, political process in Uttar Pradesh has witnessed emergence of new social groups with parties of their independent backing. The BSP is one of them which relies on the support of dalits who have asserted themselves by rejecting parties to which they have hitherto been attached. The BJP have resorted to the strategy of mobilizing people on the basis of religious idiom of 'hindutva' which stands for creating a homogeneous support base surpassing caste identities. Presence of multiple parties renders the party system in Uttar Pradesh fragmented and fluid. More so, present day political process in Uttar Pradesh has witnessed crystallization of political conflict expressed in terms of opposition of backward castes against

70. Hasan, Zoya, n. 13, p. 185.

the dominance of the upper castes⁷¹ and now opposition of dalits against their exploitation.⁷²

The period of 1985-95 is unique so far as mobilization and politicisation of dalits is concerned. It is not only mobilization but also self-assertion. Earlier, the Congress Party has mobilized the dalits especially the Harijans as part of its 'rainbow coalition' and that too through 'vertical mobilization'. The socio-economic structure rendered them as political dependents being mobilized as a part of patron-client relationship. This restricted their independent assertion and self-made political choices. Moreover, the Republican Party of India and the Dalit Panthers also tried to mobilize the dalits independently of the Congress. But they failed precisely because of the massive presence of the Congress and its 'rainbow coalition' as well as due to the lack of political consciousness amongst the dalits. More so, the Congress also resorted to the politics of cooption of the RPI leaders.⁷³

The contemporary political process, however, witnessed efforts at independent mobilization of the dalits. The very

71. *ibid*, p. 179.

72. Ramaseshan, Radhika, n.28.

73. The prominent RPI leader, Chedi Lal Sathi, was successfully coopted by the Congress in the 1970s thereby weakening the RPI. See, Ramakrishnan, Venkitesh, "A Formidable Force", *Frontline*, January 28, 1994.

operation of the democratic process and the changes it has brought, has led to rising consciousness of the lower strata of society. The BSP and its precursor the Dalit Shoshit Samaj Sangharsh Samiti (DS-4) champions the cause of dalits. In fact, their emergence behind the BSP adds a new dimension to the existing political conflict in the State. The BSP is, in fact, trying to forge alliance of the dalits, the STs and the minorities and also the lower strata of the backward castes which, according to the BSP constitute the 'bahujan' (the majority). Nevertheless, the competition emerges because of the fact that parties like the Samajwadi Party, the BJP, etc. are also trying to win this section of the society. Moreover, the differentiation of the backward castes⁷⁴ into Yadavs and non-Yadavs also brings competition amongst parties like the SP, the BSP, the BJP, etc., Furthermore, the division of the minorities between the SP and the BSP as well as the JD, the upper castes between the BJP and the Congress also play crucial role in party competition. Given the fact that there is limitation on 'polarized mobilization' that is mobilization of specific

74. The backward castes broadly includes, Yadavs, Jats, Kurmis, Koeris, Lodhs, etc., who are upwardly mobile. While the Yadavs are largely behind the S.P., the Jats are divided between the BJP and the JD. The Kurmis, Koeris and Lodhs constitutes floating votes. See, Bidwai, Prafulla, "The Drama in U.P.", *Frontline*, June 30, 1995; Misra, Amresh, "Kurmis and Koeris: The Emerging Third Factor", *Economic and Political Weekly*, January 4-11, 1997, pp. 22-23.

castes so far as electoral success is concerned, all parties are trying to enlist cross-section of the people behind them in order to expand their support base. This has resulted of late in strategy by parties to "construct the electorate as a collection of ethnic (identities based on caste and religion) blocs and sought to expand its vote share by targetting certain blocs and ignoring others."⁷⁵

These strategies of parties to broad base their support bases have also reflected into coalition politics. Coalition politics in the nineties presents not only an attempt to capture power but also to expand their social support bases. But given fluidity and uncertainty in the social bases and their commitments, alignments and realignments amongst parties become a constant phenomenon. The attempts of parties like the SP, the BSP and the JD is to forge a broader alliance of the BCs, the dalits and minorities while the BJP despite its limitations is trying to forge a coalition of upper castes, non-Yadav BCs, and sections of dalits.⁷⁶ Within these strategies of political parties must be located the coalition politics of 1990s in the State of Uttar Pradesh. The SP-BSP coalition hailed as a triumph of the BCs-dalits social alliance which lasted for nearly one-and-a-half year gave way to a totally different

75. Chandra, Kanchan and Parmar, Chandrika, n. 17, p.214.

76. Bidwai, Prafulla, n.74.

realignment between the BSP and the BJP which though broke up after some time has again come up in 1997.

The 1993 elections witnessed a bilateral competition between the BJP and the SP-BSP coalition because the presence of the Janata Dal and the Congress was restricted to some regions only.⁷⁷ The alliance between the SP and the BSP was constructed as a formidable force so far its social base was concerned, which consists of the SCs, the BCs and the minorities. This political alliance represented a formidable strategy which has prospect to go beyond the limitations put by the earlier strategy of mobilizing only backward castes vis-a-vis the BKD/BLD type. The SP-BSP coalition launched its journey with certain objectives. The coalition committed itself to fight for secularism and weaken the communal forces represented largely by the BJP; it proclaimed it would fight for social justice and the uplift of the downtrodden Scheduled Castes, backward communities including the minorities. Nevertheless, the election results catapulted a fractured mandate and the coalition got 178 seats while the BJP got 176. However, parties like the JD, the Congress and the communists -----

77. The Janata Dal has respectable presence in upper Doab where it competes with the BJP; the Congress in Uttarakhand where it competes with the BJP and also in upper Doab, Avadh and Bundelkhand, etc. In 1993 elections; the JD got 22.4% of votes in upper Doab while the Congress 34.5% of votes in Uttrakhand. See, Banerjee, Ashis, "New Equations : U.P. Votes for Social Justice", *Frontline*, January 28, 1994.

extended their support to the coalition.⁷⁸ As a result, with the outside support of the above parties, the SP-BSP coalition government was formed in December 1993. It is obvious that notwithstanding pre-elections multi-party competition, the post-election inter-party competition got transformed into a polarized contest between the BJP and the rest of the parties on the issue of secularism vs. communalism.

Nevertheless, differences amongst the parties supporting the SP-BSP government kept on emerging from time to time. For example, the Congress opposed government's move to abolish the sales tax and the Essential Services Maintenance Act (ESMA), the CPI and the CPM opposed government's decision to privatise eight sugar mills, the JD and the Congress resented the repealing of the Goonda Act.⁷⁹ Notwithstanding the fact that the SP-BSP coalition was hailed as an alliance of the backward castes and the dalits, it is important to note that certain basic contradictions remained within the coalition. Firstly, while the BSP is particularly oriented towards the dalits, the SP seeks to

78. Ramakrishnan, Venkatesh, "Charting the Course : Mulayam Singh's Government Gets Going", *Frontline*, January 28, 1994, p. 12.

79. *ibid*, pp. 12-13.

include backwards, dalits and minorities.⁸⁰ Secondly, the backward class-dalit social conflict is a potential problem for any such political alliance between the SP and the BSP.⁸¹ The contradiction remained there despite political alliance. In fact, this political alliance was never extended to the level of social relationships. Thirdly, while both the SP and the BSP try to gain the SCs base of the congress in their favour, the SP also aims at broad basing its support by cutting into the dalit support base of other parties. The BSP being the largest beneficiary of the dalit vote would never allow its base to be eroded by its own coalition partner. These contradictions were the part of the SP-BSP coalition government.

The prospect of emergence of a formidable political alternative in the form of SP-BSP coalition based on Dalit-BCs-Minority social base was belied. Despite the fact that the coming together of SP-BSP has benefitted both the parties by consolidating this social constituency which otherwise might have got fragmented, they failed to capitalise on it. It would be interesting to note that

80. Ramakrishnan, Venkitesh, "Survivors all: As U.P. moves from crisis to crisis", *Frontline*, August 12, 1994, p. 33.

81. On December 24, 1993, at Selwanpur in Fatehpur district, six dalits of the Kanjar community were lynched by a group of backward caste Kurmis. See, Ramakrishnan, Venkitesh, "Scene in U.P.", *Frontline*, January 28, 1994.

personalised leadership of parties has put great hurdle in the way of mobilization and consolidation of social support bases. This is evident in case of SP-BSP coalition. The leadership of both the parties failed to coordinate in a way that they could consolidate the support base.

Moreover, the strategy adopted by Mulayam Singh towards other supporting parties like the JD and the CPI as well as his partner BSP, in order to expand his base, made these parties suspicious towards the S.P. Mulayam Singh encouraged defections from the Janata Dal and the CPI. The strategy adopted by Mulayam Singh towards the BSP was of "creating a supportive block within that party".⁸² The matter got further aggravated when the BSP minister Masood Ahmad openly criticised the BSP leadership and sided with Mulayam Singh claiming to have enjoyed support of more than forty BSP MLAs.⁸³ In June-July, 1994, this precipitated the tension and Kanshi Ram, the BSP leader blamed Mulayam Singh of engineering defection from the BSP. The BSP organized an "anti-defection" rally in Lucknow on July 10, 1994. Nevertheless, the tension was diffused with the removal of Masood from the official residence who had earlier resigned from the ministry.

82. Ramakrishnan, V., "Toppling to conquer : A coalition of competing ambitions", *Frontline*, June 30, 1995, pp.9-13.

83. *ibid*, p.9.

Not only the fear of defections at the legislative-political level, the BSP was also fearful of losing its support base of sections of dalits and Muslims to the S.P.⁸⁴ The BSP adopted a two-pronged strategy towards Mulayam Singh's S.P. On the one hand, it tried to enjoy the benefits of power and on the other it kept on criticizing the S.P. in order to protect its support base.⁸⁵ Mayawati constantly interfered with the government and went to the extent of declaring that she would personally supervise the working of the government. There were also problems regarding the replacement of the Chief Secretary T.S.R. Subramaniam whom the BSP wanted to replace. The fact that the two coalition partners were not working as a composite unit on the basis of a common programme was also evident from the distribution of portfolios. The portfolios were so reallocated as to put SP and BSP state ministers in departments headed by their own party colleagues.⁸⁶ Moreover, the uneasiness between the coalition partners got accentuated after the massive success registered by the S.P. in Panchayat-Zila Parishad elections in May, 1995. The BSP felt that by remaining in coalition, it is going to lose its

84. Ramakrishnan, V., "Reprieve in U.P.", *Frontline*, July 29, 1994, p.10.

85. Ramakrishnan, V., n. 82, p. 9.

86. Ramakrishnan, V., "Another Reprieve : Mulayam Singh bows again to BSP pressure", *Frontline*, September 9, 1994, p.118.

political base. The BSP had planned to "form government with the outside support of the BJP" and in the long run more closer to the JD.⁸⁷ The BSP withdrew its support in the first week of June, 1995.

The rupture between the SP-BSP was described as a "set back to forces of social justice" and a breakdown of "historical coalition of backwards, dalits and Muslims".⁸⁸ The prime beneficiary of this rupture was the BJP. On the one hand it disrupted any consolidation of this social coalition represented by the SP-BSP and on the other aligned politically with the BSP in order to endear itself with dalits. The SP-BSP coalition had benefitted by drawing certain section of intermediate castes like Lodhi Rajputs, Kurmis, Khusiwahas and Pals⁸⁹ which hitherto were supporting the BJP. Now, after the break, the Kurmis, Koeris and Lodhi Rajputs in Eastern U.P. tend to support the BJP. However, it is not only the intervention of the BJP in the coalition politics that led to realignment between the BSP and the BJP, but Mulayam Singh's strategy of making inroads into his partner's bases also went into creating the rupture.

87. Ramakrishnan, V., "The Decline and Fall", *Frontline*, June 30, 1995, p.5.

88. Mustafa, Seema, "Set back to forces of social justice", *Mainstream*, July 29, 1995, pp.11-12.

89. Reports from Kasganj, Manjhanpur, Ghazipur etc. supported this shift of loyalty by 'Sanskritized castes', see Ramakrishnan, Venkitesh, "Gaining Ground", *Frontline*, July 1, 1994, pp.33-34.

Besides encouraging defections, the S.P. also tried to make inroads into social support base of the BSP by courting castes like Valmikis, Pasis, Kumhars and Mallas, etc.⁹⁰ It can be added that notwithstanding the factor of personalised leadership, the rupture was also necessitated by the compulsion to sustain BSP's support base.

The SP-BSP rupture led to realignment between BSP-BJP catapulting Mayawati as the Chief Minister in June, 1995. The BJP supported the minority BSP government from outside. Although, it is not difficult to explain this realignment from the BJP's point of view, however, the BSP's approach reveals opportunism. The BJP in its attempt to forge a classic Congress type broader coalition was trying to win over the support of non-Yadav backward castes, Dalits, etc. and consolidate with upper caste support base.⁹¹ By its alliance with the BSP, the BJP was trying to send signal to the dalits that the party is committed to protect their interests. The BJP also supported Mayawati government in U.P. with hopes of forming alliances with the BSP in other States also and also for the Lok Sabha elections. On the other hand, the BSP did not gain much from BSP-BJP alliance. It led to suspicion amongst Muslim voters of the BSP. Even though, the breakaway group under Raj Bahadur who had

90. Ramakrishnan, V., n. 82, p. 9.

91. Ramakrishnan, V., "Burdened with power", *Frontline*, July 14, 1995, p.118.

defected earlier, came back to the BSP after the formation of the ministry, dissension within the BSP continued after the withdrawal of support to the SP. Ram Lakhani Verma, a former minister, refused to follow Kanshi Ram's decisions.

The BSP-BJP alliance had its own contradictions and their strategies to consolidate respective support bases ran counter to each other. The major strain for the BSP was BJP's attempt "to eat into our Dalit vote bank" as stated by Mayawati.⁹² The BJP also failed to dictate terms for the coming Lok Sabha elections and realised the contradictions which the BSP's effort to organize Melas has brought.⁹³ The BJP withdrew its support on October 17, 1995. The political situation afterwards has not changed much except for the fact that the fractured mandate of 1996 elections presents a fluid party system and as a result BSP-BJP again has combined to form coalition government on rotational basis. It is still to be seen whether this coalition transcends its contradictions.

The political process in the State of Uttar Pradesh has shown its peculiarity despite its linkages with the national political process. Although in most State, a two-party

92. "Mayawati's interview with Frontline", see *Frontline*, November 17, 1995, p.129.

93. The BSP organized social Melas in the name of Ambedkar (to assert dalit liberation), Sahu Maharaj, (to mollify Kurmi community), etc. However, the proposed Periyar Mela drew opposition from the BJP, the VHP, etc. See *Frontline*, October 20, 1995, p.26.

system is emerging, U.P. is peculiar for its fluidity and multi-lateral party competition. The decline of the Congress dominant party system has given way to competition but to a patternless inter-party behaviour. After 1967, U.P. presented a case where a credible opposition was emerging within the Congress dominant system. In the seventies, tri-lateral competition climaxed in a bi-lateral competition. However, in the eighties the bi-lateral competition collapsed and resulted in fragmentation of the Janata Party. The present situation is one of instability and changing realignments amongst parties. The interaction between coalition behaviour and party system is very close. In fact, coalition behaviour is reflection of these factors of instability, patternlessness and shifting realignments in the party system. Nevertheless, the post-1967 U.P. political process has witnessed mobilization of different sections of society at different point of time. Whenever a new section of society is mobilized and enter into politics, it addes a new dimension to political conflict. This was true for the OBCs in the 1960s & 1970s and is true for dalits in the 1980s & 1990s. A linkage between instability and their entry is established. It is also important to see that the breakdown of the national consensus also leads to fluidity in inter-party competition. Moreover, factors like defections and presence of independent candidates further prolong this instability. Parties having less committed

support base compete for consolidation of their respective support bases. These factors have their interaction with party competition and coalition politics in Uttar Pradesh.

CHAPTER 4

PARTY SYSTEM AND COALITION POLITICS : BIHAR (1967-1995)

Like the state of Uttar Pradesh, party system in Bihar too was characterised by the 'one-party dominant Congress system' till 1967. The previous three elections before 1967 were termed as 'maintaining elections' whereby the Congress party reaffirmed its dominant position. Nevertheless, the 1967 election was unique in the sense that it heralded the breakdown of the Congress dominance and to that extent represented the realignment of non-Congress forces. Appropriately, the 1967 elections has been called a 'realigning elections'.¹ The hitherto non-alternating party competition was transformed into an alternating one, though creating fluid and unstable alignments. The history of evolution of Party System in Bihar in post-1967 period has been one of shift from 'dominance' to 'competition'. However, unlike the state of Uttar Pradesh, Bihar has shown a relative stability in party competition in 1990s. The Janata Dal has emerged as a major party which provides pivot for governmental stability. The Janata Dal boasts of rallying the support of a combination of social forces. The

1. Prasad, R.C., "Bihar : Social Polarization and Political Instability", in Iqbal Narain (ed), *State Politics in India*, Meerut, Meenakshi Prakashan, 1976, p.52.

dominant constituents of this social coalition are the Yadavs, the Muslims and some sections of the dalits. The absence of relative fragmentation of the dalit votes because of the absence of the BSP in Bihar is an added advantage for the JD which proclaims to fight for social justice and the downtrodden.

In fact, evolution of party system is conspicuous by not only the dominance of the Congress party but also periodic attempts of the non-Congress opposition to displace the former. From 1967 to 1971, different combinations of parties tried to provide an alternative and during the course many coalition governments were formed. Again, the post emergency witnessed revival of the opposition by coming together of non-Congress non-communist parties at a single platform of the 'Janata Party'. This time, the Congress lost badly and the party competition was rendered bilateral. A 'two-party situation'² created because of this phenomena, however, did not last long and again reverted to the Congress dominance. Nevertheless, the late eighties and nineties has brought another stage of party competition whereby Congress has almost disappeared from the electoral scene giving rise to other parties like the Janata Dal, the BJP, etc.

2. Joshi, Ram and Kritidev Desai, "Towards a more competitive party system in India", *Asian Survey*, XVIII(11), Nov., 1978, 1091-1116.

Nonetheless, Bihar like Uttar Pradesh, but unlike other States, shows no sign of emergence of a bi-polar party system.³ Most of the State level party systems present a bi-polar character. The factors which would influence and direct the party competition are consolidation or fragmentation of the Janata Dal in Bihar,⁴ the inroads made by the BSP in dalit votes, rise and consolidation of the BJP, rallying of the Koeris and Kurmis behind the Samata Party, etc. Present situation despite stability provided by the Janata Dal shows signs of instability and changing realignments of forces in Bihar.

4.1. PARTY SYSTEM IN BIHAR : FROM DOMINANCE TO DISPLACEMENT, 1967-95

Till 1967, the dominance of the Congress party provided pattern of inter-party interaction in Bihar. The dominance was most pronounced in the number of seats obtained by the Congress in the Assembly elections. In all elections before 1967, the Congress party obtained more than 55% of seats.⁵

3. Manor, James, "Regional Parties in Federal Systems : India in a Comparative Perspective", in Arora, Balveer & D. Verney (eds.), *Multiple Identities in a Single State: Indian Federalism in a Comparative Perspective*, Op. cit., p.116.
4. The Janata Dal in Bihar has split, the Chief Minister Laloo Prasad has launched a new party, Rashtriya Janata Dal, *The Hindu*, July 6, 1997.
5. According to Angela Burger, if a party manages more than 56% of seats, the multi-party system would be 'one-party dominant' system; Burger, Angela S., *Opposition in a Dominant Party system*, op.cit., pp.5-6.

More so, there was absence of any credible opposition which could at least put any challenge. Moreover, no single opposition party maintained its position or improved its tally. Thus, till 1967, Congress dominance was matched with non-viable opposition. The following table reveals the relative position of the Congress and the first and second largest oppositions. It also shows the gap between the Congress and the opposition which validates the criteria of dominance applied by Burger, which is securing more than 56% of seats by a single party.⁶

TABLE-4.1 Percentage of seats of the Congress and the two largest oppositions

| | 1952 (%) | 1957 (%) | 1962 (%) |
|---------------------------|-------------|--------------|---------------|
| Congress | 72.7 | 66 | 58 |
| First Largest Opposition | 10 (JKP) | 9.8 (PSP) | 15.7 (SWA) |
| Second Largest Opposition | 7 (Soc) | 9.4 (JKP) | 9.1 (PSP) |

Source: Compiled from Shankar Bose & V.B. Singh : State Assembly Elections, 1952-85.

The above figures reveal the fact that Congress was maintaining dominance without any danger of rise of an opposition. No single opposition during these elections maintained their respective positions in the next elections.

6. *ibid.*

This shows fluidity and instability in opposition. Nevertheless, the combined strength of the two largest opposition parties stood between 17% and 25% of the total seats. The dominance of the Congress went hand in hand with fragmentation of the opposition.

However, the Fourth Assembly Elections changed the situation and though the Congress managed to secure its position as a major party with nearly 40% of seats, it lost the dominant non-alternating position. The strategy of combining all forces hostile to the Congress into one group was the basis of all-opposition front. Lohia's thesis of non-Congressism⁷ climaxed into Congress being displaced from power though not from its position of being the major party. Moreover, not only the thesis of non-Congressism worked but it was also added by the factional rivalry of the Congress. While the Rajput-Kayastha faction has worked well, in the sixties the leadership of K.B. Sahay alienated the Bhumihar faction.⁸ It will be seen, Bhumihars in general tilted towards the CPI and 'a section of middle and small peasantry' almost deserted the Congress. More so, it will be obvious from the fact that in March 1968, many Congressmen left the Congress and launched Lok Tantrik

7. Thesis of Non-Congressism was to avoid fragmentation of opposition votes which otherwise benefits the Congress.

8. Mishra, Girish and Brijkumar Pandey, *Sociology and Economics of Casteism in India : A study of Bihar*, Delhi, Pragati Publications, 1996, p.325.

Congress (LTC) which included a number of important Bhumihars.⁹ It is also appropriate to note that after 1967 elections, the factional rivalry within the Congress had surfaced which led to Mahamaya Prasad Sinha leaving the Congress with many MLAs and floating the Jana Kranti Dal in 1966.¹⁰ Thus, 'non-polarized' disintegration of the Congress added to the gathering momentum of the non-Congressism. However, the opposition before 1967 elections, too, was not organized and splits, mergers and disintegrations were common features. The Swatantra in Bihar disintegrated and a section of it sought integration into the Congress, the PSP split up into three sections, one maintaining as PSP, other two going to Congress and SSP.

Nevertheless, the opposition became successful in dislodging the Congress from power with its combined effort. In 1967 elections, the Congress had to face competition with combined opposition which avoided the pitfall of fragmentation of opposition votes to the benefit of the Congress. The period of 1967-72 presents a period of intense competition. But this 'highly competitive' situation is patternless so far as inter-party interaction is concerned. A non-structured opposition fails to provide alternative to

9. *ibid*, p.341.

10. Jha, Chetkar, "An Exercise in Futility : A Report on Bihar", in K. Karunakaran (ed), *Coalition Governments in India : Problems and Prospects*, op.cit., p.255.

the Congress and gives the latter opportunity to regain its position. The relative position of the Congress vis-a-vis the two largest opposition parties between 1967 and 1972 reveals how there is an absence of a credible opposition even after the Congress was relatively faced with challenge of combined opposition.

TABLE-4.2 Party positions between 1967-72 in Bihar Assembly, per centage seats

| | 1967 | 1969 | 1972 |
|---------------------------|---------------|---------------|----------------------|
| Congress | 40 | 37 | 52.8 |
| First Largest Opposition | 21.5 (SSP) | 16.5 (SSP) | 11 (CPI) |
| Second Largest Opposition | 8 (BJS) | 10.7 (BJS) | 10.4 (Soc. Party) |

Source: Compiled from Shankar Bose & V.B. Singh : State Assembly Elections-1952-85.

It is obvious that despite the fact that Congress has lost its dominant position, none of the opposition party was able to consolidate itself. While in 1967 and 1969, the SSP enjoyed the position of largest opposition, it showed decline and got replaced by the CPI in 1972. Similarly, the BJP, though occupied the position of the second largest opposition party in 1967 and 1969, its place was taken over by the Socialist Party in 1972. Thus, the late sixties and early seventies presents a case where party system in Bihar was fluid and disintegrated. While the Congress declined, the opposition also presented a picture of fragmentation.

The opposition was fragmented because of presence of various groups due to splits and formations of parties thereof. For example, two groups which came out of the Congress as separate parties namely the Jana Kranti Dal and the Lok Tantrik Congress played crucial role in the coalitions. Similarly, B.P. Mandal, an SSP member came out of the party on difference with Lohia and floated a separate party called the Shoshit Dal. The Shoshit Dal also participated in various coalition governments. The Raja of Ramgarh who was a part of Bhartiya Kranti Dal¹¹ left it and revived his old Janata Party. In fact, the opposition parties with divergent orientations included parties with left-to-the centre, right-to-the centre and of centrist orientations. They all competed with each other more than they did with the Congress.

During the coalitional phase of 1967-72, party interaction was patternless and fluid. The diversity amongst opposition parties, looseness of organizational boundaries of parties leading to defection and launching of new parties and presence of small parties contributed to this fluidity. During this period as many as nine ministries were formed including one minority government backed by the Congress. In fact, out of the nine governments including the minority one, as many as two were backed by

11. *ibid*, p.255.

the Congress while it participated in the three coalition governments. Thus, it is obvious that the Congress with the help of minor parties, too contributed to instability. Nevertheless, 1972 elections resulted in Congress getting majority and forming its government.

The period of late of 1960s and early 1970s in Bihar reflects both fragmentation and competition in the party system. A general tendency which can be gauged from the dynamics of this period is that inner-party divisions resulted in formation of new parties like the formation of Jana Kranti Dal and Lok Tantrik Congress out of the Congress party, revival of erstwhile parties which had merged earlier with other parties like the Jharkhand party from the Congress, the Janata Party (of Raja of Ramgarh) from the Bhartiya Kranti Dal, the Shoshit Dal from the SSP. It is obvious that parties like the Congress and the Samayukta Socialist Party (SSP) in Bihar represented the first and the second largest legislature parties after the 1967 elections. The organizational incohesiveness of these parties also added to fluidity in the party system.¹² In fact, the period of 1967 to 1972 witnessed formation and revival of various parties. Six parties, the BKD, the LTC, the Shoshit Dal, the Jharkhand party, the Hul Jharkhand party, the

12. Brass, P.R., "Coalition Politics in North India", in Brass, P.R., *Caste, Faction and Party*, Op. cit., pp.118-119.

Janata Party were born during this period. Interestingly, between 1967 to 1969 they played role in the coalition politics and their participation in the 1969 elections resulted in a fragmented electoral mandate. Moreover, it can be added that the situation got terminated with the Congress regaining its dominant position in 1972.

The period of 1972-77, however, presents the case of rise of opposition movement in Bihar which mobilized the opposition against the Congress on a massive scale. Jaya Prakash Narayan played important role in orchestrating the movement. He had given a call for a 'total revolution' meaning bringing complete change in various aspects of the public life.¹³ Jaya Prakash Narayan too followed Lohia's thesis of non-Congressism as a tactical strategy to avoid Congress enjoying a dominant position "on the basis of a mere plurality".¹⁴ The formation of the Janata Party at the all India level, had a similar consequence for the state of Bihar. The three major parties - the Congress (O), the Samyukta Socialist and the Jana Sangh merged together to become the Janata Party.¹⁵ This was a positive gain so far as opposition unity was concerned because the mobilization

13. Limaye, Madhu, *Birth of Non-Congressism, Op. cit.*, p.450.
14. *ibid*, p.460.
15. Blair, Harry, "Electoral Support and Party Institutionalization in Bihar : Congress and the Opposition, 1977-1985", *Op. cit.*, p.125.

brought by the JP movement of the forces opposing the Congress would have gone in vain if non-Congress parties had failed to come on a single platform. The accompanying Table-4.3 reveals the relation between dominance of the Congress and fragmentation of the opposition.

TABLE-4.3 Percentage of seats and votes obtained by the Congress in 1972 and 1977 as well as by the opposition when they are fragmented and when they got united in 1972 and 1977 respectively

| | 1972 | | 1977 | |
|---------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| | Votes (%) | Seats (%) | Votes (%) | Seats (%) |
| Congress | 33.1 | 52.8 | 23.5 | 27.6 |
| Congress (O) | 14.8 | 9.4 | 42.7# | 66# |
| Samyukta Socialists | 16.4 | 10.4 | | |
| BJS | 11.7 | 7.9 | | |
| Total | 42.9* | 27.7* | | |

Source: Compiled from Shankar Bose and V.B. Singh, State Assembly Elections, 1952-85.

* Represents total of three non-Congress Parties

Combined strength of 'Janata coalitions' which included the three Parties - Congress(O), Socialist, BJS in 1977

From Table-4.3, it is apparent that the relationship between Congress dominance and the opposition in electoral arena is one of disunity and fragmentation of the opposition. In 1972, the Congress obtained around 53% of seats by securing 33% of votes, while the opposition got

only 28% of seats with 43% of votes added together. This gap resulted because of oppositional fragmentation. In 1977, this benefit was withdrawn from the Congress, by the opposition. As a result, the 'Janata Coalition' obtained nearly 43% of votes but this time seat share rose upto 66% while the Congress got 23.6% of votes and a mere 17.6% of seats. This also reveals that while the support base of the Congress declined between 1972 and 1977 by nearly 10%, the Opposition i.e. the three parties separately and combined together at two occasions respectively got constant support. This leads to the inference that the Opposition in Bihar between 1972 to 1977 had opportunity to institutionalise itself and put an alternative to the Congress.¹⁶

Nevertheless, the 1980s witnessed the Congress bouncing back into power and the Opposition getting fragmented into different parties bearing, though in a changed way, their erstwhile orientations. The fragmentation of the Janata Party resulted into formation of nearly five parties -- Janata Party, Janata Party (Secular Charan Singh), Janata Party (Secular Raj Narain), the Bhartiya Janata Party, the Lok Dal, etc. The BJP carried the legacy of the pre-Janata, Bhartiya Jana Sangh, the Samyukta Socialists, the BLD group of pre-1977 revived itself first as JNP (SC) and then as LKD, etc. Some of the erstwhile Congress (O) members and

16. *ibid.*, p. 127.

those who claimed to carry the legacy of JP continued to be called as Janata Party (JNP/JP).¹⁷

Thus, 1980s witnessed fragmentation of the Opposition and proliferation of several parties which led to fragmentation of their support base also. Although the Congress under Indira Gandhi had lost its support base to a large extent, it secured 34.2% and 39.3% of vote share in 1980 and 1985 respectively. Although, this performance of the Congress did not match with its pre-1967 performances, it nevertheless certainly represented a resurgence of the Congress over the period of 1967-77 wherein the Congress has to compete with opposition except in 1972 when it fared relatively well. The non-Congress parties included not only the fragmented units of the erstwhile Janata coalition but also parties like the two Communist parties, the newly formed Jharkhand Mukti-Morcha with support in the tribal region of Chhotanagpur, etc. Thus, post-1979 period in Bihar politics presents recovery and relative dominance of the Congress only to decline afterwards giving way to parties like the Janata Dal and the BJP. 1980-85 period presents a case during which Congress faced less intense competition as can be seen from the difference between the Congress and the first and the second largest parties.

17. *ibid.*

From the accompanying table, it can be discerned that the difference of percentage of seats between the Congress and the first largest opposition is large but at the same time, the difference between first largest and second largest opposition is also large. It is also obvious that the Janata Party (Secular Charan Singh) which later renamed as the Lok Dal maintained its second position in the Assembly while the CPI as the third party in 1980 was replaced by the BJP in 1985. In fact, the 1985 position is

Table-4.4 Party Position of the Largest Party and the Largest Opposition - 1980-85 Seats (% age)

| | 1980 | 1985 |
|---------------------------|----------------|----------------|
| Congress | 52.2 | 60.5 |
| First Largest Opposition | 13 (JNPSC)* | 14.2 (LKD)* |
| Second Largest Opposition | 7 (CPI)# | 5 (BJP)# |

Source: Compiled from Shankar Bose and V.B. Singh, State Assembly Elections, 1952-85

* Represents first largest opposition
represents second largest opposition

an indicator of the next stage of party competition in Bihar. After 1985, the LKD became a part of the Janata Dal, while the BJP and the Congress competed with the JD.

The late 1980s once again witnessed attempted to consolidate the fragmented backward castes support base. Parties like the Janata Party, the Lok Dal and V.P. Singh's

Jana Morcha¹⁸ came together to form the Janata Dal. In Bihar, this in effect brought the Yadavs, the Koeris, the Kurmis, etc. into the fold of Janata Dal.¹⁹ The consolidation of the backward castes behind the Janata Dal is paralleled with the `desertion of Muslims, Rajputs, backward castes, and a substantial section of Harijans'²⁰ from the Congress. In fact, the BJP has emerged as an `alternative' to the Congress for most of the upper castes in Bihar. Thus, the 1990 election witnessed contest between the declining Congress, the Janata Dal and the BJP. Moreover, the Janata Dal secured the "support of the two communist parties, IPF, JMM, SCL and independents".²¹ Alliance of these parties with the Janata Dal however reveals the fact that polarization on the issue of social justice and secularism was taking place.

The first half of 1990s (1990-95) has witnessed a tri-lateral competition between the Janata Dal, the Congress and the BJP. In fact, this trend of tri-lateral competition in Bihar had become evident from 1985 itself, as obvious from the Table-4.5.

18. V.P. Singh had left the Congress and formed Jana Morcha in 1987.

19. Mishra, Girish and Brijkumar Pandey, n.8, p. 377.

20. *ibid.*, p. 378.

21. Roy, Ramashray, "Bihar Politics", *Indian Journal of Political Science*, 55 (3) July-September, 1994, pp. 221-230.

TABLE-4.5 Percentage vote and seat share of three largest Parties : 1985-95

| | 1985 | | 1990 | | 1995 | |
|---------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|---------------|----------------|---------------|
| | Vote (%) | Seat (%) | Vote (%) | Seat (%) | Vote (%) | Seat (%) |
| Largest Party | 39.3 (Cong.) | 60.5 (Cong.) | 26.7 (JD) | 37.7 (JD) | 27.6 (JD) | 52.2 (JD) |
| First Largest Opposition | 14.7 (LKD) | 14.2 (LKD) | 24.3 (Cong.) | 22 (Cong.) | 13.1 (BJP) | 12.9 (BJP) |
| Second Largest Opposition | 7.6 (BJP) | 5 (BJP) | 11.4 (BJP) | 12 (BJP) | 16.3 (Cong) | 9.2 (Cong) |

Source: For 1985, Shankar Bose and V.B. Singh : State Assembly Elections 1952-85; for 1990-95; CSDS Data Unit State Assembly Elections 1985-95.

It is apparent that the three parties - the Congress, the BJP and the LKD/JD have been in competition after 1985. While the LKD as the predecessor of the JD was the second largest party in 1985, the JD which included the LKD also, occupies the first position in 1990 and 1995. The BJP has emerged as the second largest party in the Bihar assembly. The Congress party has declined from being the first largest party in 1985 to the third position in 1995. The Congress vote share has declined from 39% in 1985 to a mere 16% in 1995. This reveals the erosion of its support base, hence its deinstitutionalization. The BJP, on the other hand has gained from 7.6% vote in 1985 to around 13% in 1995 assembly elections. In fact, the erosion of Congress social base and its deinstitutionalisation has to some extent, directly

benefited the BJP through the shift of Kayastha and Bhumihaar from the Congress to the BJP.²² Thus, party system in Bihar at present is by and large within the framework of tri-lateral competition. It is obvious that these parties together have secured more than 75% of seats and 60% of votes.

The evolution of party system in Bihar has resulted in the displacement of the Congress from its dominant position. From 1967 to 1977 the socialists and the Jana Sangh occupied the position of the first and the second opposition and the Congress competed with them. 1977 brought a drastic change and Congress was relegated to minor role when the Janata Party obtained 66% of seats. There was a bilateral competition. After 1980 till 1985 Congress established its dominance. However, from 1985 onwards a trend toward three-cornered contest was clear. The Congress, the BJP, the LKD/JD became the important contestants. Now the emerging situation reveals a gradual decline of the Congress relegating it to third position while the BJP has occupied the position of the largest opposition. The Janata Dal under Laloo Prasad Yadav seemed to have consolidated the social coalition of the 'Yadavs, Muslims and SCs',²³ behind him. Despite the desertion of the Kurmis and Koeris who

22. Mishra, Girish & B. Pandey, n.8, p.397.

23. Kumar, Sanjay, "Yadavs, Muslims and SCs voted for Laloo", *Mainstream*, April 29, 1995, pp.18-19.

left the JD to support the newly formed Samata Party, the Janata Dal has a large following of 'small' castes like Harijans, Lohars, Nomas, Dhanuks, Kandus, Kahars, Binds, Mali, Barai, Bari and others".²⁴ Moreso, some of the Koeris also support the Janata Dal.²⁵ Nevertheless, the emerging party competition may take the form of a bi-polar competition if polarization around the JD and the BJP as two axes takes place. Presently, the BJP and the Samata form one pole but though the JD is a major party it has failed to attract secular democratically oriented parties towards itself.

4.2. POLITICS OF COALITION AND PARTY COMPETITION (1967-95)

The period of Congress dominance, in fact, is also seen as the period of dominance of the upper castes - the Brahmans, Kayasthas, Rajputs and Bhumihars in Bihar politics. Since independence upto the Fourth General Elections in Bihar, the upper castes played important role. Although, the Congress successfully coopted 'aspiring politicians from Yadav and Kurmi caste groups',²⁶ they, however, played the role of 'appendages' to the upper

24. Mishra, G. and B. Pandey, n.8, p.396.

25. *ibid*, p.397.

26. Frankel, F.R., "Caste, Land and Dominance in Bihar : Breakdown of the Brahmanical Social Order", in Frankel, F.R. & Rao, M.S.A. (eds.), *Dominance and State Power in Modern India*, *Op. cit.*, p.84.

castes. They in fact helped in mobilizing respective caste groups for electoral success. It is interesting to note that the three backward castes, namely, the Yadavs, Kurmis and Koeris who also constitute the dominant section among the backwards²⁷ had forged a horizontal alliance under the banner of Triveni Sabha in order to press for their Kshatriya status in the social hierarchy. Nevertheless, this stage represents the effort for ritual superiority and does not add much to their political mobilization.

However, the importance of horizontal affiliation of the intermediate castes can't be discounted so far as the mobilization of caste groups in a polity with universal franchise is concerned. In practice, their numerical strength becomes an asset which possesses the potential of deciding electoral outcomes. This helped the Yadav/Ahir caste group "who derived the greatest benefit from the introduction of universal suffrage. In some constituencies their numbers accounted for 25 per cent to 35 per cent of the electorate, sufficient enough to determine the outcome of elections to the Legislative Assembly".²⁸ The Yadavs

27. Harry Blair calls them 'upper backwards' who constitute nearly 19% of the total population. See Blair, H.W., "Rising Kulaks and backward classes in Bihar : Social change in the late 1970s", *Economic and Political Weekly*, January 12, 1980, pp.64-74.

28. Frankel, Francine R., n.26, p.87.

accounted for nearly 11% of total population of the State.²⁹ The horizontal alliance amongst Yadavs, Koeris and Kurmis has its own political and electoral significance.

The 1950s witnessed shift of priorities by those castes vis-a-vis attempts to achieve ritual superiority. Now, with the recommendations of the first Backward Class Commission, 1955 which suggested for preferential treatment in the form of reservation of jobs for 'backward classes', these castes "changed their emphasis from social activities to political mobilization, underlining the need to overcome sub-caste divisions in order to maximize the power of the 'backward' vote".³⁰ Thus, reservation of 60% of posts in government jobs for backward classes became the important rallying point of these castes which not only provided basis for horizontal cohesion but also for non-Congressism. It is appropriate to note that Lohia's Samayukta Socialist Party was committed to secure 60% of posts for 'backward classes'. The Bihar State Backward Class Federation led by R.L. Chandapuri which aimed at "building up a mass membership at the village level to unite the backward communities and the Harijans"³¹ merged with the SSP. Nevertheless, this stage

29: Yadavs constitute the single largest caste group in Bihar. The data is based on 1931 census. See, Mishra, G. & B. Pandey, n.8, p.86.

30. Frankel, Francine R., n.26, p. 86.

31. *ibid*, p.88.

of political mobilization favoured only the backward castes and the Harijans and minorities never became the part of non-Congress mobilizational strategy. They remained with Congress social coalition. This, however, also put limit on the strategy of 'polarized' caste-based mobilization.

In this background of growing political consciousness amongst the intermediate castes in Bihar for asserting their strength and their mobilization for reservation, the politics of non-Congressism in Bihar should be located. Added to this was the thesis of non-Congressism enunciated by Ram Manohar Lohia who had recognized that the 'backward classes could provide an important source of support in the struggle to unseat Congress'. As a result, all hostile forces to the Congress became part of the non-Congress combine.³² In electoral terms parties resorted to seat adjustment for unseating the Congress on the eve of 1967 assembly elections, which spelt the breakdown of the Congress dominance and forming of non-Congress coalition governments.

Meanwhile, it is appropriate to point out that compared to Uttar Pradesh, particularly the area of upper Doab/western Uttar Pradesh which witnessed the impact of the Green revolution as well as politicization of the rich

32. Mishra, G. & B. Pandey, n. 8,

peasants especially the Jats,³³ no such region in Bihar is conspicuous by this phenomena. Though the Kosi region witnessed partial success of the Green revolution,³⁴ it, however, did not contribute to politicization of any particular caste of rich peasants. In U.P., the politicization of rich peasants belonging to dominant intermediate castes led to the political assertion behind the leadership of Charan Singh who played critical role in coalition politics of the State. In Bihar, no such assertion on regional line is seen.

Nevertheless, two factors contributed to the political assertion of the backward castes in Bihar. The abolition of zamindari, though in its truncated form contributed in the emergence of middle landholders who largely belonged to the three castes of 'upper backwards', the Yadavs, the Kurmis and the Koeris. A powerful section of rich peasantry emerged out of them largely owing to linkage of agricultural products with nearby towns through availability of transportation. They resorted to commercial farming for sale in the markets. Secondly, their growing economic clout was added by the numerical strength which play vital role in

33. Hasan, Zoya, "Power and Mobilization : Patterns of Resilience and Change in Uttar Pradesh Politics", in Frankel, Francine R. and Rao, M.S.A. (eds), *Op. cit.*

34. Ladejinsky, Wolf, "Green Revolution in Bihar - The Kosi Area : A Field Trip", *Economic and Political Weekly*, 4 September 1969, pp. A147-A162.

electoral politics. Adult franchise and benefit of abolition of landlordism added to their numerical strength making them in turn, politically consequential³⁵ vis-a-vis the upper caste dominated Congress party. Lohia's SSP provided them with political platform to challenge the upper caste dominance. Thus the 1960s witnessed political mobilization of the upper backward castes in Bihar who have earlier resorted to the practice of 'Sanskritization'.³⁶ Thus, from 1950 to 1960, it was a shift from social mobilization through caste sabhas to political mobilization through caste oriented political parties.

The elections of 1967 for Bihar assembly were held within this background of "emerging polarization between the 'upper' and 'middle' - commonly called 'forward' and 'backward' castes in the State".³⁷ More so, factionalism within the Congress between the Bhumihars, Rajputs and Kayasthas viz., the leadership of K.B. Sahay led to

35. Mishra, G and B. Pandey, n.8, p. 331.

36. 'Sanskritization' is a conceptual category used by M.N. Srinivas to explain social mobility amongst lower strata of the caste society. Accordingly, "Sanskritization is the process by which a 'low' Hindu caste, or tribal, or other group, changes its customs, ritual, ideology, and way of life in the direction of a high and frequently, 'twice-born' caste." See M.N. Srinivas, *Social change in Modern India*, New Delhi, Orient Longman, 1966, p.6.

37. Prasad, R.C., n.1, p.52.

alienation of the Bhumihars³⁸ and Rajputs. The coming out of Mahamaya Prasad from the Congress and launching of the Jana Kranti Dal in December 1966 also contributed to Congress's decline. As a result of several factors, the Congress faced a crushing defeat giving way to coalition governments of the Samyukta Vidhayak Dal. The following Table gives party-wise performance in 1967 elections.

TABLE-4.6 Party-wise Performance in 1967 Assembly Elections
- Number of seats

| Parties | Seats |
|----------|-------|
| Congress | 128 |
| SSP | 68 |
| BJS | 26 |
| CPI | 24 |
| PSP | 18 |
| JKD | 13 |
| CPM | 4 |
| SWA | 3 |
| RPI | 1 |
| Ind. | 33 |
| Total | 318 |

Source : Compiled from V.B. Singh and Shankar Bose, State Assembly Elections, 1952-85.

The Congress Party secured only 128 seats and lacked majority to form government. The opposition parties formed -----

38. A section of middle and small peasantry of Bhumihars has tilted towards the CPI after the death of S.K. Sinha, see Mishra, G. & B. Pandey, *Op. cit.*, 1996, p.327.

a United Front called Samyukta Vidhayak Dal (SVD). The constituents of the SVD were - the SSP, BJS, CPI, PSP, JKD, etc.³⁹ The Swatantra and the CPM extended support from outside. Amongst the constituents of the SVD, the SSP and the BJS were the two largest groups. The leader of Jana Kranti Dal, Mahamaya Prasad Sinha became the leader of the Front. The first coalition government was formed on 5 March 1967 with Mahamaya Prasad Sinha as the Chief Minister of Bihar. The SSP being the largest constituent, compromised with the JKD and gave the post of Chief Ministership to Mahamaya Prasad. In fact, the strategic position of the JKD vis-a-vis realignment of Congress with JKD, etc. increased its bargaining position. Despite less political resource in terms of number of MLAs, ^{owing to} its strategic position and capability to lead the coalition to the desired goal, the JKD occupied important position.⁴⁰

The SVD government included parties of diverse policy orientations ranging from CPI to BJS. The coming together of parties having divergent orientations was, however, made possible due to certain factors. The atmosphere of anti-Congressism brought the non-Congress parties at one platform. The non-Congress parties wanted to keep the

39. Their total strength was 149 and 156 if CPM and Swatantra's support is added.

40. Riker, William H., *Theory of Political coalitions*, Op. cit.

Congress out of power. Moreover, the sharing of the same platform by the CPI with the BJS, however, can be explained by the fact that the CPI had enunciated the thesis of two wings - 'progressive' and 'reactionary' within the BJS. According to this thesis, the Jana Sangh consists of two wings and the CPI advocated the need to combine with the 'progressive' wing of A.B. Vajpayee in order to isolate the 'reactionary' wing represented by Balraj Madhok.⁴¹ This theoretical and tactical position taken by the CPI brought it with BJS within the SVD. The first SVD coalition ministry being "ideologically heterogeneous governmental coalition"⁴² resorted to the formulation of a Minimum Common Programme.⁴³ in order to follow a policy acceptable to all

41. Mishra, G. & B. Pandey, n.8, p. 327.

42. Iqbal Narain, *Twilight or Dawn: Political Change in India*, Op. cit., p. 139.

43. The 33-Point Common Minimum Programme can be classified as follows:

1. Steps to meet the famine situation--arrangement of proper help to the drought affected people; suspension of land rent for current year; early completion of irrigation, drainage and flood control schemes and giving priority to the pumping sets and tube-wells in electrification; and full utilisation of irrigation facilities.
2. Measures of land reforms--immediate tenancy rights to the land labourers and landless peasants on homestead land; distribution of barren land among the landless; giving necessary financial help to small peasants; etc.
3. Promises to provide efficient administration, eliminate corruption and check rising prices.
4. Austerity measures--end of government lavishness, reduction in the salaries and allowances of the

coalition partners. This was an attempt to minimize policy differences amongst the parties. Policy distance minimization is related with stability of coalition governments.⁴⁴

Nevertheless despite the formulation of the 33-point CMP and instituting of a coordination committee, the SVD coalition from the beginning failed to show collective functioning. Although, it seems that the CMP doesn't affect parties ideological orientations by its very nature of being non-controversial, the parties with opposed ideological orientations, however drifted in different directions. The

...Continued...

- ministers.
5. Restructuring the development and industrialisation of the state by organising the small and home industries and by demanding more financial rights to the state from the union government.
 6. Concessions to various interest groups--students, teachers, government employees, farmers, supporters of Urdu and supporters of Hindi.
 7. Rectification of alleged Congress misdeeds --release of political prisoners institution of judicial enquiries against Congress ministers and into police firings under the Congress regime.
 8. Withdrawal of unpopular measures and taxes-- grain procurement orders, previous increases in taxation and land revenue.
 9. Provision of various agricultural benefits.

See, Jawaharlal Pandey, *State Politics in India: A Study in Coalition Politics in an Indian State*, New Delhi, Uppal Publications, 1982, pp. 164-65.

44. See Deswaan, A., *Coalition Theories and Cabinet Formation*, *Op. cit.*, and Laver, M., "Dynamic Factors in Government Coalition Formation", *European Journal of Political Research*, Sept., 1974, 2, pp. 259-70 for "ideological distance" and "ideological diversity" hypothesis.

CPI proposed various land reform measures including the Bihar Rent Abolition Bill 1967, the Bihar Land Reforms (Amendment) Bill, 1967 and those guaranteeing security of tenancy to sharecroppers. The Jana Sangh on the other hand opposed these measures and was against the proposed abolition of Tatas' Zamindari rights in Jamshedpur. The Jana Sangh was aiming at winning landholders and rich peasants through its opposition to the above measures.⁴⁵ On the issue of share-cropping, the Jana Sangh on the one hand and the CPI and the SSP on the other differed from each other.⁴⁶ A circular issued by the Revenue Minister on October 3, 1967 stipulated that no sharecropper would be evicted without an order of the Court; no landowner was entitled to more than 7/20th of total produce; no landowner was to interfere in the harvesting of crop by sharecropper; and the sharecropper was entitled to demand receipt for the share of the produce given to the landowner.⁴⁷ This measure was opposed by the Jana Sangh whose leader Thakur Prasad addressed a series of landowners' meetings and advised them to protect their property with their might.⁴⁸ There were

45. Mishra, G. and B. Pandey, n.8, p.332.

46. Jha, Chetkar, n. 10, p.253.

47. Mishra, G. and B. Pandey, n. 8, p.333.

48. The Jana Sangh leaders favoured the Sarvoday approach of JP based on reconciliation of sharecroppers and landowners.

also differences between the Jana Sangh and other parties of left and socialist-orientations regarding the issue of Urdu to be recognized as the second official language of the state. While the SSP and CPI wanted Urdu to be upgraded as the second official language, the Jana Sangh true to its stand on national unity and integrity and its attitude towards the Muslim minority⁴⁹ opposed it right from the formulation stage of the CMP.

Thus, it can be seen from above description that inter-party divergences regarding issues involving ideological and policy orientations of different parties were present despite the formulation of a CMP. The issues of land reforms, sharecropping, status of Urdu, etc., took parties into differing directions, as a result of which the initial condition of the stable functioning of the coalition government is not fulfilled.

Nevertheless, the fall of the first coalition ministry became certain less because of inner-coalitional difference and more because of two factors, one Lohia's intervention and second the attempt of Congressmen to encourage defections. Ram Manohar Lohia being the leader of the SSP wanted it to play important role, for it was the largest constituent of the coalition. Not only he wanted it to

49. Paul Brass treats only this issue as creating a major ideological cleavage and does not touch upon the issue of land reforms, etc. See Brass, P., "Coalition Politics in North India", *Op. cit.*, pp. 108-109.

implement its accepted programmes but also tried 'to enforce a code of conduct'.⁵⁰ He right from the beginning had insisted that B.P. Mandal not being a member of the State Legislature⁵¹ should not be included in the ministry. He continued to agitate against his inclusion. Meanwhile, the SVD government had instituted Aiyar Commission of Enquiry against the former Congress ministers, who had been alleged of corruption.⁵² Those Congressmen who feared government's action looked for an opportunity to eliminate the SVD ministry. The resentment amongst a section of the SSP who resented Lohia's attitude towards B.P. Mandal provided them with a chance to cause defection from the coalition. As a result, B.P. Mandal along with a number of MLAs left the coalition.⁵³ The government fell on January 25, 1968 on a no-confidence motion moved by the Congress and the Mandal's group which had come to call itself as the Shoshit Dal.

50. Limaye, Madhu, n.13, p. 148.

51. B.P. Mandal at that time was a SSP Mmember of Lok Sabha.

52. T.L. Venkatarama Aiyar Commission of Enquiry was constituted to look into the charges of nepotism, favouritism, corruption, etc., against ex-Congress ministers - K.B. Sahay, M.P. Sinha, S.N. Sinha, Ram Lakhan Singh Yadav, R.N. Singh, etc.

53. B.P. Mandal has resigned on August 27, 1967 and floated his Shoshit Dal in September 1967. See, Jha, Chetkar, n.10, p. 254.

B.P. Mandal's Shoshit Dal⁵⁴ minority government was formed on February 1, 1968 supported by the Congress. Mandal's government, in fact, included a large number of those who had left their respective parties. However, support given by the Congress to Mandal's government, created dissension within the Congress party. Congressmen like L.N. Sudhanshu, B.N. Jha, Bhola Pawan Shastri, H.N. Mishra spearheaded the opposition to the Congress decision to support B.P. Mandal. Mandal's government fell on March 18, 1968 when sixteen Congress MLAs voted with the opposition and subsequently led by Binodanand Jha formed a separate party called - Lok Tantrik Congress Dal (LTC). Thus, B.P. Mandal's minority government came to end.

A second United Front coalition government consisting of the SSP, PSP, Jana Sangh, CPI, BKD, LTC and headed by Bhola Paswan Shastri of the LTC came into being on March 22, 1968. Notwithstanding minor differences between parties like SSP delaying in joining, BKD's unhappiness over Shastri's leadership,⁵⁵ the government began working. But, the Raja of Ramgarh whose erstwhile Janata Party had merged with the BKD constituent of the United Front wanted to save his own purpose. He revived his Janata Party and joined the Cabinet. But he was resentful of not getting the Mines

54. In order to make B.P. Mandal a member of the legislature, Satish Prasad Sinha was made the Chief Minister for three days whose government nominated B.P. Mandal as MLC. Thereafter Sinha resigned to give way for Mandal. See, R.C. Prasad, n.1, p.54.

55. Jha, Chetkar, n.10, p.255.

portfolio which he had held in the Mahamaya Prasad government. He also wanted to use his participation to protect his zamindari interests.⁵⁶ In fact, Raja's manoeuvrings and Shastri's effort not to give him opportunity to forge alliance with the Congress led Shastri to resign on June 28, 1968. Afterwards, President's Rule was imposed leading to elections in 1969.

The period between March 1967 to June 1968 witnessed two coalition governments and two minority governments supported by the Congress. This period is conspicuous by split and disintegration in parties particularly in the Congress and the SSP. Thus, the period of March 1967 and June 1968 is one of fluidity, instability and fragmentation in party system as well as for coalition politics. No pattern of coalition could be evolved amongst parties leading to heterogeneous ideologically non-viable coalitions. More so, the absence of a major coalition partner also contributed to frequent fall of governments. The absence of a dominating party around which other partners could coalesce contributed to instability. Till 1967, Bihar had one party dominant multi-party system⁵⁷ with the presence of all national parties - Congress, SSP, PSP, CPI, CPI(M), SWA, JS, etc. But the aftermath of 1967

56. *ibid*, p.255.

57. For evolution of party system in Bihar, see Singh, Mahendra P., *Cohesion in a Predominant Party : The Pradesh Congress and Party Politics in Bihar*, New Delhi, Chand & Co., 1975, Chapter III.

elections and during the coalition period, it witnessed a 'highly fractionated multi-party system' and emergence of new political formations. Nevertheless, the lack of political polarization in consonance with social polarization resulted in collaboration between 'forward' and 'backward' castes who shared coalition ministries. The following Table reveals position of various parties and

Table-4.7 Strength of Various Parties in Bihar Assembly Between March 1967 and June 1968

| Parties | March, 1967 | June, 1968 |
|---------------|-------------|------------|
| Congress | 128 | 105 |
| SSP | 68 | 57 |
| BJS | 26 | 23 |
| CPI | 24 | 24 |
| PSP | 18 | 16 |
| JKD/BKD* | 26 | 2 |
| CPI (M) | 4 | 4 |
| SWA | 3 | 1 |
| RPI | 1 | 1 |
| Shoshit Dal* | - | 38 |
| LTC* | - | 22 |
| Janata Party* | - | 18 |
| Jharkhand* | - | 2 |
| Independents | 20 | 5 |

Source : Adapted from Paul R. Brass, "Coalition Politics in North India", in Paul R. Brass, *Caste, Faction and Party in Indian Politics*, Op. cit., p.119.

* represents newly formed/revived parties and legislative groups because of splits and defections.

groups and role played by defections and splits in fragmentation of party system.

In February, 1969, mid-term elections were held amidst the presence of multiplicity of parties - national, state and smaller parties. This time the divided backward votes between the SSP and the Shoshit could return only 52 seats

for SSP and 6 for the Shoshit. This is 10 less than what the SSP had got in 1967 elections. This election too, returned a fractured mandate and failed to solve the problem of stable majority. Moreover, the differences amongst the opposition were visible during the elections and they failed to fight the election by forging a broader alliance. As a result, a triple alliance of the SSP, PSP and Lok Tantrik Congress (LTC)⁵⁸ was forged to fight elections. The two communist parties resorted to seat adjustment amongst themselves and the rest of the parties fought separately.⁵⁹ The following Table shows party position after 1969 mid-term poll. In fact, after the poll, the overall complexion of

Table 4.8. Party Strength (Seats) in the Assembly after 1969 Elections

| Parties | Cong. | SSP | BJS | CPI | PSP | JAP* | LTC | BKD |
|---------|-------|-----|-----|-----|-----|------|-----|-----|
| Seats | 118 | 52 | 34 | 25 | 18 | 14 | 9 | 6 |

| Parties | SHD | HJH | CPI (M) | SWA | FBL* | Ind | Total |
|---------|-----|-----|---------|-----|------|-----|-------|
| Seats | 6 | 5 | 3 | 3 | 1 | 24 | 318 |

Source: V.B. Singh and Shankar Bose, *State Assembly Elections, 1952-85, Op. cit.*

* represents State parties.

58. The SSP, however, released its separate manifesto through its national executive. See R.C. Prasad, n.1, p.56.

59. *ibid.*

the legislature did not change and remained as it was before the poll except for the fact that the BKD and the Shoshit Dal lost many of the seats.

Nevertheless, the Congress being the largest party was able to forge a coalition of several parties - Janata, Jharkhand, Shoshit Dal, BKD, SWA and some independents.⁶⁰ Under the leadership of Harihar Singh of the Congress, a new coalition government came into being on February, 26, 1969. The inclusion of Raja of Ramgarh's Janata Party was criticized by the Congress Working Committee and as a result the Raja had to resign.⁶¹ Moreover, the conflict and dissensions amongst the coalition partners over the issue of portfolio distribution proved to be the main factor that led to the fall of the Harihar Singh Government on June 20, 1969.⁶² It is important to note that several MLAs of BKD, Shoshit Dal and Hul Jharkhand, the constituents of the coalition defected on the same day before the budget demands for the department of Animal Husbandry were put to vote.⁶³

Meanwhile, a coalition of the LTC, BKD, Shoshit Dal, Hul Jharkhand led by Bhola Paswan Shastri was forged which staked its claim to form government. The Paswan's government was backed by the SSP, CPI and Jana Sangh. The -----

60. Total strength of these parties together with 6 Independents was 158.

61. Jha, Chetkar, n.10, p.256.

62. Kashyap, S.C., *Politics of Power, Defections and State Politics in India*, Delhi, National, 1974, p.353.

63. Prasad, R.C., n.1, p.60.

government which came into being on June 23, 1969, fell just after few days when the Jana Sangh which was extending its support to the minority-coalition government from outside threatened to withdraw on the issue of inclusion of two Muslim members into the Cabinet who had earlier defected from the Congress.⁶⁴ After the fall of Harihar Singh's ministry, Bihar again went under President's rule.⁶⁵

However, the Assembly was not dissolved and put under 'suspended animation'. This left space open for realignment of different parties and groups. Meanwhile, by the time the Assembly was revived in February 1970, several changes have taken place at the level of national politics and at the State level. during this period, a new realignment of forces has taken place and more importantly the very concept of 'non-Congressism' faced challenge. Of particular importance are two crucial developments which had bearing on the state party-competition and future coalition politics. The split in the Congress and the political orientation of the CPI and the PSP at the national level brought new possibilities of realignment of different political forces. The split of the Congress into Congress(R) led by Indira Gandhi and Congress(O) also led to similar split in Bihar Congress. In November 1969, nearly 53 MLAs led by S.N. Sinha, K.B. Sahay, M.P. Sinha supported Congress(O) while

64. Jha, Chetkar, n.10, p.257.

65. Harihar Singh did not recommend for dissolution of the Assembly and it was kept under 'suspended animation'.

the Congress(R) was left with 65 MLAs.⁶⁶ On the other hand, the CPI has formulated the thesis of 'two stage of revolution in India: one democratic and the other socialist'. Before achieving the goal of socialist revolution, it proposes to achieve the goal of democratic revolution. Accordingly, one section of the bourgeoisie represented by the Congress led by Indira Gandhi was viewed as 'progressive, secular and democratic'. Thus, an alliance with this section of the bourgeoisie posed no theoretical contradiction and strategically it was important to achieve the first stage of revolution - democratic revolution.⁶⁷ This theoretical and strategic shift of the CPI led to its political alliance with the Congress(R) which lasted from 1969 to 1977 both at the national and state levels as obvious from Kerala politics.⁶⁸ Moreover, the PSP has also taken pro-Congress stand. Thus, the politics of non-Congressism witnessed a division and CPI and PSP aligned with the Congress(R) in the future coalitions.

Within these situations of new alignments, Congress(R) government in coalition with CPI, PSP, BKD, Shoshit Dal, Jharkhand Party, Hul Jharkhand and Lok Tantrik Congress

66. Mishra, Girish & B. Pandey, n.8, p.342.

67. Desai, A.R., "Congress(I), Communist Parties and Communalism", *Economic and Political Weekly*, July 28, 1984, pp.1196-97.

68. Nossiter, T.J., *Communism in Kerala : A Study in Political Adaptation*, Oxford, RIIA, 1982.

(LTC) came into being on February 1970 with Daroga Rai as the Chief Minister.

Nevertheless, Rai ministry faced problems relating to "composition and expansion of the Cabinet"⁶⁹ as well as representation of various caste groups.⁷⁰ While he reduced the representation of upper castes and increased that of Harijans and tribals, he also faced pressure from backward castes to increase their representation. Unable to reconcile with the situation he was voted out of power in December 18, 1970.

With the fall of Daroga Rai's government, a coalition of the SSP, Congress(O), Jana Sangh, Janata, BKD, Shoshit Dal, Hul Jharkhand and a section of PSP led by Karpoori Thakur of the SSP came into being on December 22, 1970. Nevertheless, Karpoori Thakur's government could survive only six months (approx.) and fell on June 1, 1971. In fact, a massive victory of Congress(R) in the 1971 Lok Sabha elections triggered defections to the Congress (R). As a result, "scores of MLAs from Congress(O) returned to the 'real' Congress"⁷¹ thereby weakening Karpoori Thakur's United Front government.

Notwithstanding, Karpoori Thakur's recommendation to dissolve the Assembly, Bhola Paswan Shastri got a chance to form government with the help of the CPI, PSP, Jharkhand

69. Kashyap, S.C., n.62, p.363.

70. Mishra, G. & B. Pandey, n.8, p.343.

71. Frankel, F.R., n.26, p.101.

(Horo Group), Shoshit Dal (Jagdeo group) etc. Bhola Paswan Shastri who belonged to Congress(R) was Chief Minister from June 2, 1971 till December 27, 1971. It is appropriate to note that the three parties - the Congress(R), the CPI, the PSP had constituted a front in the name of progressive Vidhayak Dal (PVD) and Paswan represented the PVD. Thus, a polarization between PVD and SVD was visible. His government resigned in order to pave way for Assembly elections.⁷² The 1972 Assembly elections catapulted the Congress(R) into majority thus bringing an end to coalitional instability.

Thus, the period of 1967-71 witnessed 'factionalism', 'fractionated multi-party system', 'social polarization and political instability' and minority and coalition governments. Although 1972 elections brought political stability with the Congress(R) getting majority, the mobilization of backward castes especially, Yadavs, Koeris, Kurmis, etc. into the state political process has added a new dimension to political conflict. The issue of reservation⁷³ of 60% posts for the backward castes was a major rallying point for the backward castes.

The 1970s witnessed the crystallization of backward castes votes behind the J.P. movement which Jayaprakash

72. The Congress(R) national leaders advised Bhola Paswan to resign. See, R.C. Prasad, n.1, p. 62.

73. The Daroga Rai's coalition government in 1970 had instituted a Backward Class Commission headed by Mungeri Lal which submitted its report in February, 1976 which provided basis for Karpoori Thakur to give 26% reservation in Bihar to OBCs, most BCs, etc.

Narayan launched to bring a 'total revolution' in all aspects of public life. The J.P. movement in Bihar contributed to the polarization of anti-Congress forces as well as backward castes. In fact, political polarization in the form of informal coalition of Congress(O), Jana Sangh, BLD, the Socialists etc. which were behind the J.P. movement crystallized into Janata party in 1977.⁷⁴ Although, the imposition of the emergency resulted in the weakening of the J.P. movement, the treatment to Mungheri Lal Commission Report (Feb., 1976) by Chief Minister Jagannath Mishra by denying 26% reservations to the backward castes added to backward caste polarization.⁷⁵

The Janata Party consisting of the Congress(O), the Jana Sangh, the BLD,⁷⁶ the CFD and the Socialists got 214 (66%) seats while the Congress obtained only 57 (17.6%) of seats. Nevertheless, the Janata Party being a 'coalition',⁷⁷ of various groups witnessed fight for leadership amongst different groups, particularly between S.N. Sinha and Karpoori Thakur. Since the BLD faction of the Janata coalition has the largest members, Charan Singh got the privilege to play crucial role in Bihar. Karpoori Thakur

74. Frankel, F.R., n.26, p.105.

75. *ibid.*

76. The BLD was formed in July 1974 by merging the erstwhile BKD, Swatantra and the Socialists.

77. Janata Party remained a coalition of erstwhile groups, see Harry W. Blair, n.15, pp.130-33; and Madhu Limaye, *Janata Party Experiment*, op. cit., p.372.

supported by the BKD and Jana Sangh faction of the Janata coalition became the Chief Minister.

The Janata coalition government headed by Karpoori Thakur faced internal problem on the issue of implementation of 26% reservation in government jobs for the backward castes. The "upper caste members of his Cabinet pressed for a new Commission to go into the issue taking economic criteria into consideration".⁷⁸ In fact, a clear cut polarization on caste line emerged within the coalition. The upper caste members mostly belonging to the Jana Sangh and the Congress(O) made attempts to foil implementation of reservation.⁷⁹ The implementation of 26% reservation⁸⁰ created furore amongst the constituents of the Janata Party. The Jana Sangh group stepped up its efforts to destabilize the state government.⁸¹ On April 19, 1979 Karpoori Thakur got defeated on a motion of no-confidence when the Jana Sangh and the C.F.D. joined together.

After Thakur, the Janata coalition led by Ram Sunder Das formed its government on April 24, 1979. The change of leadership changed the caste composition of the ministry also. While in the Karpoori Thakur government the upper

78. Mishra, G & B. Pandey, n.8, p. 359.

79. *ibid.*

80. Modified Mungherilal formula of 26% reservation (Karpoori Thakur Formula) gave 12% to most backward communities (Annexure I); 8% to backward communities (Annexure II); 3% to economically poor upper castes; 3% to women.

81. Frankel, F.R., n.26, p.111..

caste had 29% seat in the ministry, they got 50% in Ram Sundar Das ministry, while the backward castes who had 38% seats in the previous ministry got reduced to 20%.⁸² The government of Ram Sundar Das also included provision to deduce those who are recruited on the merit basis (from backwards) from the reserved quota.⁸³ Thus, a clear victory for the upper castes was visible. The fall of the Janata government at the Centre led to dismissal of Bihar government by Indira Gandhi in February, 1980.

The disintegration of the Janata Party into various parties⁸⁴ resulted in the Congress gaining strength in the eighties. In 1980, it got 52% of seats and 34% of votes and increased its share to 60.5% (seats) and 39.3% (votes) respectively. This resulted in Congress establishing its 'dominance' though in a transformed way. However, the late eighties has witnessed several changes in the party competition and the emergence of parties like Janata Dal and BJP which seek to provide alternative to the declining Congress. In Bihar, however, the BJP, the Congress and the Janata Dal are the main contestants and the relatively stable social base of the Janata Dal makes it difficult for the BJP to make easy inroads in Bihar as has happened in Uttar Pradesh.

82. Harry W. Blair, n.27, p. 69.

83. Frankel, F.R., n.26, p. 112.

84. Several erstwhile constituents emerged with different names: BJP (erstwhile BJS), LKD (erstwhile BLD), Janata Party (erstwhile Socialists), etc.

It is important to note that the emergence of the Yadavs along with Koeris and Kurmis provided the base for the Janata Dal in Bihar. It is also obvious that the Dalit vote are divided between the Janata Dal and the CPI (ML). Nevertheless, the Janata Dal after the break up of Koeris and Kurmis along with the Samata Party is trying to consolidate the social coalition of 'Yadavs, Muslims and SCs'.⁸⁵ On the other hand the Samata Party backed by the Kurmis and Koeris is forging alliance with the BJP and attempts to win sections of upper castes also.⁸⁶ Moreover, Laloo Prasad led Janata Dal which started in 1989, first formed its government with the outside support of parties like CPI, CPI (M), IPF, JMM, etc.⁸⁷ after the elections. After 1995 elections his position had been relatively stable. Nevertheless in the present context when Janata Dal has split and Laloo Prasad faction has launched Rashtriya Janata Dal, a new uncertainty regarding realignment of forces has come up. In fact, future direction of party competition would depend on realignment of different parties. The BJP-Samata are trying to benefit from this situation, on the other hand the Congress is trying to sustain itself which necessitates it to align with the Janata Dal factions.

85. Kumar, Sanjay, n.23, pp. 18-19.

86. Gupta, Tilak D., "Bihar: Elections with a Difference", *Economic and Political Weekly*, April 15, 1995, p. 789.

87. Roy, Ramashray, "Bihar Politics", *Indian Journal of Political Science*, 55(3), July-September 1994, p. 229.

CHAPTER 5

POLITICS OF COALITION AND PARTY COMPETITION IN UTTAR PRADESH AND BIHAR : A COMPARATIVE PERSPECTIVE

Political processes in Indian States represent varying characteristics regarding pattern of party competition and evolution of party system. The fact that each State shows peculiarity poses problems for devising a common theoretical framework for comparison and generalization.¹ Although, most of the States started within the framework of 'one party dominant' party system, each State had its own distinctive feature so far as multi-party competition is concerned.² More so, the transition in party competition due to the political changes during the late sixties and early seventies rendered even this framework less useful for accounting inter-party and intra-coalition behaviour. The contemporary political processes in States represent a new phase of party competition which is largely a reflection of 'reconfiguration in Indian politics' brought due to transition from 'single party dominance' to 'competitive multi-party system'.³

1. Wood, John R. (ed.), *State Politics in Contemporary India: Crisis or Continuity*, London, Westview Press, 1984, Introduction.
2. Brass, Paul R., "Coalition Politics in North India", *Op. cit.*, p. 99.
3. Yadav, Yogendra, "Reconfiguration in Indian Politics: State Assembly Elections, 1993-95", *Economic and Political Weekly*, January 13-20, 1996, pp. 95-104.

Transformation and reconfiguration in Indian politics get reflected not only in the decline of the Congress, the breakdown of the national consensus and emergence of alternative political forces but also in the mobilization of hitherto excluded sections of the other backward castes (OBCs) and the dalits, regionalisation of party system and realignment of political forces through polarization. These changes largely manifest at the State level making State politics relevant for study and analysis.

The two States of Uttar Pradesh and Bihar show commonality so far as the evolution of their party systems and the recent changes are concerned. Both started within the framework of 'one party dominance' Congress system; witnessed the transformation in the form of coalition politics of the late sixties and early seventies; experimented with two party situation of the Janata coalition vs. Congress in late 1970s; and have witnessed decline and disintegration of the Congress and emergence of new political alternatives in late 1980s and 1990s. Furthermore, these States are also representative examples of mobilization and entry of different sections of society at different point of time. As a matter of fact, the mobilization and politicization of the backward castes in two stages - in 1980s, mobilization of other backward castes

(OBCs),⁴ as well as the mobilization and assertion of the dalits in 1980s has added new dimensions to existing political conflicts. Added to this is the fact that the rise of the Hinduvta-based BJP posing itself as an alternative to the Congress is also reflected here especially in Uttar Pradesh. Thus, the decline of their 'one-party dominance' system has given rise to unstable situation and possibility of realignment and polarization of political forces. Party competition and coalition politics are reflective of these basic changes. These States represent examples where the changes and reconfiguration in politics is most pronounced.

Nevertheless, despite these commonalities, there are certain basic differences which mark these Stages. While the BSP has made strong inroads into the Congress vote of dalits in Uttar Pradesh, it has not been successful in Bihar. Similarly, while the BJP has made phenomenal rise in U.P. by getting the support of the upper castes and sections of non-Yadav backward castes, it has failed to present itself as a strong alternative in Bihar. In Uttar Pradesh, the situation is one of fluidity and instability while Bihar presents a case of relative stability and consolidation of social coalition of the 'Yadavs, Minorities and Scheduled

4. Pai, Sudha, "Caste and Communal Mobilization in the Electoral Politics of Uttar Pradesh", *Indian Journal of Political Science*, 55(3), July-September 1994, pp.307-320.

Castes'.⁵ Thus, it can be said that net Congress loss in Bihar has been Janata Dal's gain while in UP net Congress loss has got distributed between the BJP and the BSP particularly.⁶

Within these commonalties and variations, this Chapter proposes to compare the pattern of party competition, alignments of parties through coalitions, alliances etc. and linkages with social support bases in these States. Changes brought through Land Reforms, Green Revolution, operation of the democratic process, mobilization of different strata of society, decline of the Congress and its social rainbow coalition and emergence of new political alternatives provides entry point for comparison.

5.1. LAND REFORMS, GREEN REVOLUTION, POLITICIZATION OF THE MIDDLE CASTE/RICH PEASANTRY AND COALITIONAL INSTABILITY

The 1960s witnessed challenges to the Congress and the politics of upper caste hegemony⁷ in three States. This challenge was premised on the politicization and mobilization of the middle caste/rich peasants in both the

5. Kumar, Sanjay, "Yadavs, Muslims and SCs Voted for Laloo", *Mainstream*, April 19, 1995, pp. 18-19.
6. See Hasan, Zoya, "Uttar Pradesh : Persistence of Polarization", *Frontline*, May 17, 1996, pp. 36-38; and Kumar, Sanjay, "Janata Dal in the Driver's Seat", *Frontline*, May 17, 1996, pp. 39-40.
7. Hasan, Zoya, "Power and Mobilization: Patterns of Resilience and Change in Uttar Pradesh Politics", in Frankel, F.R. and Rao, M.S.A. (eds.), *Op. cit.*, 1989, p. 170.

States. The caste-class convergence in the form of middle castes like Jats, Yadavs, Koeris, Kurmis and rich upwardly mobile peasants provided social base for anti-Congress politics in its initial phase. Their entry into the political process brought new dimension to political conflicts. As a result, Congress dominance faced challenge which, in turn, led to multi-party competition and unstable coalitions during 1967-71/72 in the two States. Thus, the correlation between the entry of the backward castes/rich peasantry into politics and intensification of party competition is seen during this period.

Nevertheless, rise of this segment and its assertion at the political level bears its relationship with factors like land reforms, introduction of Green Revolution in agriculture, numerical strength of the middle castes and its importance due to adult suffrage, etc.⁸ Despite its truncated nature, land reforms affected the relation of dominance vis. the upper castes. In Bihar, since land reforms had benefitted larger occupancy tenants who were mostly Bhumihars and Rajputs, baring exception in some districts like Saharsa and Patna, middle castes like Yadavs and Kurmis did not benefit directly.⁹ Nevertheless, by making former tenants economically independents, land reform

8. See, Frankel, F.R., "Caste, Land and Dominance in Bihar", and Hasan, Zoya, "Power and Mobilization: Patterns of Resilience in Uttar Pradesh", *Op. cit.*

9. Frankel, F.R., *Op. cit.*, 1989, p. 95.

added to their economic status. It led to elevating the middle caste peasants from sub-tenant to tenant status. Furthermore, land reform also resulted in selling of surplus land by landlords, the purchasers of which 'invariably were from middle peasantry'.¹⁰ In Uttar Pradesh also, zamindari abolition has similar results. The number of owner cultivators increased after this and these owner cultivators were largely rich peasants belonging to middle castes.¹¹

Although, land reforms affected the middle peasant castes differently in the two States, it nevertheless created conditions for emergence of capitalist farming in agriculture. The Green Revolution was aimed at introduction of capitalism in agricultural sector. So far as the impact and regional spread of this new technique is concerned, the States of Bihar and Uttar Pradesh present different pictures. In Bihar, modern agricultural technique is limited to certain regions only like the districts of Bhojpur and Rohtas, Patna, Nalanda, Gaya, Nawada, etc.¹² Ladejinsky's study¹³ also reveals the limit of Green Revolution within the 'Kosi area'. On the other hand, Uttar

10. Prasad, Pradhan H., "Rise of Kulak Power and Caste Struggle in North India", *Economic and Political Weekly*, August 17, 1991, pp. 1923-1926.

11. Hasan, Zoya, *Op. cit.*, 1989, p. 154.

12. Francine, F.R., *Op. cit.*, 1989, p. 98.

13. Ladejinsky, Wolf, "Green Revolution in Bihar: The Kosi Area, A Field Trip", *Op. cit.*

Pradesh presents a case of successful implementation of Green Revolution especially in western Uttar Pradesh.¹⁴ However, 1970s also witnessed its spread into other parts of Uttar Pradesh. Moreover, the significant point for our concern is the relationship these changes at the agricultural level bear with the politicization and mobilization of middle castes and rich peasants. The latter, in turn, challenged Congress hegemony by devising the thesis of backward caste unity and non-Congressism. It is interesting to note that in Uttar Pradesh, "agricultural issues have important effect on electoral politics".¹⁵ The changes in party competition during 1967-71 and coalitional instability were largely a result of entry of these rich peasant castes. It is appropriate to note that Charan Singh who left Congress in 1967 and subsequently launched party called BKD which renamed as BLD and to LKD in 1970s and 1980s respectively, in fact, represented the interest of these peasant castes. The Jats of western Uttar Pradesh massively supported Charan Singh. His party played critical role during the coalition period and he bargained successfully to be the Chief Minister twice during this period. Thus, politicization of the rich peasantry and their mobilization reveals correlation between agricultural

14. Pai, Sudha, *Uttar Pradesh: Agrarian Change and Electoral Politics*, Op. cit.

15. *ibid*, p. 75.

issue and party support base.¹⁶ It also raises methodological and theoretical question of how to relate factions with class interest. It is obvious that Charan Singh and his group within the Congress has been treated as a mere factions.¹⁷ But it is reasonable to ask whether the major sources of socio-economic conflict affect the pattern of factional conflict.¹⁸ More so, within or outside the Congress, Charan Singh represented the interest of this class.

Nevertheless, despite its phenomenal rise and potential of providing a credible opposition, the BKD/BLD could not consolidate itself owing to the factors of limited spread of the Green Revolution in Uttar Pradesh. His effort to mobilize other castes like Yadavs, Koeris, Kurmis besides Jats in the form of horizontal cohesion of these castes failed because of regional distribution of Green Revolution.¹⁹ However, the 1977 experiment of Janata coalition transcended this limitation and included parties like Congress (O), SSP, BKD, Jana Singh with support base in different regions.²⁰

16. *ibid.*

17. Brass, Paul R., n.2.

18. Carras, Mary C., *The Dynamics of Indian Factions*, *Op. cit.*

19. Pai, Sudha, n.14, p.87.

20. *ibid*, p. 88.

The case of Bihar is different from Uttar Pradesh so far as the impact of the Green Revolution and emergence of backward castes is concerned. In Bihar, delayed impact of land reforms and agricultural practice on commercial lines is however, evident on certain castes. Added to this is opportunity of selling of products in markets through availability of transportation. Middle castes like Yadavs, Koeris and Kurmis have emerged strong. Nonetheless, in the sixties, after land reforms, their relatively strong position added with their numerical strength led to their assertion at the political level. Both in U.P. and Bihar, however, the question of reservation for backward castes in government jobs led to their massive mobilization. Thus, the sixties witnessed politicization and mobilization of backward castes/intermediate peasants which provided the support base of different parties advocating non-Congressism. The political change of 1967 and resultant fluid party interaction leading to coalitional instability was because of challenge posed by their entry to the Congress.

The late seventies witnessed crystallization of political conflict through oppositional unity and horizontal cohesiveness of backward caste groups. This resulted in the emergence of a "two party situation" in the two States and Congress gave way to a coalition of different parties. But because of internal differentiation within the backward castes and inter-party conflict within the Janata coalition, this experiment also failed. Nevertheless, the linkage

between the non-Congressism and horizontal mobilization of the middle castes/rich peasants is established. It would be obvious, that the Janata Dal emerged with the support of rich and middle peasantry in the two States but their fragmentation has led to decline of Janata Dal in Uttar Pradesh. However, in Bihar, the division between Yadavs and Koeris and Kurmis has brought two parties - Janata Dal and Samata Party into being. The Janata Dal is consolidating the support base of Yadavs, Minorities, Dalits and other backward castes who were mobilized in 1980s. In fact, backward castes other than Yadavs, Koeris and Kurmis entered into politics as part of the 'second wave' of backward caste mobilization in Bihar.²¹ On the other hand, the Samata Party-BJP alliance is aimed at providing an alternative to it. In Uttar Pradesh, the presence of BJP, JD, SP leads to competition for getting support of backward castes. While in U.P. the horizontal cohesion of backward castes is weak, in Bihar except for Koeris and Kurmis, the Janata Dal has been able to forge such a coalition.

21. Pai, Sudha, n.14, p.96.

5.2. DOMINANCE, DISINTEGRATION AND DECLINE : THE CONGRESS IN THE TWO STATES

The position of the Congress Party in Uttar Pradesh and Bihar has irretrievably declined. While till 1980 it enjoyed dominance though alternated power in 1967 and 1977, after 1980 it has declined.²² After 1985, the Congress party in these two States has declined both politically and institutionally. In Uttar Pradesh, its vote share has come down from 39.3% in 1985 to a mere 8.15% in 1996. In terms of seats also, it has come down from 269 (63.3%) in 1985 to 33 (7.8%) in 1996. Similarly, in Bihar, the Congress share of vote declined from 39.3% in 1985 to 16.5% in 1995. Its share of seats also declined from 196 (60.5%) to a mere 29 (9.2%) in 1995. Thus, within a span of ten years, the Congress has been relegated to the third position in Bihar, while in Uttar Pradesh it occupies third place in terms of seats, in terms of vote share it has been forced to fourth position. The decline of the Congress is most pronounced in these two States.

In fact, although in Uttar Pradesh, it draws its support-base from diverse sections of the people thereby

22. In 1980, Congress regained its dominant position but its social support-base has got transformed. See, Rudolph, L.I. and Rudolph, S.H., "Transformation of Congress Party: Why 1980 was not a Restoration", *Op. cit.*

maintaining the rainbow character of its base,²³ the social coalition of the Congress of 'upper castes - minorities - Harijans has been replaced by the backward castes-Muslims-Dalit combine. Likewise in Bihar, the erosion resulted in similar situations. In fact, the break-up of the social coalition has resulted in shift of the loyalty of erstwhile constituents of the social coalition to new political alternatives like, BJP, JD, BSP, SP, etc. in these States. Thus, decline of the dominant party has led to multi-party competition in these States. But because of lack of stable and consolidated support base for parties, instability in party competition and coalition politics occurs.

5.3. BEYOND VERTICAL MOBILIZATION : POLITICAL MOBILIZATION OF THE DALITS

The 1980s witnessed conscious mobilization of the dalits owing to their political consciousness and platforms like the BSP and the IPF/CPI(ML). While the BCs/OBCs entered into the politics of these States in 1960s, the dalits largely constituted as subordinate part of the vertical mobilization strategy of the Congress. The Harijans never asserted themselves independent of Congress coalition. The Republican parties also failed to mobilize them independently. In 1980s, the formation of the BSP with

23. Chandra, Kanchan and Chandrika Parmar, "Party Strategies in the Uttar Pradesh Assembly Elections, 1996", *Op. cit.*, 1997.

the objective to bring dalits, Muslims and most backward castes at one platform resulted in the rise of the BSP in Uttar Pradesh. The disintegration of the Congress classic social coalition has resulted in shift of Harijans/SCs loyalty to the BSP in Uttar Pradesh. Nevertheless, parties like the Samajwadi Party, the BJP are also competing to gain their support. The BSP has increased its share of votes in U.P. from 9.5 per cent in 1989 to 10.7% in 1993 to 20.6% in 1996. Its share of seats has arose from 13 in 1989 to 67 in 1996.

However, the picture in Bihar is quite different so far as the affiliation of the dalits is concerned. The absence of the BSP in Bihar is conspicuous by the fact that the dalits have opted for other alternatives. It is appropriate to see that the BSP has failed to gain more than 1-2% of votes in Bihar. While in 1990 elections it got 0.33% of votes in 1995 elections it got nearly 1% of votes. Thus, absence of the BSP in Bihar is to be explained by the fact that Bihar has alternatives other than the BSP. These alternatives are available in two forms. While a bulk of the dalit votes for the Janata Dal and constitutes the coalition of 'Yadav-Muslim-SC', the radical alternative in the form of IPF/CPI-ML is also mobilizing the SCs who constitute large section of agricultural labourers. The support of SCs to Janata Dal is pronounced through the share of votes it get in SC reserved constituencies. In 1991 elections, the Janata Dal got 43.5% of votes in SC reserved

constituencies and in 1995 Assembly elections, it was 34.5% in SC constituencies.²⁴

Furthermore, notwithstanding the fact that Harijans constituted the broader social coalition of the Congress in Bihar also, a large section of dalit population who are agricultural labourers in class terms hence convergence of their caste and class identity were mobilized by left parties particularly the CPI-ML/IPF. Despite various land reform legislations²⁵ brought by the coalition governments during 1967-71, the basic condition of agricultural labourers did not change. Even the land grab movement launched by the CPI, SSP, PSP etc. against the eviction of under-raiyats and sub-tenants and for forcibly occupying lands, harvesting of crops, etc.,²⁶ failed to make change on this section of the population. As a result of failure of land reforms and the left parties to consolidate the dalits, there emerged the CPI-ML aggregating the discontent of the exploited dalits. The Bhojpur region is one of the important areas in which CPI-ML support base is located. Recently, however, the dalits have started following the

24. Kumar, Sanjay, "Janata Dal in the Driver's Seat", *Op. cit.*, p. 40.

25. Bihar Land Reform (Amendment) Act, 1970; Bihar Tenancy (Amendment) Ordinance, 1970; Bihar Privilege Persons Homestead Tenancy (Amendment) Act, 1970, etc. See, Das, Arvind N., *Agrarian Unrest and Socio-Economic Change in Bihar, 1900-1980*, New Delhi, Manohar, 1983, p. 235.

26. Das, Arvind N., *Op. cit.*, p.233.

CPI-ML in other areas also. The vote share of the CPI-ML/IPF in 1990 and 1995 Assembly elections has been between 2.5%-3.0% and have won 7 seats and 6 seats respectively. Thus, unlike Uttar Pradesh, where BSP enjoys nearly full support of the dalits and aims to gain the remaining of the Congress dalit base, in Bihar, the dalits have supported either Laloo Prasad or the CPI-ML. In fact, their support for Janata Dal is premised on promise of social justice made by the party failing which they would enjoy their option to either support the JD or go for either BSP or CPI-ML. Nevertheless, both U.P. and Bihar have witnessed rise of their political consciousness. Moreover, all parties are competing to gain support from this section of the society.

5.4. HOMOGENISING IDIOM : HINDUTVA AND THE BJP IN THE TWO STATES

After 1985, political and electoral mobilizations in north India have witnessed both caste-based and religion-based mobilizations. The idiom of hindutva has been used by the BJP in order to bring different castes under a single umbrella in order to reap its electoral benefit. The decline of the Congress has led to shift of upper caste votes from it to the BJP in both the States, for the latter is considered as an alternative to the former by the upper castes. However, the rise of the BJP is more pronounced in Uttar Pradesh than in Bihar. In Bihar, the BJP got 16, 39 and 41 seats in 1985, 1990 and 1995

respectively with vote share of 7.6%, 11.4% and 18% for the same years. In Uttar Pradesh, however, it has multiplied its seats from 16 in 1985 to 174 in 1996 and its vote share from 9.8% in 1985 to 33.4% in 1996. The reason for this difference may be attributed to the strength of the hindutva movement in U.P., because of the location of the disputed place and the resultant polarization. Moreover, BJP is resorting to alliance-making - with BSP in U.P. and with Samata Party in Bihar - in order to gain the dalits and non-Yadav backward caste votes for itself. While, it is the main opposition in Bihar, it has occupied the first position in Uttar Pradesh and has emerged as the largest party.

5.5 PARTY INSTITUTIONALISATION, POLITICAL POLARIZATION AND PARTY COMPETITION

In the States of Uttar Pradesh and Bihar, the fourth Assembly elections, 1967 ushered in a period of multi-party competition. Both states witnessed proliferation of parties, fragmentation of the party system and displacement of the Congress from its dominant position though temporarily. As a result, coalitional instability became the order in both states between 1967-71/72. While, Uttar Pradesh witnessed four coalition and minority governments between 1967-71/72, Bihar had nine coalition governments including minority governments for the said period. The increased party competition and political conflict in both the States were reflection of the mobilization and emergence of the middle castes and rich peasants in these States. In

fact, the 1960s represents the first phase of entry of non-upper caste segment of the society into politics in these states. The horizontal cohesion of these castes provided basis for non-Congressism of Lohiate variety. Nevertheless, both the states have witnessed political conflict because of assertion of the middle castes whose status converges with rich peasant class identity.²⁷ Thus, both the States witnessed political polarization between upper caste dominated Congress and middle caste/rich peasant supported Samyukta Vidhayak Dal. In fact, the political process of these States reflected to a large extent the impact of agrarian issues²⁸ as well as the issue of backward caste reservation.²⁹

Nevertheless, this polarization proved to be short lived and none of the states provided a viable alternative to the Congress. Splits, defections and floating of new parties continued in the late sixties and seventies which stood in the way of emergence of a viable opposition. However, the period between 1967 and 1977 in Uttar Pradesh witnessed three party competition between the Congress, the

27. See, Hasan, Zoya, "Power and Mobilization: Patterns of Resilience and Change in Uttar Pradesh Politics", and Frankel, F.R., "Land, Caste and Dominance in Bihar", in Frankel, F.R. and Rao, M.S.A. (eds.), *Op. cit.*, 1989, and Pai, Sudha, *Uttar Pradesh: Agrarian Change and Electoral Politics, Op. cit.*

28. Pai, Sudha, *Op. cit.*, p.137.

29. Frankel, F.R., *Op. cit.*, 1989.

BKD/BLD and the Jana Sangh: The three parties maintained their vote share - the Congress got about 32%, the BKD about 21% and the BJS about 18% of total votes. On the other hand, in Bihar, between 1967-77, none of the opposition showed consistency regarding its vote share. The BJS, the SSP, the Socialist Party and the Congress (O) changed their positions vis, vote share. Thus, while in Uttar Pradesh, the period of 1967-77 showed trends of party institutionalization, this was absent in Bihar.

Furthermore, both the States witnessed a two party situation emerging in late 1970s. The direct competition between the Congress and the Janata Party represented crystallization of the political conflict in these States. Nevertheless, the post-Janata period witnessed fragmentation of the Janata Party and revival of the Congress. The second half of 1980s and 1990s has witnessed intense party competition in these states. This period is also conspicuous by the mobilization of the dalits and other backward castes other than those who were mobilized in 1960s.³⁰ As a result of mobilization of dalits, BCs/OBCs as well as mobilization based on hindutva identity, political competition has increased in the two states. However, the situation is of competition but fragmented party system.

30. In the 1960s, the major backward castes who were mobilized constitute - Yadavs, Jats, Koeris, Kurmis, etc.

Moreover, the party competition in the states present varying trend, while in Uttar Pradesh, the BJP and the BSP show increasing share of vote which also shows their institutionalization, they are relatively weak in Bihar. The Congress shows a trend of deinstitutionalization in both the States. In Uttar Pradesh, the Janata Dal and the Samajwadi Party compete for the same social support-base. As a result, instability and fluidity is more pronounced. In Bihar, however, the Janata Dal has succeeded in mobilizing the social coalition of Yadavs-Muslims and SCs as well as same sections of the OBCs. Thus, relative institutionalization of the Janata Dal makes it as the major party which provide pivot for stability. The 1990s has witnessed fluidity and unstable coalitions in Uttar Pradesh.

Thus, it can be inferred that both Uttar Pradesh and Bihar though started within the Congress dominant party framework and experimented with coalition governments has reached at different stages. While Bihar has multi-party competition with relative stability, Uttar Pradesh is grappling with fragmentation and fluidity. Nevertheless, both the States present a picture where a viable, patterned party interaction is absent, hence shifting alliances and realignment of forces.

CHAPTER-6

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

This enquiry seeks to explore the linkages between party systems and coalition behaviour as well as how coalition politics affects evolution of party system through integration, polarization, realignment or disintegration and split of parties. The relationship between intra-party factional conflict and inter-party competition has bearing on coalition politics. Coalition behaviour is largely a function of prevailing pattern of party competition. Organisational incohesiveness of party (parties) in the form of factionalism largely affect coalition behaviour. Moreover, two broad patterns of inter-party interaction can be identified. Firstly, it is the factional pattern of interaction which identifies interfactional competition as the basic mode of co-existence of parties. The framework of Congress 'system' applies this conceptual category in order to account for both inter-party competition and coalition behaviour. Hereby, coalitional instability is caused by factional rivalry and continuous shifting of loyalties by factions. Secondly, it is the pattern of interaction based on policy preferences of parties. In fact, these two

patterns, factional and spatial,¹, underpins the understanding of inter-party and coalition behaviour.

An attempt has been to apply the conceptual categories of these two models - 'factionalism' and 'policy preferences' of parties along with categories like 'breakdown of the national consensus', 'competition amongst parties for institutionalization' etc., in order to understand party competition and coalition behaviour. The period of 1967-95 represents transformation of party systems from one stage to another. Since party system has undergone qualitative changes, a multi-variable framework seems to be more appropriate for accounting party competition at different stages.

The selection of these two States has been premised on the fact of presence of comparative elements between them. There are two basic similarities between Uttar Pradesh and Bihar. Both the States have evolved within the framework of 'one-party dominance' system. And the contemporary changes because of the decline and deinstitutionalization of the Congress 'system' are more pronounced in these States. Nevertheless, they present variations also. These variations are reflected in the pattern of party

1. See, Brass, Paul R., "Coalition politics in North India", op.cit., and Mitra, Subrata K., Governmental Instability in Indian States, op.cit. These two studies are representative examples of two frameworks, respectively.

competition, political stability/instability,, coalition politics, realignment of political forces, electoral mobilization, search for polarization etc. In fact, understanding of political process in these two states promises to point towards larger trends in Indian politics. Nonetheless, before drawing conclusions from this study and posing further questions, it would be appropriate to summarize it.

After 1967 elections, the States of Bihar and Uttar Pradesh along with other states, witnessed displacement of the hitherto dominant party - the Congress, by coalitions of opposition parties. The period of 1967-71/72 in both the states has been conspicuous by rise and fall of several coalition governments. In Uttar Pradesh, there were four governments - coalitions and minority, within a span of nearly four years. Similarly, the situation in Bihar was also fluid. However, there were nine such governments in Bihar for the same period. Initially, both the states showed polarized competition between the Congress and the non-Congress parties. Subsequently, however, situations changed and the Congress itself intervened by breaking opposition coalitions and participating into several coalitions. In Uttar Pradesh, the Congress party forged alliance with Charan Singh's BKD and formed government thereby destabilizing the non-Congress SVD coalition in 1970. Similarly, in Bihar, out of the nine coalition and

minority governments between 1967 and 1971, the Congress either participated or supported from outside in the five of them. It is also appropriate to point out that Charan Singh's BKD played critical role in Uttar Pradesh in various coalitions so far as realignments and coalitional instability is concerned. Charan Singh had earlier left Congress to join the SVD. Again he aligned with the Congress and formed coalition government; subsequently, however, returned to the non-Congress front. The behaviour of BKD can be explained only by relating it with its support base and its interest.

In Bihar, however, the BKD was not so strong to influence the course of coalition formation and its break-up. Here, fragmentation of party system was most obvious. Both the Congress and the SSP faced splits and launching of new parties by the breakaway groups. This period witnessed floating and revival of five new parties and legislative groups after the 1967 elections. The newly formed parties like the BKD, LTC, Shoshit Dal, etc. played crucial part in coalitional instability.

Thus, the states of Bihar and Uttar Pradesh present a case of fluidity and instability during the period of 1967-71. Initially, starting with Congress-'non-Congress' polarized situation, fluidity and patternlessness prevailed subsequently in alliances and coalition making. Nevertheless, the split of the Congress into Congress(R)

which claimed to have a left-to-the centre orientation and Congress(O) which aligned with non-Congress front, brought new possibilities of alignments. Moreover, the tactical and theoretical understanding of the CPI brought it close to the Congress(R). The PSP also oriented itself towards the Congress(R). Thus, non-Congressism faced new alignments and a new polarized situation emerged after 1969. The Congress(R), CPI, PSP launched the Progressive Vidhayak Dal (PVD). The Samayukta Vidhayak Dal (SVD) of non-Congress parties and the Progressive Vidhayak Dal (PVD) of the Congress(R) represented two poles. This new equation also reflected itself in the coalition politics of the two States.

The causal factors for fluidity and coalitional instability can be identified as factional shift of loyalty which resulted because of organizational incohesiveness of parties especially at the centre of the political spectrum like the Congress, the SSP, etc., as well as the policy differences amongst parties on major issues like, land reforms, agricultural policy, status of Urdu, etc. Nevertheless, these factors account for instability and fluidity only when it has already been introduced into the system. I argue that two important factors can be identified which introduced instability into the political system. Firstly, the massive mobilization of the intermediate (backward) castes/rich peasantry castes and

their politicization led to their asserting at the political level. Their entry into the political process brought two important issues into the politics of these two states. These issues - the issue of reservation for backward castes, and the issue of agricultural policy, came to play crucial role in party competition of these states. The politics of non-Congressism based itself on this support base. The political conflict reflected itself as Congress vs. non-Congress competition. Secondly, the division within the Congress into two groups and its subsequent vertical split proved the point that Congress had failed to evolve 'consensus' which it had successfully done earlier. This period is also marked by breakdown of the 'national consensus'.² Thus, entry of a new section of society into the political process and breakdown of the national consensus introduced instability into the system.

Nevertheless, the 1970s is characterised by the return of Congress dominance. However, in U.P. two opposition parties - the BKD/BLD and the BJS were maintaining their progressive rise. The 1977 witnessed coming together of the very parties which had provided the base for the SVD of 1967-71. The Janata Party formed by merging of four parties - BLD, BJS, Congress(O), CFD and also the Socialist, acted more as a coalition than as a party. This experiment once

2. Mitra, Subrata K., Governmental Instability in Indian States, op. cit., preface.

again represented the crystallization of political conflict. The 1970s has witnessed mobilization of opposition forces against the Congress by Jaya Prakash Narayan. However, the internal contradiction amongst the parties as well as the limitation posed by the internal differentiation amongst the backward castes viz. their mobilization as horizontally cohesive group, resulted in the failure of non-Congressism.

The eighties witnessed not only the fragmentation of the party system but also mobilization of the OBCs, backward castes other than those who were mobilized during the 1960s like Jats, Yadavs, Koeris, Kurmis, etc., as well as conscious and independent assertion of the dalits. Despite Congress' relative dominant position in the first half, the second half of eighties again witnessed attempt at mobilization of backward castes as one group behind the Janata Dal. The states of U.P. and Bihar have witnessed mobilization both on caste and community lines. In 1990s, the four upper backward castes - Yadavs; Koeris, Kurmis and Jats are all divided belying any possibility of horizontal cohesion. The Yadavs are supporting the Janata Dal of Laloo Prasad in Bihar while in U.P. they are behind SP of Mulayam Singh Yadav. The koeris and Kurmis are behind the Samata Party which has an alliance with the BJP. The Jats are divided between the BJP and the Janata Dal in U.P. Moreover, the newly mobilized OBCs are supporting Janata Dal as well as the BJP. The Dalits are the main base of the BSP

in U.P., while in Bihar they have opted for other alternatives like the JD and the CPI-ML.

In fact, the late 1980s and 1990s is conspicuous by factors like break-down of the 'national consensus' as well as entry of the Dalits and the OBCs into the political process of these states. While in U.P., all parties are competing to consolidate their social base, in Bihar, Janata Dal has been able to forge a broader social coalition of Yadavs-Muslims-SCs. The situation in U.P. is one of instability and fluidity while Bihar is one of stability but with potential of disintegration.

Thus, this study reveals that there is close linkage between party system, coalition politics as well as social support bases. The mobilization of new section of society intensifies political conflict and party competition. Likewise, 'breakdown of the national consensus' creates possibilities of realignment of political forces which initiates fluidity into the political system. This is true both for 1967-71 and in the post-1985 period. It is important to point out that the breakdown of the national consensus has a larger impact on these states because of the fact that these states have been one-party dominant system and unlike other states have failed to evolve a two-party or

three party system.³ Succinctly, it can be said that coalitional experiments in the 1990s very much reflect the fissures at the social level from below and break down of the national consensus from above.

Moreover, it is also clear that not only factionalism but factors like policy differences amongst the parties, their effort to protect their social bases and consolidate themselves also lead to coalitional instability. However, coalition politics also reflects the competition of parties to gain social support bases. Coalitions at the political level like that of the SP-BSP or the BSP-BJP don't lead to coalition at the social level also like that of the BC-Dalit or Dalit-upper caste respectively. These attempts are meant to forge a broader electorally viable social coalition by either gaining through adjustment or by making inroads into other parties bases.

The relationship between party system and coalition politics leads to the conclusion that fragmentation of the party system, organisational incohesiveness because of factionalism, presence of ideologically divergent parties, lack of committed bases for parties and their effort for institutionalisation, all have a direct bearing on coalitional instability.

3. Manor, James, "Regional Parties in Federal Systems: India in Comparative Perspective", in Balveer Arora and Douglas Verney (ed.), *Op. cit.*

Nevertheless, this study also leads to raise certain doubts and questions. Importantly, intra-party factionalism and inter-party competition are related through the Congress system. Now with the decline of the Congress and its coalition of social forces, as well as with the emergence of parties seeking to create 'polarized' social bases, it is important to ask as to what direction factionalism takes. Is it that increase in inter-party competition leads to decrease in intra-party factionalism?⁴ It is also important to point out that factions also represent certain cleavages in society and may not always be just instrumental and autonomous of social cleavages. For example, Charan Singh's BKD/BLD is largely identified with the rich peasantry of the Western Uttar Pradesh. Moreover, even when he was inside the Congress, he represented this interest. Thus, it is important to ask what relationship factions bear with social cleavages or what are the socio-economic bases of factions?⁵

Furthermore, it is clear that coalition and realignments does not necessarily obstruct political polarization. Thus, polarization may lead to structuring the party competition within the coalitional model itself.

4. Brass, Paul R. *Factional Politics in an Indian States: The Congress Party in U.P.*, Op. cit., Oxford University Press, 1966, p. 233.
5. Carras, Mary C., *The Dynamics of Indian Political Factions*, Op. cit.

It can lead to a tri-lateral or bilateral competition. However, it is necessary to locate conditions for polarization. The states of Bihar and Uttar Pradesh are faced with competing parties and mobilization of different sections of population. It is appropriate to point out that Congress' attempt to forge social coalition went hand in hand with factionalism. What are the possibilities of factionalism when parties are trying to forge broader social bases? Polarized bases will increase political competition while forging of broader social bases will reflect at the organisational level in terms of 'incohesiveness'.

Thus, answer to these questions will certainly have bearing on further evolution of the party competition and coalitional behaviour.

APPENDIX-A

COALITION GOVERNMENTS IN UTTAR PRADESH (1967-1995)

| Chief Minister | Period | Parties in Coalition |
|---|-------------------------|---|
| 1. Charan Singh (JC) | 14.03.1967 - 01.04.1968 | Jana Cong. SSP, PSP, BJS, SWA, RPI, IND. |
| 2. C.B. Gupta (Cong/Cong (O)) | 26.02.1969 - 10.02.1970 | Cong/Cong (O) (after Nov.1969 supported by BJS and SSP |
| 3. Charan Singh (BKD) | 17.02.1970 - 24.09.1970 | BKD, Cong (R) |
| 4. T.N. Singh (SVD) | 18.10.1970 - 30.03.1971 | SSP, BKD, Cong (O), SWA, BJS |
| 5. Ram Naresh Yadav (Janata Party) | 15.06.1977 - 15.02.1979 | Janata Coali- tion (BLD, Cong (O), BJS, CFD, SOC. |
| 6. Banarsi Das Gupta (Janata Party) | 28.02.1979 - Feb. 1980 | Janata Coali- tion (BLD, Cong (O), BJS, CFD, SOC. |
| 7. Mulayam Singh Yadav (JD[S]) | 05.12.1989 - 04.04.1990 | Janata Dal (S) supported by Cong (I) and BSP. |
| 8. Mulayam Singh Yadav (SP) | Dec. 1993 - June 1995 | SP, BSP supported by JD, Cong (I), CPI |
| 9. Mayawati (BSP) | June 1995 - Oct. 1995 | BSP supported by the BJP |

APPENDIX-B

COALITION GOVERNMENTS IN BIHAR (1967-1995)

| Chief Minister | Period | Parties in Coalition |
|----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|---|
| 1. Mayamaya Prasad (JKD) | 05.03.1967 - 25.01.1968 | SSP, BJS, CPI, PSP JKD (backed by CPI(M), SWA |
| 2. Satish Pd.Sinha (Shoshit Dal) | 28.01.1968 - 31.01.1968 | Minority Govt. of SHD backed by Cong. |
| 3. B.P. Mandal (SHD) | 01.02.1968 - 18.03.1968 | SHD Minority Govt. backed by Cong. |
| 4. Bhola Paswan Shastri (LTC) | 22.03.1968 - 28.06.1968 | SSP, LTC, BKD, PSP, BJS, CPI, JAP |
| 5. Harihar Singh (Congress) | 26.02.1969 - 20.06.1969 | Congress, SHD, JAP, BKD, HJH, SWA, IND |
| 6. Bhola Paswan (LTC) | 23.06.1969 - 01.07.1969 | LTC, SHD, BKD, HJH backed by SSP, CPI BJS, PSP |
| 7. Daroga Rai Cong (R) | 16.02.1970 - 18.12.1970 | Cong (R), BKD, SHD, JKP, LTC, HJH backed by CPI and PSP |
| 8. Karpoori Thakur (SSP) | 22.12.1970 - 01.06.1971 | SSP, Cong (O), BJS, JAP, BKD, SHD, HJH, SWA. PSP (one sec.) |
| 9. Bhola Paswan Cong (R) | 02.06.1971 - 27.12.1971 | Cong (R), CPI, PSP, SHD (J), JKP (Horo), HJH, BKD |
| 10. Karpoori Thakur (JNP) | 15.06.1977 - 19.04.1979 | Janata Coalition: BLD, BJS, Cong (O), CFD, SOC |
| 11. Ram Sundar Das (JNP) | 24.04.1979 - ^{Feb.} 1980 | Janata Coalition: BLD, BJS, Cong (O), CFD, SOC |
| 12. Laloo Prasad Yadav (JD) | 10.03.1990 - ^{Feb.} 1995 | JD supported by CPI CPI(M), IPF, JMM, etc. |

APPENDIX - C

DISTRIBUTION of CASTE AND COMMUNITIES in U.P., 1931

| Category | Name of the caste | Percentage of total population |
|------------------------|---|--------------------------------|
| A Upper caste | <i>brahman</i> | 9.2 |
| | <i>thakur</i> | 7.2 |
| | <i>bania</i> | 2.5 |
| | <i>kayastha</i> | 1.0 |
| | <i>khatri</i> | 0.1 |
| Total of sur-group A : | | 20.0 |
| B Middle castes | <i>jat</i> | 1.6 |
| | <i>bhumihar</i> | 0.4 |
| | <i>tyagi</i> | 0.1 |
| Total of sub-group B : | | 2.1 |
| C Backward castes | <i>yadav</i> | 8.7 |
| | <i>kurmi</i> | 3.5 |
| | <i>lodh</i> | 2.2 |
| | <i>koeri</i> | 2.8 |
| | <i>gujar</i> | 0.7 |
| | <i>kahar</i> | 2.3 |
| | <i>gadaria</i> | 2.0 |
| | <i>tehi</i> | 2.0 |
| | <i>barhai</i> | 1.5 |
| | <i>kachi</i> | 1.3 |
| | <i>kewat</i> | 1.1 |
| | <i>murao</i> | 1.3 |
| | <i>nai</i> | 1.8 |
| <i>others</i> | 10.7 | |
| Total of sub-group C : | | 41.7 |
| D Scheduled castes | <i>chamar</i> | 12.7 |
| | <i>pasis</i> | 2.9 |
| | <i>dhobi</i> | 1.6 |
| | <i>bhangi</i> | 1.0 |
| | <i>others</i> | 2.8 |
| Total of sub-group D : | | 21.0 |
| E Muslims | <i>saikh</i> | 3.2 |
| | <i>pathan</i> | 2.2 |
| | <i>julaha</i> | 2.0 |
| | <i>syed</i> | 0.7 |
| | <i>moghul</i> | 0.1 |
| | <i>others(faqir, shunia, tehi, nai, darzi, qasab, etc.)</i> | 6.8 |
| Total of sub-group E : | | 15.0 |

¹ Source : 1931 Census, United Provinces of Agra and Awadh . Part 2, Provincial and Imperial Tables, 1993.

APPENDIX - D

DISTRIBUTION of CASTE and COMMUNITIES in BIHAR

| Category | Caste Group | Percentage of Total Population |
|-------------------|--------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Twice-born Castes | brahman | 4.7 |
| | bhumihar | 2.9 |
| | rajput | 4.2 |
| | kayastha | 1.2 |
| | bania | 0.6 |
| Upper Shudras | ahir(yadav) | 11.0 |
| | kurmi | 3.6 |
| | koiri | 4.1 |
| Lower Shudras | barhi | 1.0 |
| | dhanuk | 1.8 |
| | kahar | 1.7 |
| | kandu | 1.6 |
| | kumbar | 1.3 |
| | lohar | 1.3 |
| | mallah | 1.5 |
| | nai | 1.4 |
| | tatwa | 1.6 |
| | teli | 2.8 |
| | other Shudras (less than 1% each) | 16.0 |
| Muslims | | 12.5 |
| Sheduled Castes | | 14.1 |
| Sheduled Tribe | | 9.1 |
| Total | | 100 |

Source : Harry W. Blair, Voting, Caste, Community, Society : Exploration in Aggregate Data Analysis in India and Bangladesh, New Delhi, Young India, 1979, Page 5

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