PDP AND COALITION POLITICS: RE-EMERGENCE OF DEMOCRACY IN JAMMU AND KASHMIR, 1999-2008

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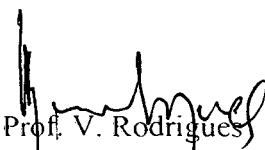JAWAHARLAL NEHRU UNIVERSITY
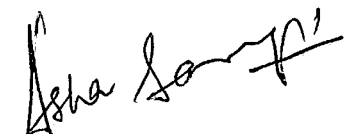NEW DELHI- 110067, INDIA

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I declare that the dissertation entitled **"PDP AND COALITION POLITICS: RE-EMERGENCE OF DEMOCRACY IN JAMMU AND KASHMIR, 1999-2008"** is submitted by me for the award of the degree of Master of Philosophy of Jawaharlal Nehru University is my own work and has not been submitted in part or in full for any other degree or diploma of any university.

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We recommend that this dissertation be placed before the examiners for evaluation.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Introduction

The rise of People's Democratic Party (PDP), a Kashmir based regional party, and the emergence of coalition politics have been significant developments in the politics of Jammu and Kashmir (J&K). Since the formation of PDP in 1999 as an alternative to National Conference, the politics of the state is centered around state level parties. It brought vibrancy in the mainstream politics and introduced the factor of competition[1] which bolstered electoral democracy in the state. The competitive element experienced in 2002 increased the appeal for electoral democracy[2] and it resulted in a high voter turnout in the 2008 state assembly elections.[3] Moreover, the new party adopted a people-oriented approach, introduced healing touch policy and put forward self-rule as a solution to the Kashmir problem. It tried to address the alienation of the people in a state which has been the cause of war between India and Pakistan and a state which has grappled with militancy and violence since the 1990s. In addition, the state politics shifted from one party to coalition politics in 2002. The coalition government was a power sharing arrangement which satisfied the political aspirations of both Jammu and Kashmir regions.

The state of J&K is divided into three regions: Jammu, Kashmir and Ladakh. All the regions have different geographical, political and cultural characteristics. Jammu is the most accessible region of the state as it is directly connected to Punjab and Himachal Pradesh.[4] Politically, the region has always complained about the dominance of Kashmir and Kashmir based leadership. The politics of the region has multiple players: National Conference, Congress, BJP, and Panthers Party. In recent times, PDP and BSP have also joined the political landscape of Jammu. Culturally, the region has a majority of Hindus, although, there is a vast population of Muslims and the main language spoken is Dogri. The

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[1] Rekha Chowdhary, "J&K: Once Again on the Brink," *Seminar* 591 (2008).
[2] Rekha Chowdhary, "Separatists Sentiments and Deepening of Democracy," *Economic and Political Weekly* 44, no. 3 (2009): 14.
[3] 61% (approx.) was the officially recorded polling percentage in 2008 elections.
[4] Afsir Karim, *Kashmir: The Troubled Frontiers* (New Delhi: Lancer, 1994), 37.

Kashmir region has gained importance because of the India-Pakistan dispute over the accession of the state. A Muslim majority state within the Indian fold and the peaceful co-existence of Hindus and Muslims in the state negated the two-nation theory which laid the foundation for the creation of Pakistan. Thus, Pakistan was uncomfortable with the idea of Kashmir being a part of India. For India, Kashmir was important as it strengthened the secular fabric of the country. The dispute between India and Pakistan resulted in a turbulent period in the politics of the state. National Conference has a strong presence in the valley and has given three generations of leaders to the state.[5] Culturally, it's a Muslim majority region and the main languages spoken are Kashmiri and Urdu. Ladakh is located at a very high altitude and shares border with China and Tibet. Majority of the people are Buddhist and speak Ladakhi. The political divide between Jammu and Kashmir has completely isolated Ladakh and a movement demanding a Union Territory status started in the region so that it could directly deal with the centre in order to bring socio-economic progress. The inter-regional relationship is a crucial dimension of the politics of J&K. The focus of the centre has been Kashmir and its leaders. The people of Jammu have always demanded full integration of the state with India; they reject the demand for autonomy, and want the abrogation of Article 370. A few regional groups have also raised the demand for a separate state of Jammu. The Jammu Mukti Morcha (JMM), a regional outfit, founded in the early 1990s argues for a separate Jammu state because it believes that political and regional imbalances favour the valley at the cost of Jammu and Ladakh. The JMM constituted a political wing called Jammu State Morcha to fight the 2002 assembly elections. Other groups demanding a separate state are J&K Nationalist Front (JKNF), Jammu Tigers, People's Revolutionary Movement, Duggar Pradesh Party, Confederation of Jammu Lawyers, J&K Panther's Party, a splinter group of Bhim Singh's Panther Party, and the state unit of Janata Dal (S). A few groups have formed the All Party Jammu Statehood Movement in order to

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[5] Sheikh Abdullah was the prime minister of Kashmir from 1948 till 1953. He became the chief minister in 1975 till his death in 1982. His son Farooq Abdullah became chief minister in 1982. The present government is headed by Omar Abdullah, the grandson of Sheikh and son of Farooq.

distance themselves from the RSS backed JMM and JKNF.[6] The people of Ladakh also share similar sentiments. They want more development for the region and a power sharing arrangement at the governmental level. Over the years regional polarization has become stronger due to vote bank politics in the state. At times, parties like the BJP and JMM have also made the regional divide a communal issue since Kashmir is predominately Muslim and Jammu has more Hindus. The coalition addressed the political grievance of the Jammu region by rotating the chief ministership and allowing a leader from Jammu to take over as the first chief minister from the region. The coalition also granted autonomy to the Ladakh Hill Development Council. This study examines coalition politics for the period of 2002-08 which was an attempt to end regional polarization and bring the polity closer to a democratic power sharing arrangement.

The study also examines the formation of PDP and its impact on the politics of the state. The significance of the study stems from the fact that PDP operates within the same paradigm as the National Conference and both share similar ideologies,[7] yet it was able to carve out a space for itself in mainstream politics and capture the imagination of common Kashmiris. The study shows that PDP emerged as a challenge to the dominance of National Conference in the valley and as a result, the election process became more meaningful. Moreover, the party politically connected with the people by raising issues such as human rights violation, demilitarization and dialogue with the separatists. Thus, people-oriented politics, erosion of one party rule and competitive electoral politics strengthened the prospects of democratization in the state.

Although Kashmir became a part of the Indian democratic framework in 1947, democracy was not allowed to flourish in the state. In the 1990s, militancy and politics of separatism resulted in a collapse of mainstream politics. However, political situation changed in late 1990s as the level of violence came down and

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[6] *Daily Excelsior*, February 19, 2001.
[7] Rekha Chowdhary and V.Nagendra Rao, "Alienation in Kashmir and Election 2002," *World Focus* 23, no. 10-12 (2002): 37.

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the introduction of PDP and coalition politics led to the re-emergence of democratic politics in the state.

Scholars have argued that Kashmir was integrated with India but democracy was not allowed to consolidate itself in the state. Sumantra Bose argues that failure of democracy in the state was justified by invokating interest and integration of the Indian nation.[8] Balraj Puri has reiterated that demand for democracy in Kashmir and India's national interest were considered incompatible.[9] The removal of Sheikh Abdullah as prime minister in 1953 was the first major blow to democracy in the state. The period 1950-70 witnessed the 'installation' of chief ministers: Bakshi Ghulam Mohammed, G.M. Sadiq and Mir Qasim. After the Sheikh-Indira Accord of 1975, Sheikh was reinstated as the chief minister without elections. A repeat of his dismissal took place in 1980s when his son, an elected chief minister of the state was removed from office through political manipulations by the central leadership of the Congress Party. For many years the politics of the state centered around one party and one leader. Opposition parties were prevented from growing in the state. Thus, elections were merely a democratic formality in the state rather than a contest between political parties.

Beyond procedures, one party-one leader phenomenon also eroded the element of power sharing at two levels: at the level of different regions of the state which has been discussed earlier and at the level of centre-state relations. Constant central intervention in the politics of the state has been a big blow for federalism in India. Since 1953, the centre has been dismissing governments and installing chief ministers loyal to the centre. Even the state leaders have contributed to the weakening of federalism by acting as agents of the centre. National Conference has always tried to form an alliance with the party ruling at the centre, be it Congress, Janata or even BJP. The key to remain in power in the state is to form

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[8] Sumantra Bose, *Challenge in Kashmir: Democracy, Self-Determination and a Just Peace* (New Delhi: Sage, 1997), 50.

[9] Balraj Puri, *Kashmir: Insurgency and After* (New Delhi: Orient Longman, 2008), 58.

alliance with party ruling the centre. This idea is central to the politics of the state and has completely ruined the democratic ethos of the polity.

However, PDP evolved an idea of 'independent' chief minister. The leader of the Party, Mufti Mohammed Sayeed, was an elected chief minister who did not allow much interference of the central government. Infact, for the first time, a state government actively took part in the peace process and conflict resolution of the Kashmir problem.

A crucial facet of J&K politics is that the state politics, particularly the Kashmir region, has a strong presence of state level parties.[10] Sudha Pai defines such parties as "restricted in a particular state and rooted in both regional aspirations and grievances and these parties are restricted to a particular state because they identify themselves with regional culture, language and religion."[11] Incidentally, the two major state level parties in J&K are based in Kashmir. The PDP has certain specific characteristics which it shares with its main rival: National Conference. Both are one leader or rather one family oriented parties. The PDP is dominated by Mufti Mohammed Sayeed and his daughter Mehbooba Mufti. The leaders of National Conference are Farooq Abdullah and his son Omar Abdullah. Secondly, both parties project themselves as pro-Kashmir. When PDP started raising issues like human rights violation, demilitarization and dialogue with separatists, the National Conference, to prevent losing its supporters, promised to look into human rights violations and demanded removal of draconian laws which apply to the state. Although, the parties are based in Kashmir, both nurse the desire to expand in the other regions as well. National Conference, being the oldest party in the state has presence in the Jammu and Ladakh regions. PDP is a new political outfit with negligible presence in the other regions. However, the party made in roads in the Jammu region in 2008 by winning two seats and more

[10] Suhas Palshikar, "Revisiting State-Level Parties," *Economic and Political Weekly* 39, no. 3-10 (2004): 1477.
[11] Sudha Pai. "Regional Parties and the Emerging Pattern of Politics in India," *Indian Journal of Political Science* 51, no. 3 (1990): 393.

importantly, it won in the backdrop of serious political divide between Jammu and Kashmir over the Amarnath land transfer issue.

The parties differ on the solution to the Kashmir problem. National Conference has always suggested autonomy while being a part of the Indian Union. National Conference wants the state politics to return to the pre-1953 period when Kashmir was relatively autonomous. However, PDP advocates self-rule as the solution to the Kashmir dispute. It suggests the integration of 'two Kashmirs'[12] and proposes an autonomous Kashmir with joint control by India and Pakistan. Thus, the party has emerged as an alternative to National Conference and occupies a central position in the politics of J&K.

CHAPTERIZATION

The main focus of the dissertation is on the democratic experience of J&K with special reference to PDP and coalition politics. The study is laid out in four chapters. The first chapter titled 'Understanding Democracy: Theoretical Conceptions and Democratic Experience' is an attempt to examine the theoretical conceptions and the experience of democracy. Democracy is understood as a universal value which has both procedural and substantive dimensions. The chapter also enlists certain qualities that are required for attaining good democracy. Theoretical conceptions explain the concept of democracy from different perspectives. Democracy establishes fair procedures in a system of governance. It also tries to recognize and seek to represent diversity in a political system. Democracy attacks the notion of concentration of power and promotes power sharing through coalition building. People have a supreme position in a democracy. Thus, the deliberative conception of democracy advocates the inclusion of people in governance by encouraging them to participate in discussions and debates on issues pertaining to their welfare. There has to be a connection between the 'ruler' and the 'ruled'. The chapter also incorporates a

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[12] Few areas of Kashmir occupied by the Pakistan army are called *Azad* Kashmir.

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recent conception of democracy named deviant democracy. Indian democracy has survived despite daunting challenges and the democratic experience refutes most of the western theories on democracy. Simultaneously, this segment of the chapter also explains why these conceptions of democracy are useful in understanding the experience of democracy in J&K.

A major segment of the chapter discusses the experience of democracy in India which has completed more than sixty years. According to Manoranjan Mohanty the political events over the years have made Indian democracy multi-dimensional and multi-layered and therefore, India contributes a new theory of democracy called creative theory, which is discussed in the chapter. Many scholars have studied the democratic journey of India and have characterized it in different ways which makes it easier for us to understand the practice of democracy.

When the state of J&K integrated with India, as the ruler of the state signed the instrument of accession in favour of joining India, the state was also supposed to imbibe the democratic norms and procedures that India inherited from the colonial rule. However, examining the political history of the state, chapter two argues, that there was a constant attempt to deny democracy to the state. Although, there was parallel movement going on in Kashmir in the 1930-40 to demand independence from the Dogra rule and transfer of power to the people of J&K, the movement could not ensure democratic consolidation post-1947. Soon after independence, India was faced with the daunting task of integrating the princely states. Kashmir posed a major problem as Pakistan claimed sovereignty over the state on the basis of two-nation theory and geographical contiguity.[13] The dispute was internationalized as major powers of the world and the UN tried to sort out the Kashmir issue between India and Pakistan. At the same time, the leader of Kashmir, Sheikh Abdullah, argued for an independent state of Kashmir. Therefore, Pakistan's claim over Kashmir and the subtle demand for its

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[13] Pakistan lost the claim over the state of Hyderabad as India cited the problem of geographical contiguity.

independence made Indian state fearful of losing the only Muslim majority state of India, which was the most important cog in its idea of secularism. Thus, the Indian state resorted to trampling democratic norms in the state by removing the most popular leader Sheikh Abdullah. The central government ensured the leadership of the state was pro-India. It prevented the growth of opposition parties in the mainstream politics by banning their participation in elections on some pretext or the other. It tried to build a polity based on a strong leader rather than strong institutions and rule of law.

Gradually, the centre realized that it was losing the trust of the people which was essential to keep a hold on the state. Therefore, Sheikh Abdullah was brought back as the main actor of the politics of the state, yet the model of a strong leader based polity continued. People were completely disillusioned with the polity and lost all hope when National Conference allied with the Congress. The blatant manipulations and rigging of 1987 state elections resulted in a violent movement demanding independence. Almost a decade was lost in controlling violence in the state. India further complicated the Kashmir problem by denying the growth and consolidation of democracy. It should have ensured the assimilation of the state with democratic India in order to find a solution to the Kashmir dispute; however, the Indian state did the opposite and lost the confidence of the people of Kashmir.

The last segment of the chapter deals with the current phase of Kashmir politics in which India accepted its mistakes and allowed re-emergence of mainstream politics. From the 1996 election onwards, the Indian state has not interfered with the electoral procedures in the state. The people have elected the government and its leader. The one leader-one party model has been replaced by multi-partyism which has transformed the politics of the state.

The next chapter focuses on the emergence and rise of PDP as an alternative to the National Conference. It examines the formation of PDP, its leadership, and electoral performance. The chapter also outlines the core ideology of the party

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which introduces the concept of healing touch and proposes self-rule as the solution to the Kashmir problem. The alternative suggested by the party attempts to end the alienation of Kashmiris and provide a position of dignity to the people of the state. The chapter analyses the electoral performance of the party which reveals the erosion of one-party dominance and the beginning of competitive electoral democracy. The procedure of electing a government is no longer a mere formality but a highly contested election giving ample opportunity to the voter to support any political party which promises the welfare of the common Kashmiri.

The central argument of the chapter is that the rise of an alternative party has changed the character of politics in the state in favor of democracy. The new party has brought competition in power politics and at the same time raised local issues to address the grievances of the people, which is the main goal of democracy. The presence of an alternative party in Kashmir made possible the ouster of a party in power through electoral procedure.[14] The National Conference lost its hegemonic position in the Kashmir region.

Party-Wise Seat Share in the Kashmir Region

Party	Seats Won in 2002	Seats Won in 2008
NC	18	20
PDP	16	19

Source: Election Commission of India

Today, the political space of the entire state is occupied by National Conference, PDP, Congress, BJP and many other smaller parties. Thus, political space has opened up and expanded augmenting the democratic practice in the state.

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[14] Rekha Chowdhary, "Electioneering in Kashmir," *Economic and Political Weekly* 43, no. 28 (2008): 22.

The chapter discusses the localization of mainstream politics by incorporating local issues and offering solution to the Kashmir problem by mainstream political forces. Local concerns and self-rule have become a part of the political parlance of the state. The success of democracy depends upon the mainstreaming popular concerns as it connects the people with the government.

Chapter four examines the shift in party politics of the state since the inception of coalition politics due to multi-partyism in the state. This shift is studied in the context of the rise of coalitions in Indian politics. The main argument of the chapter is that coalitional nature of politics evolved a power sharing arrangement between two parties representing two different regions of the state. For the first time in the history of the state, a leader from the Jammu region became the chief minister in 2005. Coalition politics in the state has facilitated the accommodation of divergent interests and aspirations. The chapter looks at coalition politics since 1987 as the first formal alliance was formed between National Conference and the Congress party in the wake of smaller opposition parties uniting as Muslim United Front. This brought the two parties together in order to capture power in the state.

In contrast, the PDP-Congress alliance was formed post elections and in a circumstance of political confusion as no party won majority in the legislature in 2002. The coalition government was formed after many rounds of discussion and dialogue between the central leadership of both parties. Although, the element of political opportunism cannot be ruled out completely, yet the end result was a power sharing arrangement which reflected the diversity of the state. The working of the coalition was not very smooth but in the bargain the problem of regional discrimination was addressed. Moreover, it was the first experiment with coalition government so there was bound to be trouble in its working.

By the way of a conclusion, the study makes a link between democratic theory and practice taking up the case of J&K. The conclusion shows the experience of

democracy in J&K being starkly juxtapose with the practice of democracy in India. Democratization was prevented in J&K but India is regarded as a role model of democracy. Further, the few conceptions of democracy discussed in chapter one are linked with practice of democracy in J&K. It is suggested that the deliberative model of democracy be used to legitimize the process of resolving the Kashmir dispute.

The final section of the conclusion examines the presence of fundamentalist ideas in the politics of Kashmir. These ideas have emanated from the Islamic quarters and Hindu right-wing politics. Since the re-emergence of democracy, extremism has prevented its consolidation. The recent Amarnath land transfer controversy created a political divide between Jammu and Kashmir. However, the extremists on both sides communalized the issue and challenged the unity and diversity of the state. The conclusion prescribes the adoption of 'democratic fundamentalism' as the supreme idea that should guide politics and society. There should be firm commitment to democratic norms and procedures. The conclusion argues that democratic fundamentalism is the pre-requisite for normalcy in the state.

CHAPTER ONE

UNDERSTANDING DEMOCRACY: THEORETICAL CONCEPTIONS AND DEMOCTRATIC EXPERIENCE

Democracy is a 20th century concept. It existed in an elementary form in ancient Greece but it was realized only in the 20th century when it became an accepted form of governance. In the 21st century, the American mission to democratize the world has made it an 'ideal' model of governance, which all nations must emulate. Democracy has become a universal value. Amartya Sen identifies three merits of democracy which make it a universal value.[1] Democracy guarantees participation, political and social, which ensures human well-being. Exercising political and civil rights is crucial for citizens. This makes democracy an intrinsic value. It is also an instrumental value, in the sense that citizens can hold their government accountable. Democracy is meaningless if government is not kept responsible and accountable. For Sen, democracy has a constructive role as well. Democracy provides an opportunity to citizens to engage in discussion, exchange views and information and understand the needs of others. These merits are universal in character and thus, democracy can make strong claims of being a universal value.

However, it is a major requirement to evaluate and analyze the quality of democracy. A mere adoption of this value is not enough. Leonardo Morlino introduces the idea of 'good democracy'.[2] He suggests that fulfilling minimum requirements like universal adult franchise, recurring, free, competitive elections, more than one political party, and more than one source of information cannot alone establish good democracy. The standard of democracy, which implies knowing what the quality of democracy is, indicates whether it is good or bad.

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[1] Amartya Sen, "Democracy as a Universal Value," *Journal of Democracy* 10, no.3 (1999): 10.
[2] Leonardo Morlino, "What is Good Democracy?" *Democratization* 11, no.5 (2004): 10-32.

Morlino along with Larry Diamond explores and presents eight dimensions of democratic quality:[3] These are-

- Rule of Law, which implies, all citizens are equal before the law, a legal system in place which defends the rights of the citizens, ensures democratic procedures are being followed and the legality of official actions.

- Participation is a basic tenet of good democracy. Participation entails voting, contesting, forming party or a group, protesting, lobbying, participating in civil society organizations, discussing public policy issues, demanding accountability from elected representatives.

- Competition is vital for democracy. Electoral competition between different parties gives citizens opportunity to defeat the incumbent or choose an alternative government. Competition provides an alternative and variety of policy options to choose from. Every party has its own agenda and policy preferences and citizens can vote accordingly.

- Vertical accountability is another feature of good democracy. Elected representatives are responsible and answerable for the actions and decisions. Accountability involves information, justification and punishment.

- Horizontal accountability impacts quality of democracy, in the sense, all officials have to act according to rules and commands of the seniors. In vertical accountability, accountability runs upwards, that is, from citizens to representatives. On the contrary, horizontal accountability involves answering in a lateral way. There is a command and obedience relationship. This kind of accountability ensures leaders act according to legal framework and it also puts a limit to the powers of office holders.

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[3] Larry Diamond and Leonardo Morlino, "An Overview," *Journal of Democracy* 15, no. 4 (2004): 22-25.

These are procedural dimensions. With procedural, there is also a substantive notion of democracy. Procedural view is a narrow conception of democracy. Simply following procedures does not guarantee good democracy. Out of eight dimensions, three are substantive in nature[4]-

- Freedom: political, social and civil, is inevitable part of democracy. Right to vote, contest, campaign, and organize political party are political rights which every citizen must enjoy. At the same time, personal liberty, security, privacy, freedom of speech and expression, freedom of religion, freedom of movement etc. are other rights which reflect quality of democracy.

- Equality: basic feature of a good democracy should be that all citizens have equal rights and duties, same legal protection, equal access to power and resources. A good democracy will always try to mitigate inequalities in society.

- Responsiveness entails two things: one, satisfaction, and two, legitimacy. Democratic quality is ensured when citizens express satisfaction with leaders and institutions. The ultimate aim of governance is to satisfy legitimate demands of the people. Once people are satisfied, they give legitimacy to the rulers. In a democracy, it is necessary win the acceptance and approval of the people.

I. THEORETICAL CONCEPTIONS OF DEMOCRACY

The theory and practice of democracy must relate to each other. In order to understand the experience of democracy in J&K, it is essential to look at a few conceptions of democracy. These conceptions of democracy have been chosen to understand and examine the process of democratization in the state. Each conception will give a different perspective on the idea and practice of

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[4]Ibid., 25-28.

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democracy. The starting point of the discussion is the procedural aspect of democracy. Subsequently, the study will discuss polyarchy, which is an elaboration of procedural democracy. Further, the coalition politics in the state will be understood through consociational democracy of Arend Lijphart. Together, these highlight the older but critical views on democracy. The study would supplement the above conceptions with deliberative and deviant democracy. These two conceptions are being explored by the academic world today.

Procedural Democracy: Ever since democracy actualized in the 20th century, procedural aspect has been the highlight of all political discourses on democracy. As a system of governance, it throws light on the relation between ruler and the ruled and a set of procedures that connect the two. Joseph Schumpeter was very critical of the 18th century view of democracy and suggests refinement in the procedural notion of democracy.[5] The 18th century view is based on people realizing common good and deciding political issues through electing individuals. Schumpeter attacks this view by arguing that governing requires specialists and not everybody has the capacity and ability to rule. He further argues that there is no such thing as common good. It is utopian to believe that people would agree on common good. In such a political system, individual issues will be ignored and always left out. Moreover, it is very difficult to locate the centre of wills of the people. Thus, this view of democracy needs revision and has to be brought closer to real life.

Schumpeter puts forward "another theory of democracy which is much truer to life."[6] He takes the opposite view of classical notion. For him, selecting representatives is the primary role of the people. These representatives will in turn produce a national executive. This view implies, leaders who are selected are specialist in governing. He also incorporates the concept of competition for

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[5] Joseph Schumpeter, *Capitalism, Socialism and Democracy* (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1976), 250-83.
[6] Ibid., 269-83.

leadership. Democracy should be a method of competitive struggle for leadership. This means that people will have install a government of their choice and at the same time, they have the option to displace the incumbent leaders. People can withdraw a government not working for their benefit and replace it with new leaders. This can happen when there is a competition among leaders. Thus, procedural democracy demands competitive elections.

In order to make procedural democracy feasible, Philippe Schmitter and Terry Karl discuss nine essential elements which are regime, ruler, citizens, competition, public realm, majority rule, cooperation among rulers, deliberation and representatives.[7] Regime or a system of governance, according to Schmitter and Karl, institutionalizes procedures. A regime will determine procedure or methods of access to public office, who is included or excluded from the procedures, what are the rules to be followed? Most important component of procedural democracy is the ruler. He occupies the most special position because ruler has the authority to take decisions and give commands. Procedures are put in place so that people can select the rulers. Citizens have a very important role assigned to them in a democratic framework. They have to select the rulers, hold him accountable and replace him if necessary. Citizenship has been a very sensitive issue as inclusion or exclusion from political process depends upon the citizenship status of an individual. Competition is central to democracy. Procedural democracy is equated with elections. But free and fair conduction of elections is a necessary but not a sufficient condition of democracy. Elections must allow citizens to choose between alternative political parties. If there is a single party and people vote for it, votes are counted honestly, yet we cannot claim that the outcome has been achieved through democratic procedure. Public realm brings rulers and citizens closer. It is here that citizens can exchange ideas with the government, give their preferences or grievances. It is also realm where conflicts can be resolved and consensus reached. It is commonly believed that

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[7] See Philippe Schmitter and Terry Karl, "What Democracy Is and Is Not," *Journal of Democracy* 2, no.3 (1991): 76-80.

procedural democracy will lead to majority rule. A majority may emerge before elections and vote for a particular group or a decision may be influenced by a majority group. This can become a problem if a majority deliberately attacks a particular minority. Thus, democratic procedures must incorporate minority rights, provision to protect these rights, sharing powers among different groups.

A central element of procedural democracy is cooperation among rulers and citizens. Different parties, associations groups should act collectively in order to give meaning to democratic procedures and practices. Cooperation encourages citizens to deliberate among themselves. Citizens must engage in deliberation in order to discover common needs and resolve their differences. Democracy becomes real if citizens move beyond their traditional role of electing officials and act collectively to meet their goals instead of relying and depending on central authority for all their needs. Representatives are the real workers who emerge from the democratic procedures. They are the ones who make laws, make decisions and policies on behalf of the citizenry. People hold their respective representatives accountable for bad governance. Democracy cannot survive without representatives and citizens both.

However, procedural democracy has a flaw. Fareed Zakaria has termed procedural notion as illiberal[8] because elections can bring fascist or racist groups to power. Elections and procedures are not enough to be called democracy. At the same time, procedures are significant for the practical functioning of democracy so along with procedures a political system must be marked by rule of law, a separation of powers and protection of basic liberties.

Procedural conception of democracy can be summarized in two points-
1. Regular free and fair elections
2. Competitive electoral politics.

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[8] Fareed Zakaria, "The Rise of Illiberal Democracy," *Foreign Affairs* 76, no.6 (1997): 22-25.

This conception matters for J&K for two strong reasons. One, procedures were reduced to travesty in J&K. This was responsible for the alienation of people. The period 1950-70 was marked by constant central intervention in installing chief ministers. From the 1970s, an attempt was made to restore democratic norms and procedures. However, the attempt failed miserably and 1980s was marked by imposition of Governor's rule. The blatantly manipulated and rigged elections in 1987 led to a separatist movement and militancy. Therefore, non adherence to democratic procedures and norms and failure of National Conference (most popular political party) to address grievances and discontent of the people led to alienation of the people. The second reason for linking procedural conception and J&K politics is the non-competitive character of the electoral space in J&K and the dominance of one party: National Conference. Political space provided to opposition groups was restricted. However, politics of the state has transformed since 2002 and the procedural dimension is useful in examining the political history and contemporary politics of the state.

Polyarchy: Procedural Democracy takes the form of Polyarchy in heterogeneous societies. Robert Dahl calls his conception of democracy 'polyarchy'. In his words-

"The change of scale and its consequences- representative government, greater diversity, the increase in cleavages and conflicts- helped to bring about the development of a set of political institutions that, taken together, distinguish modern representative democracy from all other political systems, whether non democratic regimes or earlier democratic systems. This kind of political system has been called *polyarchy*, a term I use frequently."[9]

For Dahl, polyarchy could be understood in two ways- one, it specifies certain conditions necessary for the maintenance of a democracy in a system and two, presence of political institutions which distinguishes democratic systems from non-democracies.

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[9] Robert Dahl, *Democracy and It's Critics* (New Delhi: Orient Longman, 1991), 218.

Dahl proposes five criteria that a system must satisfy in order to be democratic.[10] One, effective participation- every citizen must have equal and adequate opportunities to participate and express his or her preferences. Two, voting equality which will ensure that the vote of each citizen is important and will be counted as equal in weight in the process of collective decision making. Three, enlightened understanding is an important criterion for polyarchy. Citizens should exchange information and opinions and discover new ideas to shape their preferences and interests. Fourth, it is absolutely essential that the control of the public agenda is vested in the citizens. And finally, inclusion of all citizens is must. Privileges of citizenship should be extended and enjoyed by all the people. David Held analyses the criterion set by Dahl.[11] He argues that the rationale of the criterion is derived from two principles- equal consideration of interests and personal autonomy. Thus, polyarchy tries to promote political equality.

Further, Dahl specifies seven institutions that distinguish polyarchy as a political order. [12] Institutions are important in modern societies and Dahl holds them must for any government to be classified as polyarchy. These institutions are-
Elected officials whose authority is constitutionally defined and limited. A free and fair election is the sine qua non of democracy. Inclusive suffrage which gives all adults the right to vote. At the same time, every adult has the right to run for office, though there may be age limits for holding office. Freedom of expression which gives the citizens right to express themselves freely, without fear of punishment, even if it is expressing displeasure or criticizing the government. Alternative sources of information should be available to citizens. Associational autonomy which gives the citizens a chance to form or be a member of any organization, political party or interest group. Thus, polyarchy aims at institutionalizing democracy.

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[10]See Table, Ibid., 222.

[11] David Held, "The Possibilities of Democracy," review of *Democracy and its Critics*, by Robert Dahl, *Theory and Society* 20, no. 6 (1991): 878.

[12] Ibid., 883.

This conception will facilitate the examination of democracy in Jammu and Kashmir as it states the conditions necessary for the survival of democracy and also emphasizes the importance of institutions in maintaining democracy. Polyarchy will inform us about the fragile nature of democratic politics of the state.

Consociational Democracy: Democracy advocates power sharing which is a necessary element in divided societies. Arend Lijphart prescribes consociational democracy for deeply divided societies. He claims to have borrowed the term from David Apter's study of Uganda.[13] He defines it as "government by elite cartel designed to turn democracy with a fragmented political culture into stable democracy."[14] He establishes a link between consociational democracy and deviant democracy. Consociationalism helps democracy to survive and consolidate itself under unfavorable conditions in deeply divided societies. It is an arrangement in which different groups share power.

Lijphart gives a list of requirements for successful consociational arrangement.[15] Firstly, the ruling elites must have the ability to accommodate divergent interests and demands made by groups. Second, elites must themselves be prepared to work with elites of different subcultures. Third, they must be committed to the system otherwise it is bound to fail. And finally, elites must understand the consequences of political fragmentation. Unless these requirements are not fulfilled, consociational democracy cannot take off as a power sharing arrangement.

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[13] Arend Lijphart, *Thinking about Democracy: Power Sharing and Majority Rule in Theory and Practice* (Oxford: Routledge, 2008), 1.
[14] Ibid., 31
[15] Ibid., 32

He differentiates between consociational and consensual democracy, stating that the former is better arrangement than the latter. Consociational involves groups and diverse population whereas consensual involves parties. Consociational relies on institutional devices but consensual has to rely on informal practices. Consensual is a broad framework for power sharing. Consociational is based on groups and group autonomy thus, being more specific. Consociational has four main characteristics: grand coalition, cultural autonomy, representation and minority veto. Consensual, on the other hand, has nine characteristics like broad coalition cabinet, balance power relations between cabinet and legislature, bicameral legislature, federal and decentralized system, rigid constitution, judicial review, multiparty, multidimensional party system and elections by PR (proportional representation).

Lijphart holds participation as the basic element of successful democracy. Low participation logically implies unequal influence which is detrimental to representative democracy. Therefore, he advocates compulsory or mandatory voting.[16] Thus, the most important features of consociational democracy are executive power sharing and government by grand coalition. The fundamental assumption is that in plural societies the stake of politics is higher than in a homogenous society. Consequently, it becomes significant for political leaders of all segments in a plural society to form a grand coalition to govern the country.

Broadly, there are two ways to understand democratic polity in J&K under this conception. Power sharing between players of mainstream politics. The alliance between NC and Congress was a sham and formed only to gain monopoly of votes.[17] Two strongest parties came together to capture all votes and thus, making the electorate's judgment redundant. Secondly, power sharing in terms of the three regions of the state, that is, between Jammu, Kashmir and Ladakh. Kashmir is more robust politically compared to the other regions. Since 1951, the head of

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[16] Ibid., 214

[17] Sten Widmalm, "The Rise and Fall of Democracy in Jammu and Kashmir," *Asian Survey* 37, no. 11 (1997): 1018.

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the government has always been from the Kashmir region. The three regions have different identities and different political objectives. Not satisfied with the power sharing arrangement, Ladakh is demanding Union territory status and there is a movement in Jammu demanding separate statehood. The change in politics of the state in terms of emergence of coalition politics in 2002 can be analyzed from the prism of consociationalism.

Deliberative Democracy: Public discussion was a feature of ancient Greek city-state. In the 1990s, there was a revival of public discussion as democratic theorist began exploring a different version of democratic theory. There was a need to go beyond the procedural model of democracy as it had a narrow conception of participation and a very limited role for the citizens. Deliberative democracy rests upon three assumptions:- [18]

One, it will enhance the scope for participation. Citizens will move beyond voting and indulge in public discussion.

Two, it will lead to exchange of information. When citizens deliberate, they will share ideas and information which will bring about changes and modifications in their ideas.

Three, it will certainly bring a change in the value system of the society because the interaction among people will lead to wiping out of many biases, prejudices and misunderstanding between groups.

Wayne Gabardi summarizes deliberative democracy in the following points.[19] One, a free public sphere in which citizens can discuss and debate on various issues. Two, "a set of procedures to ensure that collective deliberation is fair, equal and impartial for all participants." Three, deliberation should be conducted rationally and based on greater public interest. Finally, "the government should translate the consensus into laws and policies." He further reviews the writings of

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[18] Colin Farrelly, *An Introduction to Contemporary Political Theory* (California: Sage, 2004): 138-44.

[19] Wayne Gabardi, "Contemporary Models of Democracy," *Polity* 33, no. 4 (2001): 551.

Jürgen Habermas on deliberative model of democracy. Habermas comes up with the procedural-deliberative model of democracy. According to Gabardi, Habermas situates deliberative conception of democracy between the liberal and communitarian models of democracy. From the liberals, he borrows procedural notion and from the communitarians, he borrows the public realm. Habermas' earlier writing has a list of ethics essential for a discourse[20]. One, every citizen with the competence to speak must be allowed to take part in the discourse. Two, everyone is allowed to question, introduce assertions and express their needs. Three, no speaker can be prevented from speaking using coercion of any kind.

For John Dryzek, democratic theory took a 'deliberative turn' in the 1990s.[21] Deliberation is the essence of democracy. It makes democracy authentic and substantive rather than symbolic. He calls deliberative model of democracy as 'discursive democracy', and argues that that discursive democracy should be: "pluralistic in embracing the necessity to communicate across difference without erasing difference, reflexive in its questioning orientation to established traditions, transnational in its capacity to extend beyond state boundaries into settings where there is no constitutional framework, ecological in terms of openness to communicate with non-human nature, and dynamic in its openness to ever-changing constraints upon and opportunities for democratization."[22]

Major advantages of deliberative democracy are effective participation and enlightened understanding.[23] Participation in open discussion and debate are practices which make democracy effective and meaningful. Interaction between groups and exchange of views, opinions and ideas leads to an enlightened understanding among people. Darrin Hicks examines three premises of deliberative democracy which make it a more attractive conception in comparison

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[20] Farrelly., op.cit., 144-48.
[21] John Dryzek, *Deliberative Democracy and Beyond* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), 1.
[22] Ibid., 3.
[23] Farrelly, op. cit., 143.

with other models[24]. Deliberative democracy promises inclusion. All citizens are included in the collective decision making process. All participants are treated equal. Also, deliberative model tends to promote equality. Since all participants are treated equally and equal consideration is given to views and opinions of every participant. Equal opportunity is given to all citizens to participate and express their views. And finally, the promise of reason makes deliberative democracy superior conception of democracy. People are encouraged to justify their views, policy preferences and suggestions on the basis of reason and logical arguments. Arrival of politically reasonable solutions or proposals is facilitated by deliberative procedures.

Deliberative democracy is a departure from earlier conceptions of democracy. It has made democracy more effective and real. As a system of governance, democracy can succeed only with concerted efforts of both rulers and the ruled and deliberative democracy makes the attempt to bring the two closer. Yet, it has its limitations. Farrelly points out that deliberative conception is a utopian idea as it is impossible for people to collect at one place and hold discussions. Moreover, deliberation is a long process and urgent issues will be delayed since arriving at consensus takes time. Also, citizens don't have all the information to hold fruitful discussions. There are matters which are considered sensitive like foreign policy, military and security, which cannot be openly discussed and need expertise to understand them.

Deliberative democracy goes beyond procedures and provides more meaning to democracy. It is a new conception which gained prominence in the 1990s. To look at politics of J&K from perspective of deliberative democracy will be significant as people of the state have been alienated from politics for a long time. In 1947, the question of accession of the state came up. Ordinary people of Kashmir had no role in deciding their fate. Although, accession was subject to a

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[24] Darrin Hicks, "The Promise(s) of Deliberative Democracy," *Rhetoric & Public Affairs* 5, no.2 (2002): 224.

plebiscite, circumstances were not in favor of holding a referendum. Thus, people were not involved in discussions on the accession of the state. The 1990s witnessed a movement for *azadi* or self determination but this culminated in violence and militancy in the state. The recent crisis over land transfer for the Amarnath yatra caused a major confrontation between Jammu and Kashmir. Instead of resolving the matter peacefully, mainstream parties gave support to violent agitation and the separatist in the valley mobilized people and made an attempt to revive their *azadi* movement. Therefore, it seems deliberation is not a part of the political culture of the state. The Kashmir dispute is discussed at the level of central government and treated as a bilateral issue between India and Pakistan. However, in the present political context, the issue has become a part of the mainstream politics of the state and so the possibility of using deliberative model to resolve Kashmir dispute needs to be explored.

Deviant Democracy: There are some political systems that do not meet the standard requisites for democracy prescribed by modernization and diffusion theories, and yet, meet the minimum criteria of democracy, that is, competitive elections and universal suffrage. "Countries that have beaten the odds and successfully democratized within an unfavorable structural setting are called deviant democracies."[25] Alistair McMillan explains this conception of democracy with India as an example.[26] Democratic transition and consolidation in India occurred in a very unfavorable setting, abject poverty, widespread illiteracy, diversity in terms of ethnicity, caste, class, language. This is accompanied by low levels of economic development and urbanization. These challenges make it highly improbable for democracy to survive. Very few post-colonial societies could move towards democracy. Further, McMillan gives other factors that make

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[25]Renske Doorenspleet, Petr Kopecky and Cas Mudde, "Preface," *Democratization* 15, no.4 (2008).

[26] Alistair McMillan, "Deviant Democratization in India," *Democratization* 15, no.4 (2008): 733-49.

democracy difficult for India, which are, India surrounded by non-democracies, the period of Emergency, demands for regional autonomy and communal violence taking place on several occasions (1984, 1992, 2002). Despite these odds, India is considered world's biggest democracy. Democracy has not only survived in this country but also flourished.

Deviant democracy is a recent conception of democracy. India survived and sustained democracy despite all odds and challenges emanating every now and then. Like India, J&K has also faced severe challenges in the process of democratization. To a certain extent, the state has even witnessed the breakdown of democratic norms and procedures. However, since 2002, J&K has been experiencing democratization in terms of expansion of democratic space, competitive elections, a coalition government, and people's participation. Elections in J&K are not held under normal circumstances. Violence intensifies during elections. During the 2002 elections, many political activist, candidates and civilians were killed. Further, the separatist give a call to boycott elections and mobilize people to join their boycott politics. Yet, 2002 elections brought back confidence of people in democratic process and there was a rise in the participation of the people in 2008. It would be interesting to see if J&K can be characterized as deviant democracy.

The conceptions discussed above provide a theoretical understanding of democracy and will help in explaining the democratic experience of Jammu and Kashmir. At the same time, it is important to discuss the Indian democratic experience which will help in assessing the case of democratization in J&K.

II. DEMOCRATIC EXPERIENCE IN INDIA

The democratic experience in India has generated different responses from different scholars. Manoranjan Mohanty has argued that Indian political experience has led us to a new theory of democracy called theory of creative

democracy.[27] Indian political experience involves both procedural and substantive dimensions of democracy. Political institutions exist along with socio-economic change. Further, India offers a variety of politics: politics within the constitutional system, politics within the state and politics within civil society. Also, political activity revolves around movements of self-determination and greater autonomy. The political arena is multi-dimensional and multi-layered.

Indian political experience has been looked at from liberal and Marxist view.[28] The preamble of the Indian Constitution describes India as a sovereign and democratic republic. India has witnessed free and fair elections since 1952 and incumbent governments have been replaced peacefully. India has functioned as a liberal democracy and especially under Nehru. Indian National Congress as the dominant political party, yet, factions and opposition within the party were allowed. Moreover, under Nehru diverse interests and views were reconciled. Marginalized groups were integrated with the mainstream. However, liberal conception has serious limitations. Mohanty argues that despite universal adult franchise, a lot of people were not adequately represented by the people. Power remained confined to the privileged sections of the society and government drew its strength from landlords, capitalist and emerging middle class. India political system is experiencing criminalization and violence in a big way. Lot of parties are indulging in money and muscle power to win elections. State has used violence against its own citizens in Jammu and Kashmir, Punjab and Assam. Majoritarianism has posed a serious challenge to liberal democracy. According to Mohanty, a society which cannot guarantee safety and freedom of minority can hardly be called democratic. India has witnessed communal tension and riots on many occasions. The Marxist theorization gives an alternative view of Indian democracy because it analyzes the transition from feudal to capitalist society. India incorporated the word socialism in the preamble of the constitution. Even post-liberalization no party or group has demanded its removal from the

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[27] Manoranjan Mohanty, "Theorizing Indian Democracy," in *Indian Democracy: Meanings and Practices*, ed. Rajendra Vora and Suhas Palshikar (New Delhi: Sage, 2004), 99.
[28] Ibid

preamble. According to Mohanty, the Marxist conception offers three crucial points: first, Indian bourgeoisie has become stronger, the middle class has expanded and the poor have become poorer. Secondly, Marxist find it very difficult to characterize Indian state because feudal elements are still intact, caste relations are also prominent and at the same time, rural India has been exposed to world markets in the era of liberalization and globalization. Finally, Marxist in India agree that Indian state is relatively autonomous vis-à-vis the dominant classes. Hamza Alavi argues that post colonial state inherited overdeveloped state apparatus which controlled every aspect of society, however, this state is relatively autonomous as the indigenous bourgeoisies was weak at the time of independence.[29] Therefore, one can conclude that India reflects liberal democratic and both capitalist and socialist elements in its political system.

Theorizing democracy in India is very complex. India offers variety of politics, shows the contradiction in polity, that is, democratic procedures which includes everybody but an economic system and the caste system which discriminates a vast majority of population. Our freedom struggle was based on non-violence and Satyagraha which were unique in its own way. Also, I would like to add that non-alignment in foreign policy, the idea of mixed economy and secularism contribute to the creative theory of democracy in India.

In the following segment, the study presents different characterizations of Indian democracy which explain the democratic experience in India and also show clearly the creative aspect of our democracy.

Arend Lijphart characterizes Indian Democracy as a big puzzle.[30] It's a puzzle because it has survived despite deep ethnic and communal divisions. Also, the size of India poses a challenge for survival of democracy. He has tried to solve

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[29] Hamza Alavi, "The State in Post-Colonial Societies: Pakistan and Bangladesh," *New Left Review*, 74 (1972): 61.

[30] Arend Lijphart, "The Puzzle of Indian Democracy: A Consociational Interpretation," *The American Political Science Review* 90, no. 2 (1996): 258-268.

this puzzle using consociational theory of democracy. Indian democracy has survived because of the power sharing system. It has helped maintain democratic stability. Although, power sharing has been difficult to implement because: one, presence of a majority Hindu community within the divided society. Two, presence of socio-economic disparity. Infact, Lijphart argues that socio-economic disparity within religious and linguistic groups are much larger than inter-group disparities. Three, the presence of too many groups make it very difficult to have negotiations and sharing of power. Fourth, India is over-populated country. If the total population is small, decision making is relatively easier. Fifth, geographical concentration of groups has led to demands of autonomy and self-determination. Yet, India has survived as a democratic polity.

The elements of power sharing prevalent in India are broadly characterized as: Grand coalition was formed under the Congress party since independence. The early Congress of the post Independent India was an umbrella party. It represented all groups and was inclusive in nature. Even the Nehru cabinet had ministers belonging to different linguistic, religious, regional groups and few ministers had different ideological leanings. Cultural autonomy is a major part of power sharing theory. Federalism, a list of rights for the minorities and personal laws for religious minorities have found place in the Indian democratic system. Further, India may not have the proportional representative system but our electoral system does not disfavor any group. Also, the system of reservations has ensured representation of disadvantaged groups in parliament, government jobs and educational institutions. Minority veto is yet another feature of power sharing theory of Lijphart. Indian minorities have not exercised the minority veto ever, but, the India has never attempted to remove the provisions made for the minorities.

From the 1960s, power sharing started to weaken. Indira Gandhi personalized the Congress. She behaved like the owner of the Congress party. Even, federalism received a big blow because Indira Gandhi tried to centralize power and imposed

President's Rule in many states which posed a challenge to her authority. The rise of Hindutva forces in the 1980s was another blow to Indian democracy because they practiced divisive politics to create votebank. However, coalition politics and power sharing revived in the 1990s. No party or group is in a position to form the government on its own. State parties and regional groups are playing a crucial role at the centre. The government formed since 1996 have been a coalition of many small parties led by national party. Government represents different groups and regions. The bargaining capacity of states has gone up. The federal system has strengthened. However, despite power sharing providing vital elements to solve the puzzle called Indian democracy, our political system will continue to baffle scholars.

Alistair McMillan calls Indian democracy a deviant case and traces the process of democratization in India.[31] The transition and consolidation of democracy succeeded despite many odds. India was a colony of the British who made no attempts to introduce and promote democracy. However, in order to manage the affairs of its colony, the British established representative system of government. Thus, British were indirectly responsible for setting up democratic institutions in the country. Elections also took place although, there was no competition and the franchise was limited. The transition to democracy was facilitated by Gandhi's mass movement against the British rule. The national movement was an elite based movement as educated and professionals were involved in it. Gandhi brought common people including women and dalits and transformed the movement to mass movement. McMillan points out another remarkable feature of Indian democracy in its transitional phase. The army was kept under civilian control. In most post-colonial societies we find a bureaucratic-military oligarchy in a dominant position in the state.[32] Unlike other post-colonial states, Indian military did not have a destabilizing role as it stood for democracy and respected the civilian institutions. Thus, representative system of government introduced by

[31] McMillan., op.cit.
[32] Alavi., op.cit., 65.

the British and the mass based national movement for independence were factors that led to the transition of democracy. Democracy was made possible despite odds.

Consolidation of democracy faced serious challenges. McMillan presents counter-arguments to Lijphart's account of consociational democracy. He gives Steven Wilkinson's arguments against Lijphart.[33] Wilkinson argues that Lijphart exaggerates power sharing by Congress and Nehru. India was a control state under Congress. Minorities were excluded from jobs and political power. The state managed ethnic and separatist movements in a very repressive way. Special provisions to dalits and aboriginal groups were granted with reluctance. Congress was never interested in sharing power and was a highly centralized and personalized party under Nehru. McMillan also brings the arguments of Kanchan Chandra.[34] India is a patronage democracy. Parties divide people on caste, religious and ethnic lines and cater to particular groups which are its votebank. Thus, democratic consolidation was quite complex.

McMillan points out that centralization and personalization of Congress led to many factions breaking away from the party and forming new groups. This led to multi-party system. This makes Indian polity more representative and also provides alternatives to the citizens. Secondly, patronage democracy may seem to undermine neutrality of the government yet, it also gave an intensive for wider participation. People could connect with parties. Therefore, transition and consolidation of democracy was not a very easy task yet India overcame all obstacles to democratize and prove its exceptionalism.

Rudolph and Rudolph characterize Indian democracy as substantial, durable and adaptable.[35] They focus on the challenges faced by Indian democracy in 1990.The

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[33] McMillan., op.cit., 743.
[34] Ibid., 744.
[35] Susanne Rudolph and Lloyd Rudolph, "New Dimensions of Indian Democracy," *Journal of Democracy* 13, no.1 (2002): 52.

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adaptable nature of Indian democracy triumphed over these challenges and added new dimensions to Indian democracy. Rudolph and Rudolph summarized the new dimensions under seven headings- a more prominent role for federal states, transformation of the party system, coalition government, and a federal market economy, central government as regulator, social revolution and centrism against extremism

India's state formation took place under the guidance of central government. The constitution of India envisages a more powerful role for the center vis-à-vis the states. Under the one party system the Congress ruled at the center and most of the states. Also, centralized planning did not leave much scope for states to pursue their own development agenda. However, since the 1990 the ascendancy of the state parties at the national level has led to federal states playing a more prominent role in India's political system. This has also transformed our party system. The dominance of the congress party was replaced by a more regionalized party system. India witnessed its first hung parliament in 1989. Regional parties hold the key to government formation at the center. Thus, the shift from dominant party to multiparty politics has led to, one, highly competitive system and has made federalism more meaningful and real. This development has strengthened the roots of democracy in our country. The rise of coalition government in the 1990 has further democratized the polity. Strong central governments led by one party majority promote concentration of power in one- hand which can become authoritarian (Emergency 1975-77). The era of coalition politics has led to governments being more representative, has incorporated federal states at the center and has promoted decentralization of power. With economic liberalization, the hallmark of 1990s, India has become a federalized market economy. The economic and financial decision making is shared between the centre and the states. The state governments are charting their own course of development. They are inviting investments and multilateral assistance for their states. Liberalization has also changed the role of the state from doer to enabler. State intervention has been replaced by state as regulator. As a regulator sates has to ensure that

procedures are being followed in fair manner. They have to provide and promote a favourable atmosphere for market to operate and ensure the supply of goods and services. The rise of the dalits and the other backward castes is a significant dimension of Indian democracy. Exclusion of certain groups was a blot on Indian democracy. From the 1990s, we have witnessed the rise many backward castes leaders and parties with social justice as main agenda. Social equality and respect for all has promoted substantial aspect of democracy. Finally, survival of democracy depends upon ideological moderation. Extreme positions can be detrimental to democracy in terms of invigorating violence, being intolerant towards other views and opinions, exclusion of groups on the other extreme, government favoring those who are followers of the particular ideology. Indian democracy has forced ideological positions to stay near the centre. Compulsions of coalition and electoral politics forced many parties to change or tone down their ideological positions. These dimensions clearly indicate that adaptive nature of our democracy has made it substantial and durable.

Indian democracy has been termed as resilient as it has the capacity to bounce back after temporary breakdown. Subrata Kumar Mitra argues that challenges to democracy emanate from imposition of Emergency, insurgency movements, intolerance of minorities, communal riots, police atrocities, criminalization of politics etc.[36] Yet, the resilient character of our democracy has succeeded in sustaining the democratic system. Mitra suggests some of the factors that have contributed to resilient democracy.

Political participation and accountability of power has played a crucial role in shaping up resilient democracy in India. Regular fee and fair elections have ensured that authoritarian rule does not build its foundations in Indian political system. Indira Gandhi had compromised democratic rule in 1975 and paid a heavy price in the 1977 elections. Congress was defeated and India got its first

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[36] Subrata Kumar Mitra, "Democracy and Political Change," *Journal of Commonwealth and Comparative Politics* 30, no. 1 (1992): 9.

coalition government. Elections have enhanced accountability by ensuring victory or defeat of incumbent governments. Like McMillan, Mitra also traces the nature of our democracy as a legacy of national movement. The national movement was influenced by the "Congress culture" of consensus and accommodation,[37] and this was incorporated in our democratic system. The national movement set a precedence of challenging authoritarian rule and bad governance. Mitra also expresses his views about the growth of multi-party system which are similar to many other scholars. According to him, multi-party system has helped democracy reach remote corners of the country, incorporated diverse segments in our political system and has made democratic exercise of power more efficient. He also argues that caste discrimination and exclusion of groups was major drawback of our democratic polity. But with mobilization and inclusion of all social groups into our political arena, Indian democracy has championed the cause of egalitarianism. Further, local protests movements provide a defense of our democracy. Protest movements have fought injustice and state repression. A broad range of movements are taking place in India: women's movement, civil liberties movement, peasant movement, movement for self determination, environmental movement, etc.[38] Democracy is a power for the powerless to better their lives. Poor and the marginalized have the right to demand a decent standard of living and it is not often that their voice reaches the government. So protest movements are led by activist and social workers on behalf of the vulnerable sections of society in order to bring about a change in their lives for the better.

Challenges have provoked democracy but the democratic experience of the country shows that democracy has always triumphed over challenges and the resiliency is so strong that it is always prepared to take on new challenges.

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[37] Ibid.,13.
[38] Ibid., 28.

Atul Kohli has also characterized Indian democracy as being resilient. Democracy has undergone lot of stress and resilience in India.[39] According to Kohli, four decades of democratic politics has strengthened the democratic habits and expectations of the people. At the same time, journey has also witnessed strain and turmoil. Despite considerable stress, democracy survived because of resilient nature. Democratic habits are entrenched within our system and this is evident through the rise of political activism in the country.

Political activism has made a lot of groups, which were traditionally quite acquiescent in politics, assertive and vocal. Kohli points out that activism in the rural parts began with Indira Gandhi. She tried to bring the rural masses in the mainstream by making them a potential votebank. The rural poor were mobilized and they realized their important position vis-à-vis votebank politics. They became active in making demands for their upliftment. The Congress also exploited their activism and made populist sloganeering to garner their support. However, India has failed to reduce poverty till today. Further, the backward castes have also become politically active and have led the reservation movement in the country. These groups have also been treated as votebank by many parties. At the same time, they have received a backlash from higher caste that refuse to share power or allow these groups to rise in society. Peasant activism has been demanding better prices for their agricultural products and subsidies for agricultural inputs like fertilizers. The rich peasants have a political clout and donate money to parties, but poor farmers have been neglected by the governments continuously. Urban middle class is not very active politically and is not a votebank of any one party. Yet, it has been concerned about corruption, roads, electricity, water, traffic congestion, pollution, and other common city problems. Rajiv Gandhi was supported by the middle because of his clean image and policies formulated by him aiming at the middle class. Activism is not restarted to urban cities or rural interiors. The entire country has witnessed a

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[39] Atul Kohli, "Indian Democracy: Stress and Resilience," *Journal of Democracy* 3, no. 1 (1992): 52.

growth of political activism. Activism makes it clear that democracy is here to stay. Till the time Indian democracy can maintain the streak of resilience, democracy will not only survive but flourish as well.

Rajni Kothari argues that "democracy has become a playground for growing corruption, criminalization, repression, and intimidation of large masses of people."[40] For him, political participation has been reduced to following the rituals of plebiscitary democracy. The state in democratic setup has weakened. It is no longer an instrument of change. It only mediates and uses its coercive arm to put things in order. Kothari has noted a sharp decline in rule of law and tolerance, and growing fundamentalism. In this context, the phenomenon of non-party political formations acts as a savior of democracy. It provides a broader political space and involves people in large numbers especially poor and deprived sections. Therefore, these non-party organizations have kept the relevance of democracy alive and more meaningful in the present context.

Creolization[41] and vernacularization[42] of Indian democracy are recent characterizations which try to capture the real experience of democracy in recent years. Yogendra Yadav has accused Indian democracy of failing to remove or even reduce poverty and inequality. Thus, there is a need to creolise democracy, a process that has already started. He gives "hardware" and "software" approach in understanding creolization of democracy.[43] The hardware approach focuses on proper installation of democratic institutions in a given setting. The software approach treats democracy as software which must be re-written and updated in a language that is understood by the ordinary citizen who is the end user. Indigenization of democracy is a necessary condition for the success of democracy because an elite based liberal democracy will have less relevance if

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[40] Rajni Kothari, "The Non-Party Political Process," *Economic and Political Weekly* 29, no. 5 (1984): 216.
[41] Yogendra Yadav, "The Idea of Democracy," *Seminar* 461 (1998): 61.
[42] Lucia Michelutti, "The Vernacularization of Democracy: Political Participation and Popular Politics in North India," *Journal of Royal Anthropological Institute* 13, (2007): 639.
[43] Yadav., op.cit., 61.

ordinary people cannot relate to it. Similarly, Lucia Michelutti argues that democratic ideas and practices have to be internalized in popular consciousness of the people. She points out that rise of OBC leaders (Yadavs in North India), using of religion, caste, and kinship in political world has vernacularized democracy as common citizens relate to these issues. When people vote for a candidate who belongs to a backward caste, they feel they are voting for one amongst them. This brings legitimacy to democratic practices. Democracy has entered the lives of the Yadavs of north India and this has led to an upsurge of the common people. This has brought a change in their attitude towards caste. To be a Yadav is matter of dignity and self respect now. Also, democracy has brought changes in their community in terms of whom they worship, whom they marry, whom they vote for Therefore, Michelutti is arguing that India is going through a process of vernacularization of democracy because of the changes taking place in society on one hand, and ideas and practices of democracy on the other.

There are many issues which are democracy has to address in the present time. Here is a brief mention of a few challenges before Indian democracy. Some of them have been discussed by Rajni Kothari.[44] The empowerment of the marginalized sections of the society has to be tackled by democracy. The second major issue is a shift from secularism to communalism and religious fundamentalism. Democracy has to tone down extreme feeling of hatred and reinforce secularism. In the political economy, we are being affected by the global economic crisis. Capitalism has caused serious trouble in the economic system which is leading to inflation, unemployment, and bankruptcy. Terrorism is another challenge which has two dimensions. One, safety and security of the citizens. And two, passing draconian laws and targeting specific communities. Thus, Indian democratic experience has to be evaluated from time to time based on its response to issues being faced presently.

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[44] Rajni Kothari, "Issues Before Indian Democracy: An Overview," in *Indian Democracy: Meanings and Practices*, ed. Rajendra Vora and Suhas Palshikar (New Delhi: Sage, 2004), 45-46.

The above characterizations and discussion projects Indian democracy in a very positive light and baring a few aberrations, the journey of democracy has been credited of being successful. However, the state of Jammu and Kashmir has undergone a different experience of democracy which is discussed in the next chapter.

CONCLUSION

The conceptions of democracy delineate certain criteria which a political system must satisfy in order to be called democratic. These conceptions become a means to assess the process of democratization in J&K in terms of looking at the political history and examining the new developments in J&K which push for an appraisal of changing political context and contemporary situation of the state.

CHAPTER TWO

POLITICAL HISTORY OF JAMMU AND KASHMIR (1930- 2002)

A brief look at the history of J&K will show that politically it was a turbulent state. From the very beginning, the state witnessed frequent change of rulers, long spell of bad governance, in-fighting among members of ruling families and most strikingly, rule by 'outsiders.' The great Mauryan king Ashoka founded the city of Srinagar,[1] which is the present summer capital of the state of Jammu and Kashmir. When the Kushan dynasty took over Afghanistan, Kanishka brought Kashmir into the fold of the Kushan Empire. He also brought Gilgit, Baltistan and Ladakh under its territory and thus, these areas were linked with Kashmir.[2] After the decline of the Kushans, Kashmir experienced a long spell of instability, to the extent, that a King named Varnata ruled for about twenty-four hours only.[3] Finally, after more than a thousand years, came an era of prosperity under the rule of Shahi Khan, also known as Zainul Abidin.

To a large extent, Zainul Abidin, was like Mughal Emperor Akbar. He became the Sultan of Kashmir at a very young age. Like Akbar, he displayed qualities of a good ruler. He gave respect to all religions. His secular outlook made him abolish *jiziya*, the cremation tax, ban cow slaughter and visit Hindu shrines and places of pilgrimages.[4] *Kashmiriyat*[5] or culture of synthesis evolved during his reign. He also invested in education by opening schools. He was given the title of Budshah or Great King.

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[1] M.J.Akbar, *Kashmir: Behind the Vale* (New Delhi: Viking, 1991), 10-11.

[2] Navnita Chadha Behera, *State, Identity and Violence: Jammu, Kashmir and Ladakh* (New Delhi: Manohar, 2000), 36.

[3] Akbar, op.cit., 15.

[4] Ibid., 26-30.

[5] *Kashmiriyat* refers to the ethos of being Kashmiri devoid of religious affiliation. However, it is also used to symbolize the shared religiosity between Hindus and Muslims in the valley. *Kashmiriyat* is a mix of Hindu and Muslim customs, rituals and beliefs. Both communities revere the same saints using similar names. Like, Lal Ded, a fourteenth century saint, is Lalla Arifa for the Muslims and Lalleshwari for the Hindus. Saint Nooruddin is worshipped as Nund Rishi by the Hindus. Pakistan has conceptualized *Kashmiriyat* as Kashmiri citizenship. See Neil Aggarwal, "Kashmiriyat as Empty Signifier," *Interventions* 10, no.2 (2008): 222-35.

Then, came the turn of the Mughals. Akbar brought Kashmir into the ambit of the Mughal Empire. Kashmir continued to prosper under the Mughals. However, weak Mughal rulers after Aurangzeb could not keep control over Kashmir and it was occupied by the Afghans. Their rule was the exact opposite of Budshah and the Mughals. But the reign of barbarism did not last long and Maharaja Ranjit Singh brought Kashmir under Sikh Empire. Gulab Singh was the commander of the Sikh army. He was rewarded with the title of *Jagir* of Jammu. Gulab Singh was loyal to the British and this earned him their support. In 1846, Singh and the British signed a treaty called the Treaty of Amritsar. It was more of a "commercial transaction"[6] as the valley of Kashmir was sold to the Maharaja for a sum of seventy-five lakh rupees. The British could not afford to lose the hold of the Kashmir valley because of its strategic location and thus, chose Gulab Singh, who was loyal to them. The signing of the Treaty of Amritsar had two implications:

(i). It consolidated Jammu, Kashmir, Ladakh and Gilgit into one single unit and thus the Dogra state of Jammu and Kashmir was born. The separate regions were unified into one state.

(ii). the second implication is much more crucial. People of Kashmir were hurt by the fact their land was 'sold' to the Maharaja.

One thing is clear from this brief history that Kashmir has been mostly ruled by 'outsiders' or non- Kashmiris. This feeling is strongly imbibed in the mindset of the people. "The Kashmiris have always perceived their identity as distinct and separate within the subcontinent."[7] After hundreds of years, Sheikh Abdullah became the first Kashmiri to govern the state. However, when he was removed from office and Kashmir politics was being guided by the central government, strong sentiments for *azadi* or independence and demand for autonomy became a

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[6] Sumantra Bose, *Challenge in Kashmir: Democracy, Self-Determination and a Just Peace* (New Delhi: Sage, 1997), 23.

[7] Balraj Puri, "Kashmiriyat: The Vitality of Kashmiri Identity" *Contemporary South Asia* 4, no.1 (1995): 55.

part of Kashmir's political discourse because the feeling, of being ruled by outsiders again, came to haunt the people.

This chapter is a trajectory of Jammu and Kashmir politics. The political developments since 1947 indicate that the state was prevented from democratizing its polity. In order to understand the hurdles in the development of a democratic polity, I propose to divide the political history into two phases. The first phase 1930-47 was the period when Kashmir became politically conscious and active. In this phase, Kashmir was under the Dogra rule and India under British rule. The movement in Kashmir demanded transfer of power from non-Kashmiri to the people of Kashmir while Indian leaders are fighting to end the British rule. People wanted a democratic regime rather than the authoritarian rule of the Dogra king. From 1947 till 2002 is the second phase of Kashmir politics. In this phase, Dogra rule comes to an end in Kashmir. India also attains freedom from the colonial rule. The Dogra king was replaced by a popular government headed by Sheikh Abdullah. The accession of the state of Jammu and Kashmir creates a dispute between India and Pakistan which has a bearing on the subsequent political developments in the state. Most literature discusses Kashmir as a cog in India-Pakistan conflict. But my focus will be on state politics and political developments which are equally important if not more than the international relations perspective. The emphasis of the chapter will be on political movements, implications of accession on state politics and Nehru's policy on Kashmir, political parties, leaders, centre-state relations, political alliances, and the period of insurgency and the post-insurgency phase of Kashmir politics.

I. First Phase of J&K Politics (1930-47)

1930-47 is the phase which marks the beginning of Kashmir politics. The 1930 recruitment policy of the Dogra regime provided the impetus for the political struggle. The new policy made qualification the basis to secure jobs rather than

patronage.[8] A few educated Muslim youth founded the Reading Room Party to discuss the conditions of Muslim youth and the community as a whole. The Party felt that the Dogra rule was synonymous with religious discrimination. Kashmiri Muslims had no proprietary rights over land, the *jagirdari* system made the conditions of peasants pathetic; Muslims were denied entry into military services, they were excluded from state services, the businessmen and workers were heavily taxed and there was no modern education.[9] Sheikh Abdullah, the tallest leader of Kashmir, had returned from Aligarh Muslim University with a Masters degree. He got a temporary job as a school teacher. But the Pandits, with the same qualifications, became members of the faculty in Government colleges. Thus, the Muslims organized themselves to start a political movement against the Dogra regime. Even the Kashmiri Pandits started a movement called 'Kashmir for Kashmiris' since lot of jobs were taken by Punjabis who were seen as outsiders in the state.[10] Therefore, the movement cannot be read as communal.

1931 proved to be a watershed in the history of Kashmir politics because the events that took place in that year ignited a spark that culminated into a mass political movement and led to the formation of a political party called Jammu and Kashmir Muslim Conference.[11] It also invigorated the growing political consciousness of the people of Kashmir. The first incident took place in Jammu Central jail where a Hindu constable insulted the Holy *Quran*. Following which few pages of the Holy book were found in the drain in Srinagar. Another major incident happened outside Srinagar jail. A man named Abdul Qadir was arrested for making provocative speeches in the mosque. On the day of his trial, police and the crowd gathered outside the jail, clashed resulting in police firing which killed many people. This led to violence and riots in the city. In order to curb the unrest, Maharaja Hari Singh appointed the Glancy Commission to look into the matter. Not satisfied with government's response, the Muslims organized themselves

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[8] David Devadas, In *Search of a Future: The Story of Kashmir* (New Delhi: Viking, 2007), 15.
[9] Behera, op.cit., 44.
[10] Ibid., 45.
[11] For details see Chitralekha Zutshi, *Languages of Belonging: Islam, Regional Identity and the Making of Kashmir* (New Delhi: Permanent Black, 2003), 211-227.

under the banner of Jammu and Kashmir Muslim Conference in 1932. Inspired by the Civil Disobedience Movement of Gandhi, Sheikh Abdullah launched a similar movement in Kashmir demanding a constitutional government and the ouster of the Dogra King. The support and response to the movement encouraged formation of many organizations and associations like Kashmir Youth League, Peasant Association, Student Association, Silk Labour Union, union of carpet weavers, etc. [12]

In the late 1930s, an interesting yet important development happened within the J&K Muslim Conference which had bearing on the politics of the state. Sheikh Abdullah had started interacting with Nehru and Indian National Congress. Influenced by their secular outlook, Sheikh Abdullah wanted to bring Hindus and Sikhs into the fold of the Muslim Conference.[13] He also realized that to take on the might of the Dogra rule, the support of all groups is a must and the name Muslim Conference was changed to J&K National Conference in 1939. The 'National' would expand the base of the party and attract all groups to join the movement against the Dogra regime. However, a section of the Muslim Conference did not approve the secularized version of the party and a small faction, mainly comprising of religious leaders, broke away to retain the Muslim Conference. In the political circles of Kashmir, the rivalry between the two parties was known as *sher* versus *bakri*. *Sher* (lion) was Sheikh Abdullah and the religious leaders because of their beards were referred to as *bakri* (goat). The implication of this rivalry was political competition in Kashmir politics as the two parties with divergent ideologies started mobilizing people in order to garner their support. The National Conference made deep inroads in the rural areas by promising to ameliorate the conditions of the poor, artisans, and peasants. It also promised to establish a responsible government and Sheikh Abdullah also projected *Kashmiriyat* as cultural ideology of the party.[14] The Muslim

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[12] Behera., op.cit., 49.
[13] Akbar., op.cit., 81-82.
[14] Riyaz Punjabi, "Kashmir imbroglio: the socio-political roots," *Contemporary South Asia* 4, no.1, (1995): 43.

Conference, on the other hand, could manage support from few pockets of Srinagar, its leaders were mostly from Jammu and non-Kashmiri speaking Muslims who could not communicate with ordinary people of the valley. Thus, Muslim Conference proved to be ineffective in comparison to the National Conference[15] which became the popular political party of Kashmir.

The 1940s saw a convergence of national and state politics. Gandhi launched the Quit India movement and Abdullah launched the Quit Kashmir movement. At the same time, the Muslim League was demanding a separate homeland for the Muslims. Sheikh Abdullah rejected the two nation theory since it was not compatible with *Kashmiriyat*. Moreover, he was more interested in freedom from the Dogra rule, and his slogan was 'Freedom before Accession'.[16] For the Muslim Conference this was a last chance to survive in the mainstream politics, thus, it started mobilizing people to support One God, One Nation, and One Leader. Another group called Jama'at-i-Islami was also pitching for Pakistan because it was disillusioned with both parties of Kashmir.[17] Abdullah thwarted the attempts to lure Kashmiri Muslims towards Pakistan by launching the 'Naya Kashmir Manifesto' in 1944. The salient points covered in the document were:[18] constitutional reforms, establishing Panchayats and a National Assembly, Universal Adult Franchise with weightage for minorities and Dalits, an economic plan and land reforms. The period 1946-47 shifted the focus towards national politics where Indian leaders and British officials were discussing the fate of the subcontinent. Kashmir could only wait and watch.

Thus, the period from 1930 to 1947 was politically vibrant and volatile in the history of Jammu and Kashmir politics. This phase witnessed the first political movement, emergence of political parties, rise of Sheikh Abdullah, the Naya

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[15] Ibid.
[16] Behera, op.cit., 62.
[17] See Yoginder Sikand, "The Emergence and Development of the Jama'at-i-Islami of Jammu and Kashmir (1940s-90)," *Modern Asian Studies* 36, no.3 (2002): 705-51.
[18] Behera, op.cit., 53.

Kashmir document: a blueprint of establishing democratic procedures and norms and a debate between secularism and religious nationalism.

II. Second Phase of J&K Politics (1947-2002)

The year 1947 was a watershed in the history of South Asia because India got independence, it was partitioned, Pakistan was born and Kashmir became an 'issue' at three levels, international, national and regional. Due to its strategic location, it got entangled in the Cold War politics. At the national level, it became a dispute between India and Pakistan. At the regional level, the accession of the state and Nehru's policy on Kashmir had implications on the politics of the state. Nehru believed that Kashmir politics "revolved around personalities and there was no room for democracy."[19] The following segment will outline key events which indicate that Nehru and his successor's were averse to democratizing the politics of Kashmir. The central argument is that Kashmir politics was prevented from democratizing because the Indian leadership did not want to lose Kashmir. In its effort to keep Kashmir within the Indian fold and under the control of the centre, the Indian state trampled with democratic norms and procedures resulting in the alienation of the people of Kashmir which later culminated into demand for *azaadi*.

In 1947, the Hindu Maharaja was in a dilemma over accession to India or Pakistan. As a Hindu, he did not fit into the Islamic framework of Pakistan. Although, Jinnah made an offer to protect his rights as a ruler even if he decided to accede to Pakistan.[20] Accession to India would mean surrendering the title and making way for a democratically elected government headed by Sheikh Abdullah. At the same time, Nehru wanted to retain Kashmir as a part of India at any cost because accession of a Muslim majority state would reiterate India's rejection of the two-nation theory and give a boost to its secular credentials. Moreover, Nehru

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[19] Bose, op.cit., 39.
[20] Balraj Puri, *Kashmir: Insurgency and After* (New Delhi: Orient Longman, 2008), 6.

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was "personally attached" to Kashmir[21] as his ancestors hailed from here. His Kashmir policy was built upon twin goals of securing the borders and its legitimation through popular consent.[22] He got the Maharaja to sign the instrument of accession in the wake of invasion by Pakistan. The accession was limited as the state legislature could not legislate on important subjects like defense, communication and foreign affairs. Nehru also extended unconditional support to Sheikh Abdullah who brought the will of the people in favour of India. To appease Abdullah, Article 370 was enshrined in the constitution which gave a degree of autonomy to Kashmir in the sense, it could have its own flag, titles of head of the state and the head of the government, no part of the Indian constitution, except Article 1, was applicable to the state, etc. This made Abdullah confident enough to run a "party-state"[23] with the slogan one party (National Conference), one leader (Abdullah) and one program (Naya Kashmir document). He initiated land reforms in the state to free the peasants from the burden of the zamindaars. The Abdullah government declared abolition of landlordism, land to the tiller, formation of cooperative associations and granting wastelands to the tiller for cultivation.[24]

As a consequence of these developments in Kashmir, a political movement started in Jammu. Jammu is the Hindu majority region of the state. The Dogra rulers were Hindus from Jammu and in 1947 power was transferred to Muslim leader from Kashmir. Post 1947, Kashmir region had become the centre stage of all political and decision-making activity. Thus, Jammu felt neglected. It didn't feature anywhere in Nehru's Kashmir policy. Moreover, the land reforms initiated by Abdullah alienated a large section of the Hindu population since the landlords were mostly Hindus.[25] Further, under Article 370, the Indian Constitution was not made applicable to the state. Therefore, the state of Jammu and Kashmir was not

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[21] Subrata Mitra, "Nehru's Policy Towards Kashmir: Bringing Politics Back in Again," *Journal of Commonwealth and Comparative Politics* 35, no.2 (1997): 60.
[22] Ibid., 56.
[23] Bose., op.cit., 31.
[24] Mohamed Aslam, "Land Reforms in Jammu and Kashmir," *Social Scientist* 6, no.4 (1977): 61.
[25] Zutshi., op.cit., 318.

fully integrated with the Union of India. The talk of a plebiscite made the Hindus of Jammu very insecure. In 1952, "the Praja Parishad, a vanguard of the Jan Sangh in Jammu and Kashmir"[26], founded by Balraj Madhok, launched a political movement. The movement agitated against the domination of Sheikh Abdullah and discrimination against religious minorities. The eight points in the agenda of the Praja Parishad movement were as follows: abrogation of Article 370, full integration with India, full application of the Indian Constitution, no distinction between state subject and Indian citizen, complete jurisdiction of the Supreme Court, removal of custom barriers between Kashmir and India, fresh election to Constituent Assembly and investigation into corruption in state administration.[27] Thus, National Conference faced an opposition from the Jammu based political party but within Kashmir it was very much a National Conference rule till 1953.

In 1953, when the Praja Parishad movement was still going on, the Bhartiya Jan Sangh President Shyama Prasad Mookerjee, came to Srinagar to support the agitation. He was arrested by the Abdullah administration and died in jail. Nehru came under tremendous pressure as Abdullah was blamed for his death. At the same time, Abdullah was making preparations to demand independent Kashmir. The meeting with American diplomats was enough to convince New Delhi that Abdullah was making his own plans for Kashmir.[28] Thus, the ground was set for his dismissal. The decision to remove Abdullah was the first major blow to democracy in the state. According to the centre, Abdullah was arrested as it was in the interest of the state. Bakshi Ghulam Mohammed was 'installed' as the new prime minister of Kashmir. Bakshi regime was characterized by corruption and authoritarianism.[29] Bakshi had two goals, one, projecting Anti-Abdullah sentiments to curb the unrest in Jammu, and second, crush all opposition in Kashmir and remain loyal to the Congress. Nehru preferred Bakshi as he had turned into an extended arm of the Central government in the state. The 1954

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[26] Navnita Behera, "Kashmir: A Testing Ground," *Journal of South Asian Studies* 25, no.3 (2002): 347.
[27] Ibid., 348.
[28] Puri., op.cit., 22.
[29] Bose., op.cit., 32.

Constitutional Order empowering the government to legislate on all matter reduced Article 370 into a state of non-existence. This phase saw a rise and growth of some other political outfits. Disillusioned with the political developments in the state many Kashmiri youth joined the Jama'at-i-Islami and this led to expansion of the organization both in terms of "number and geographical reach."[30] The senior leaders of National Conference, who were unhappy with Bakshi, formed Democratic National Conference. The arrest of Sheikh Abdullah removed him from the political scene but his comrade-in-arms Mirza Beg launched the Plebiscite Front in 1955 to stress for "self-determination through free and fair plebiscite."[31]

However, the unpopular rule of Bakshi was tarnishing the image of democratic India and Nehru. Bakshi was removed and Ghulam Mohammed Sadiq was appointed as the prime minister of Kashmir in 1963. Sadiq introduced many changes to please New Delhi. He abolished National Conference and merged it with Congress. In another step, he changed the titles of the head of the state and the head of the government to Governor and chief minister respectively. Thus, Jammu and Kashmir was brought into conformity with other states in India.[32] It started a phase of "integrative politics"[33] which brought Indian state and Kashmir closer. It also brought inter-regional harmony as Jammu always demanded closer ties with India. Therefore, people and political groups in Jammu were happy with the developments but Kashmir lost all hopes for autonomy and self-determination. In a way, Sadiq helped Plebiscite Front to garner support of the people of the valley and thus, the party decided to contest the 1972 Assembly election and make a comeback into mainstream politics.

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[30] Sikand., op.cit., 725.
[31] Behera., op.cit., 114.
[32] David Lockwood, "Sheikh Abdullah and the Politics of Kashmir," *Asian Survey* 9, no.5 (1969): 385-86.
[33] See Reeta Chowdhari Tremblay, "Kashmir: The Valley's Political Dynamics,"*Contemporary South Asia* 4, no.1 (1995): 89-93.

In 1972, the state witnessed a major setback to democratic procedures by banning the Plebiscite Front from contesting in elections.. The state assembly election was a direct contest between the Congress and the Plebiscite Front, although, there were other political groups participating in the election too. The then chief minister Mir Qasim was able to gauge the mood of the public which was pro-Plebiscite Front and reported the same to Indira Gandhi, who was the prime minister and leader of the Congress party. On the directives of the Central command, Qasim banned Plebiscite Front from contesting and arrested many leaders of the Front. However, Indira Gandhi was aware that the Front was a political force to be reckoned with. The 1972 Shimla Agreement had closed the doors for a plebiscite and the only person who could bring people around was Sheikh Abdullah. At the same time, Abdullah, who had been out of power since his arrest in 1953, realized that loyalty to Indira Gandhi can revive his political career again. Thus, Kashmir Accord was signed in 1975 and Abdullah accepted Jammu and Kashmir as a part of the Union of India. He also accepted that the Indian parliament will have the power to make laws relating to the prevention of activities directed towards questioning or disrupting the sovereignty and territorial integrity of India or bringing about secession of a part of the territory of India from the Union.[34] Abdullah became the chief minister and the National Conference was back in power, but, by aligning with the Congress, the party lost support of the people. Soon after assuming power, Abdullah revived and reasserted the issue of autonomy to garner the support of the people. Thus, the phase of "distinct Kashmir politics"[35] was back.

In 1977, the central government led by the Janata Party announced elections to the J&K Assembly and promised to conduct free and fair elections. Abdullah revived the National Conference and met many Janata party leaders in order to strike an alliance, but, the Janata leaders did not trust him enough. The 1977 elections are

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[34] Behera., op.cit., 324-25.
[35] Tremblay., op.cit., 93.

considered to be "first reasonably democratic elections"[36], however, P.N.Bazaz presents details of electoral malpractice which ensured the victory of National Conference.[37] The National Conference workers had indulged in booth capturing and intimidation of voters. Hooliganism and irregularities[38] marked the 1977 elections. The Janata party did not take action against the National Conference because it at least kept Congress out of power in Kashmir.

A new phase began in Kashmir politics after the death of Sheikh Abdullah in 1982 which renewed the phase of integrative politics. This phase also witnessed the complete collapse of democracy in the state. Farooq was named the successor after the demise of Sheikh Abdullah which upset the senior leaders of the party including his brother-in-law, G.M.Shah. When the 1983 elections in the state were round the corner, Indira Gandhi approached Farooq for an alliance with the Congress. Farooq did not oblige Gandhi and went ahead with an alliance with Mirwaiz Farooq's Awami Action Committee. On the other hand, Indira Gandhi having realized she had lost a chance in the valley began regress campaigning in Jammu with Anti-Kashmir sentiments. This kind of polarization worked in favour of both, the National Conference and the Congress, in Kashmir and Jammu respectively. However, Farooq at the helm of affairs without the support of the Congress was not a very comfortable situation for Indira Gandhi. "A hostile government in a sensitive border state was unacceptable."[39] Thus, the plotting of Farooq's dismissal began. The move to ouster Farooq was undemocratic and unconstitutional. G.M. Shah, Farooq's brother-in-law and a senior National Conference leader, who was upset because his seniority was ignored while announcing the successor of Sheikh Abdullah, defected from the party with a few other MLAs and formed the government with outside support of the Congress. But two years of his rule, and Congress under Rajiv Gandhi realized that Farooq

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[36] Bose., op.cit., 41.

[37] For details see P.N.Bazaz, *Democracy through Intimidation and Terror: the Untold Story of Kashmir Politics* (New Delhi: Heritage, 1978).

[38] Ibid., 132.

[39] Sten Widmalm, "The Rise and Fall of Democracy in Jammu and Kashmir," *Asian Survey* 37, no.11 (1997): 1015.

needs to be brought back because Shah was unpopular and outfits like Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front (JKLF) were mobilizing people against the government. Farooq also knew that in order to come back to power, National Conference will have to coalesce with the Congress. Thus, the NC-Congress alliance was formed before the 1987 election. The alliance had two implications: one, it consolidated integrative politics in the state and two, the alliance is said to have taken "consociationalism too far."[40] The two main parties despite their differences come together in order to capture power in the state, displaying little regard for democratic ethos. The 1987 elections became a turning point in the history of Kashmir politics. The election is infamous for large scale electoral malpractices like booth capturing, rigging, intimidating candidates from other parties and voters. Abdul Ghani Lone, a separatist leader who was assassinated later, was a candidate of People's Conference and a very popular leader in the Handwara constituency, complained about tampering of election results by police officers.[41] Post 1987, Balraj Puri writes that the mood in the valley changed from "anti-government to anti-India."

The 1987 election was the immediate cause of the decade long insurgency in the Kashmir region of the state. However, Sumit Ganguly argues that the real cause of insurgency was two contending interlinked forces: political mobilization and institutional decay.[42] He argues that political consciousness of old generation of Kashmiris was low but the Kashmiri youth of the 1980s was not prepared to tolerate the widespread electoral fraud. Many of the insurgent leaders were political agents of Muslim United Front candidates. Yasin Malik, the JKLF leader, was the agent of Mohammad Yusuf (later became Syed Salahuddin, the Commander of *Hizbul Mujahadeen*). Yusuf was contesting from a constituency in Srinagar and was sure of victory because he had mass support. Yet he lost to the National Conference candidate. The youth were completely disillusioned with

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[40] Ibid., 1018.
[41] Ibid., 1020.
[42] Sumit Ganguly, "Explaining the Kashmir Insurgency: Political Mobilization and Institutional Decay," *International Security* 21, no.2 (1996): 76-107.

Indian government. There was hardly any scope for expressing grievances as institutions were weak and in control of the government. Thus, the people were mobilized to support the JKLF which declared an armed struggle for independence or *azadi*.

In 1989, insurgents kidnapped the daughter of India's Home Minister Mufti Mohammad Sayeed, who was also a prominent politician of Kashmir, in Srinagar and demanded release of few members of their insurgent group to be released. The government of India agreed to the demands of the kidnappers. In 1991, the daughter of Saif-ud-din Soz, then a senior leader of the National Conference and now a member of the Congress party, was also abducted and later released in exchange of a few insurgents. Then, an executive of a public sector was abducted and the government again succumbed to the demands of the insurgents and released several insurgents. The strategy of abduction was a success as the insurgents had showcased their strength to the government and the people of the state and at the same time secured the release of their members in custody. The insurgent groups in Kashmir were supported by Pakistan. It realized that by supporting the movement for *azadi*, it could weaken the hold of Indian state over Kashmir. Gradually, Pakistan based groups, supported by the ISI, like *Hizbul Mujahadeen*, *Lashkar-e-Toiba* and *Harkat-ul-Ansar* hijacked the movement from indigenous insurgent groups like the JKLF. The Indian state responded by using force and violence which affected the common people of Kashmir. Security forces were involved in massacring civilians, torturing the youth, random firing, searching homes of common people in the middle of the night and misbehaving with women folk. This was a form of "collective punishment for disloyal population."[43]

A significant development took place during the period of insurgency: the forced migration of Kashmiri Pandits. The insurgents targeted well placed Pandits like Director of J&K Doordarshan *Kendra*, BJP leader, judges, and other top officials.

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[43] Bose., op.cit., 55.

These killings brought fear in the minds of common Kashmiri Pandits and they started migrating from the valley. The Pandit community identified themselves as Kashmiris and was pro-India. The community was targeted because they were considered to be the "last bastion of India in predominantly Kashmiri Muslim valley."[44] The other possible reasons for targeting the Pandits could be: the community was not actively involved in the struggle for *azadi*, so prominent Kashmiris were targeted to send a message to either join the struggle or leave the valley. Also, pro-Pakistan groups did not like the idea of a peaceful co-habitation of Hindus and Muslims, which negated the two nation theory. Further, Kashmiri Pandits were progressive compared to the Kashmiri Muslims in terms of literacy and employment and were placed in high positions. The exodus of Kashmiri Pandits was a big blow to *Kashmiriyat*. It gave an opportunity to the Hindu right wing groups to communalize the Kashmir issue. However, none of the political parties have made a sincere effort to rehabilitate the Kashmiri Pandits because the community does not constitute a votebank for them.

Insurgency brought the issue of human rights violation into focus. Security forces were accused of violating basic human rights, civil liberties and civilized values in dealing with the situation in the valley.[45] Even the militant organizations were guilty of human rights violations. Militants frequently indulged in attacking newspaper offices reporting against their movement. They also attacked innocent people belonging to Hindu and Sikh communities. The insurgency period also caused psychological problems. A Medecins Sans Frontieres report states that the violence in Kashmir has touched every Kashmiri and most people suffer from psychological disorders.[46] It was also very difficult phase for the young generation because insurgents would take them away as new recruits and the security forces would target them to show results in the battle against insurgency.[47] Many young boys disappeared in Kashmir during this period.

[44] Arun Joshi, *Eyewitness Kashmir* (Singapore: Marshall Cavendish Academic, 2004), 103.
[45] See Balraj Puri., op.cit., 77.
[46] Humra Quraishi, *Kashmir: The Untold Story* (New Delhi: Penguin, 2004), 26.
[47] Ibid., 146.

Insurgency led to the collapse of political process. Violence led to the cancellation of parliamentary elections of 1991. The state was brought under Governor's Rule from 1990-96. The United Front government announced assembly elections in 1996 to revive political activity in the state. The 1996 state assembly elections in J&K were held in the backdrop of an anti-Congress wave at the national level. Moreover, National Conference was the only political party to raise the issue of autonomy as the solution of the Kashmir problem. Thus, in the absence of a formidable opposition, the National Conference won two-third majority in the House. Congress was viewed as a party which was responsible for the long spell of Governor's Rule and excesses committed by the security forces in the state. The weak position of the Congress and the absence of an alternative resulted in National Conference occupying the role of a dominant force in Kashmir politics. However, the decline of National Conference began when it was in its most powerful position. Farooq inducted Ajat Shatru Singh, the grandson of Maharaja Hari Singh, in his cabinet, which did not augur well with the people of Kashmir as they had a strong dislike for the Dogras. Another significant reason for the downfall of the party was aligning with BJP-led coalition at the centre. Kashmiris were not in favor their ruling party being close to the centre. Moreover, the central government was led by the BJP, a Hindu fundamentalist party which had always advocated the abolition of Article 370 and full integration of the state with India. But Farooq Abdullah maintained a political stand of supporting any party at the centre. This stand weakened the idea of power sharing in a federal polity. Further, he removed Saif-ud-din Soz, a senior leader and the then National Conference Member of Parliament, from the party for voting against the NDA government during the confidence motion in 1999, thus projecting his strong alliance with the centre. And inspite of being close to the centre, Farooq could not fulfill his promise of autonomy. The Autonomy Report submitted by Farooq government was rejected by the prime minister. Hence, people of Kashmir felt betrayed by the National Conference leadership which had argued that it was being close to the centre to bargain the autonomy status for Kashmir. As a result, National

Conference lost its dominant position in state which changed the dynamics of state politics in the years to follow.

CONCLUSION

Democracy is a feature which distinguishes the two phases of Kashmir politics. The developments in the first phase were in favor of establishing a democratic polity in Kashmir. On the contrary, the second phase of Kashmir politics demonstrates a move towards undemocratic norms, procedures and practices in the state. The key argument of the chapter is that Indian leadership feared losing Kashmir and in its effort to keep a control over the state, tampered with democratic norms and procedures. Kashmir was a dispute between Indian and Pakistan and the latter was making attempts to wrest control over Kashmir by any means. Moreover, demand for self-determination was an issue in Kashmir politics since the 1950s. Therefore, the Indian government directed the politics of Kashmir in a manner that a pro-India leadership remains at the helm of affairs. Thus, the dismissal of Sheikh Abdullah, the installation of chief ministers by the centre, the crushing of any kind of opposition or dissent, removal of Farooq Abdullah as chief minister in 1984, electoral malpractice and human right violations by security personnel were some developments discussed in the chapter which were antithetical to the practice of democracy in the state. In order to build a democratic polity, the state required a robust opposition, competitive free and fair elections, centre-state relation based on co-operation, power sharing among the three distinct regions of the state, an accountable government to cater to the needs of the people and discussion among parties and civil society on the possible solution to the Kashmir problem.

CHAPTER THREE

PEOPLE'S DEMOCRATIC PARTY: AN ALTERNATIVE TO NATIONAL CONFERENCE

The politics of J&K, till 2002, was dominated by National Conference, one of the oldest regional parties in India. The party enjoyed a prominent position because it was the initiator of a political movement, evolved the Kashmiri identity politics and pursued the discourse of autonomy.[1] No party has been able to challenge the dominance of National Conference. Although, the party was merged with Congress in the 1960s, it re-emerged in the 1970s and again occupied the central position in state politics.

In 1999, the prospects of political change emerged with the formation of PDP; a Kashmir based regional party, by veteran Kashmiri politician Mufti Mohammed Sayeed. This marked a new era in Kashmir politics. The rise of PDP has to be located in the context in which the politics of the state has been placed since 1947. The state had witnessed single party dominance and constant intervention from the centre. PDP challenged the position of National Conference by emerging as an alternative and it did not allow central interference in the affairs of Kashmir while it was heading the coalition government from 2002-05.

The chapter will argue that the emergence of an alternative regional party accelerated the process of democratization in the state in terms of bringing competition in power politics, that is, political parties had to compete for power, provided an alternative or choice to the electorate and introduced local issues in the mainstream which helped the state move towards normalcy and to a large extent addressed the problem of alienation of Kashmiris. The further elaboration

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[1] Rekha Chowdhary and V. Nagendra Rao, "National Conference of Jammu and Kashmir: From Hegemonic to Competitive Politics," *Economic and Political Weekly* 39, no.14-15 (2004): 1521.

of the argument is discussed in the segments dealing with emergence of the party, electoral performance, ideology and party programme. Besides, the chapter also examines the leadership and organization of the party and the performance of PDP while in government from 2002 to 2005.

I. EMERGENCE OF J&K PDP

The emergence and establishment of PDP as an important political force in the valley can be traced to significant developments in the state politics. First, the National Conference- BJP alliance at the centre did not augur well with the people of the valley.[2] BJP advocates abrogation of Article 370 and full integration of the state with Union of India. On the other hand, National Conference has been strong advocate of autonomy. However, after forming the alliance with BJP, Farooq Abdullah stopped insisting on autonomy and the political status of pre-1953 period. People of Kashmir felt betrayed. Simultaneously, there was a crisis in the state unit of the Congress. It was facing rampant in-fighting between two factions led by Mufti Mohammad Sayeed and Ghulam Nabi Azad. Sayeed wanted Congress to raise the issue of dialogue with militants to better the prospect of the party before the 1999 parliamentary election, while Azad and leaders from Jammu unit of Congress were opposing the idea.[3] An underlying factor that gave impetus for the formation of the new party was the political ambitions of Mufti Mohammad Sayeed. There had been a steady decline of the Congress Party, both, at the centre and at the state level. Moreover, Ghulam Nabi Azad, junior colleague of Sayeed, had become a potential rival in the state unit and was close to Sonia Gandhi, the President of the Congress. Sayeed realized that Congress could offer him a limited role in the state unit. Therefore, in order to revive his political career, Sayeed decided to launch a new political party. Moreover, National Conference-BJP alliance had harmed the image of the former in the state. Therefore, Sayeed launched PDP keeping in mind the support his party would get

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[2] Ibid., 1524.
[3] *The Tribune*, July 20, 1999.

for espousing the interests and demands of the Kashmiris. His daughter Mehbooba Mufti resigned as the Leader of the Congress Party in the Legislature and quit the Congress. A few days later Sayeed resigned from the Congress and announced his plan to launch a state level party to rescue the people of Kashmir.[4] Thus, Jammu and Kashmir People's Democratic Party was formed on the 27th July, 1999.[5] According to the Party Declaration, "the people of the state have experienced all sorts of suffering and suppression and the main cause is the unresolved Kashmir dispute which has jeopardized peace and security in the state. The party realizes that there is no real democratic and effective organization to restore peace, rule of law and economic development."[6] Thus, a political party (PDP) was constituted with the following main objectives[7]-

(i)   To mobilize public opinion in the state and the country in favour of persuading the Government of India to adopt a policy of understanding and reconciliation and initiate a comprehensive and unconditional dialogue with the people of Kashmir for the resolution of the Kashmir problem;

(ii) To articulate the grievances of the people of the State and seek their redressal through constitutional means;

(iii) To wage a struggle for the restoration of normalcy, democracy and Rule of Law in the State so that human rights of the people can be duly respected and protected;

(iv) To find ways and means to ensure that innocent people languishing in jails are released, the migrants are brought back and rehabilitated and healing touch is administered to the victims of the violent turmoil in the State, and relief is provided to widows, orphans and other victims of violence;

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[4] *The Tribune*, July 26, 1999.
[5] *The Tribune*, July 28, 1999.
[6] PDP Party Declaration, n.d.
[7] See list of objectives at http://jkpdp.com

(v) To advocate formulation and implementation of proper policies for the devolution of powers and distribution of resources amongst the three regions of the State, equitable economic growth and advancement of understanding and co-operation amongst the various communities and regions;

(vi) To formulate and implement proper policies for the:

(a) Restoration and protection of environment in the State;

(b) Universal education that would serve the needs of employment, economic and industrial growth;

(c) Protection and advancement of the horticulture and agriculture;

(d) Minimum burden of taxes and tariffs;

(e) Development of infra-structure, power, tourism and industries;

(f) Providing an economic package of the State, industrial and tourism sectors, to compensate them for the loss and damage caused due to militancy during the last ten years;

(g) Empowerment of women, weaker sections of society;

(h) Formulation and implementation of adequate policies to remove un-employment and poverty in the State.

II. LEADERSHIP AND ORGANIZATION

PDP founder Mufti Mohammad Sayeed was born in Bijbehera in 1936. He started law practice in Anantnag and joined politics in 1950s on the insistence of a prominent lawyer and National Conference leader P.N.Handoo.[8] When National Conference split, he joined the new group Democratic National Conference and became the district convener of the new organization. He contested elections for the first time in 1962 from Bijbehera and retained the seat in 1967. He became a Deputy Minister in G.M.Sadiq's cabinet. Later, when Mir Qasim came to the helm of affairs, he switched over to the Congress Party and became the leader of the Legislative Council. But with Sheikh-Indira Accord, National Conference

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[8] See full profile *Frontline*, November 9-22, 2002.

regained its dominant position in the state and Mufti lost the 1977 and 1983 elections to National Conference candidates. Since he had no future left in the state after the defeat, Rajiv Gandhi brought him to the centre as Union Minister for Tourism. However, with 1987 election approaching in the state, his focus moved towards the state. But, the Farooq-Rajiv Accord was not acceptable to Mufti. He could not forget that the earlier accord with National Conference had led to his defeat in the state elections. He resigned from the Congress and joined the Jan Morcha. He contested his first Lok Sabha elections from UP in 1989 and won. He became the Union Home Minister in V P Singh government. It is paradoxical that the insurgency movement began and spread in Kashmir during his tenure as Home Minister. However, he blames Farooq Abdullah and the central government policies for the militancy in the state. However, with the V P Singh government not managing to complete its term and mainstream politics withdrawing in the valley due to insurgency and violence, Mufti found himself in the oblivion. When the 1996 state elections were announced, Mufti rejoined the Congress to revive his political career. He made his daughter Mehbooba Mufti join the Congress too. However, his differences with the Congress party over talks with militants and potential threat from younger colleague Ghulam Nabi Azad, made him resign from the Congress once again and this time he formed his own political party. Finally, after spending more than 40 years in the politics of the state, Mufti became the chief minister in November 2002 and remained in office till 2005. At present, he is the Patron of PDP and MLA from Anantnag constituency.

Critics have found Mufti to be a political opportunist who has switched parties to further his interests. But Mufti argues that he switched from Congress as the Rajiv-Farooq accord destroyed the opposition force he built over the years.[9] Moreover, he says that rigging and electoral malpractice of 1987 elections made him switch to Jan Morcha. He rejoined Congress as the circumstances had changed in 1996 and he felt he could consolidate the party against National

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[9] Mufti's interview at http://www.rediff.com/election/1999.html

Conference. Yet, the fact remains that Mufti was indeed concerned about his own political career. He left National Conference as he realized that with Abdullah at the helm of affairs he had no scope to rise in the party. Again, he left Congress when it was at a weak position. There was an anti-center and anti-Congress feeling in Kashmir which meant Mufti's chances of winning in Kashmir were bleak. He founded the PDP to revive his political career and fulfill his political ambitions.

A brief mention of the life of Mehbooba Mufti and Muzaffar Hussain Beg is also necessary as they have emerged as important leaders of the party in their own right. Mehbooba was born in 1969 in Anantnag district and is presently the President of the party. She first entered public life in the 1990s on the insistence of her father Sayeed. She contested Bijbehera seat in 1996 and won. When Mufti was at the helm of affairs in the state, she moved to the Centre by winning the Lok Sabha elections. Critics like Farooq Abdullah have accused her of being pro-militant, but Mehbooba argues that militants are a part of people and it is necessary to address their problems in order to end the violence in the state.[10] She is a prominent woman politician of J&K and as a result, her party fielded the maximum number of women candidates in the state assembly elections.

Table 1 Number of Women Candidates in State Assembly Elections

Political Party	Number of Women Candidates
Congress	4
National Conference	2
PDP	9

Source: Election Commission of India.

Muzaffar Hussain Beg is an eminent lawyer. He was the Advocate General of J&K. He joined Mufti Mohammad Sayeed in 1999 and contested Lok Sabha

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[10] See interview in Yudhishtar Kahol, *Kashmir: Return of Democracy* (New Delhi: Anmol, 2003).

elections which he lost to a National Conference candidate. He won state assembly election from Baramulla in 2002 and retained his seat in 2008. He was the deputy chief minister in PDP-Congress coalition government. He was responsible for framing the self-rule document released for the 2008 assembly elections.

PDP has a Central Committee and a Political Affairs Committee.

Central Committee	Political Affairs Committee
Mufti Mohammad Sayeed (Patron)	Mufti Mohammad Sayeed
Mehbooba Mufti (President)	Mehbooba Mufti
Iftikhar Hussain Ansari	Muzaffar Hussain Beg
Ved Mahajan	Abdul Aziz Zagar
Nizam-uddin-Bhat	Tariq Hammed Karra
Abdul Rehman	Sardar Rangil Singh
Daman Bhasin	Iftikhar Hussain Ansari
Murtuza Khan	Ved Mahajan
Nazir Ahmad Bakshi	T.S.Bajwa (Rajya Sabha member) Invitee
Kacho Feroz	-
Asghar Ali	-
Syed Mohammad Bukhari	-
Syed Basharat Bukhari	-
Peerzada Mansoor Hussain	-

Source: http://jkpdp.com

III. ELECTORAL PERFORMANCE

The emergence of PDP changed the nature of power politics in the state. "Genuine democratic competition surfaced for the first time in mainstream politics."[11] The hegemonic role of National Conference came to an end in the 2002 State Assembly elections. The results of the elections in 2002 and 2008 clearly show a tough competition between National Conference and PDP in the Kashmir region. Therefore, electoral process has become competitive and this has made "political space quite vibrant with people having choice between two parties."[12] As a consequence, the democratic procedure has become a meaningful exercise unlike in the days of single-party dominance.

PDP entered the electoral arena within a few months of its formation. The 1999 Parliamentary elections were announced as the NDA government, which came to power in 1998, lost majority in the lower house. The state of J&K has 6 seats in the lower house. PDP contested 3 seats in the Kashmir valley, fielding Party President Mufti Mohammad Sayeed, Vice President Mehbooba Mufti and senior Party leader Muzaffar Hussain Beg. The pre-poll scenario indicated a triangular contest between National Conference, PDP and Congress.[13] PDP failed to win a single seat in the elections and all its candidates lost to National Conference. However, the triangular contest laid the foundation of an intense competitive politics, a trend that was evident in the 2002 and 2008 State Assembly elections.

In 2002 state elections, PDP provided an alternative to people. The voters had choice to either vote for National Conference or PDP.[14]The advantage was clearly on the side of PDP because National Conference had been ruling the state since 1977and anti-incumbency factor could work in favour of PDP. The party

[11] Rekha Chowdhary and V.Nagendra Rao, "Alienation in Kashmir and Election 2002," *World Focus* 23, no. 10-12 (2002): 37.
[12] Rekha Chowdhary, "Separatists Sentiments and Deepening of Democracy," *Economic and Political Weekly* 44, no. 3 (2009): 14.
[13] *The Tribune*, August 23, 1999.
[14] Chowdhary and Rao., op,cit., 1526.

contested in 59 seats across the state and won 16 seats, all in the valley. In comparison, the National Conference won 18 seats in the valley. Thus, PDP had brought an end to the hegemonic position of the National Conference. PDP captured Pulwama and Anantnag from National Conference by winning most of the seats in these two districts. (See Table 7) There was a stiff competition in Baramulla and Badgam. National Conference could retain its dominant position in Srinagar and Kupwara. An interesting aspect of 2002 elections was the result in the Ganderbal constituency, which emerged as a symbol of change in Kashmir, [15] the National Conference's chief ministerial candidate Omar Abdullah lost to PDP candidate Qazi Mohammad Afzal. The defeat of third generation Abdullah by a PDP candidate clearly proved that people rejected Abdullah dynasty and were in favour of an alternative to Abdullahs and their party.

The next electoral test for the party was the 2004 Parliamentary elections. During these elections, PDP-Congress alliance was ruling the state and it was important for the party to win at least a single seat in order to show their popularity and acceptance of their policies by the people. Mehbooba Mufti won from Anantnag constituency and the percentage of votes polled by her was more than the percentage of votes polled by National Conference candidates in their respective constituencies.[16]

Further, in the 2008 state assembly elections, the party improved its seat and vote share and emerged as a strong force in the state. These elections were crucial for the party as it was a part of the coalition government in the state and therefore, the results of the elections would reflect on the acceptance of its policies and performance of the ministers. PDP contested a total of 78 seats and won 21 seats. In the valley, it improved substantially by winning 19 seats. The party dominated the Pulwama and Shopian districts by winning all the seats. (See Table 8) It won majority of seats in Baramulla, Anantnag and Kulgam. There was a close contest

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[15] *Epilogue*, December, 2008, 14.

[16] PDP obtained 39.3% votes whereas National Conference obtained 38.4% votes.

in Badgam. However, PDP did not find support in Srinagar, Kupwara and Ganderbal. Surprisingly, it won 1 seat each in Poonch and Rajouri districts of the Jammu region.

A closer analysis of the results reveals that PDP lost many seats by a very thin margin. These include Langate in Kupwara district where an Independent candidate obtained 21.86% votes while PDP candidate obtained 21.29% votes. Similarly, in Kulgam, CPI (M) won the seat by obtaining 34.24% votes while PDP candidate obtained 33.77% votes. More significant is the result of Sonawar seat in Srinagar district considered to be a safe constituency for National Conference. Here, National Conference candidate Farooq Abdullah obtained 35.89% votes while PDP candidate obtained 35.30% votes. Another significant development was Mehbooba Mufti contesting and winning from newly created Shopian district, which was held by National Conference from 1977 to 1996. She contested outside her home constituency to prove her popularity and strength of her party beyond Anantnag-Bijbehera-Pahalgam.[17]

The major achievement of PDP was winning 2 seats in the Jammu region. It is a valley based party and projects itself as pro-Kashmir. But by winning 2 seats in the Jammu region shows the expansion of the party beyond the Kashmir region. Another electoral achievement of the party was its emergence as the second single largest party in the state after National Conference. Thus, the performance in the 2008 state elections reflects the level of acceptance of PDP as an alternative to National Conference.

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[17] *Epilogue*, December, 2008, 31-33.

Table 2   Performance of PDP in Parliamentary Elections

Year	Number of Seats Contested	Number of Seats Won	Forfeited Deposits	Votes Polled
1999*	3	0	0	92066
2004	3	1	0	267457

Source: Election Commission of India

* PDP candidates contested as Independents

Table 3   Performance of PDP in State Assembly Elections

Year	Seats Won in the State	Kashmir Region	Jammu Region
2002	16	16	-
2008	21	19	2

Source: Election Commission of India

Table 4   Party-Wise Performance in 2002 Assembly Elections

Party	Number of Seats Contested	Number of Seats Won
Congress	78	20
BJP	58	1
CPI(M)	7	2
BSP	33	1
JKNC	85	28
JKPDP	59	16
JKNPP	36	4

Source: Election Commission of India

Table 5 Party-Wise Performance in 2008 Assembly Elections

Party	Number of Seats Contested	Number of Seats Won
Congress	78	17
BJP	64	11
CPI(M)	8	1
BSP	83	0
JKNC	85	28
JKPDP	78	21
JKNPP	73	3

Source: Election Commission of India

Table 6 District-Wise Performance of PDP in the Assembly Elections

District	Year/ Seats Won 2002	Year/ Seats Won 2008
Kupwara	-	1
Bandipora	-	1
Baramulla	3	3
Srinagar	1	-
Badgam	2	2
Pulwama	4	4
Poonch	-	1
Rajouri	-	1
Shopian	-	2
Kulgam	-	2
Anantnag	6	4
Total	**16**	**21**

Source: Election Commission of India

Table 7 District-Wise performance of Political Parties 2002 Assembly Elections

District	Total Constituencies	Cong	BJP	CPI(M)	BSP	NC	PDP	NPP	Ind
Kupwara	5	-	-	-	-	4	-	-	1
Baramulla	10	2	-	-	-	4	3	-	1
Srinagar	10	1	-	-	-	6	1	-	2
Badgam	5	-	-	-	-	2	2	-	1
Pulwama	6	-	-	1	-	1	4	-	-
Anantnag	10	2	-	1	-	1	6	-	-
Leh	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2
Kargil	2	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	1
Doda	6	2	-	-	-	2	-	-	2
Udhampur	6	1	-	-	-	1	-	3	1
Kathua	5	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	2
Jammu	13	8	1	-	1	1	-	1	1
Rajouri	4	1	-	-	-	2	-	-	1
Poonch	3	-	-	-	-	3	-	-	-
State	**87**	**20**	**1**	**2**	**1**	**28**	**16**	**4**	**15**

Source: Election Commission of India

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Table 8 District-Wise Performance of Political Parties 2008 Assembly Elections

District	Total Constituencies	Cong	BJP	CPI(M)	NC	PDP	NPP	Others*
Kupwara	5	-	-	-	3	1	-	1
Ganderbal	2	-	-	-	2	-	-	-
Bandipora	3	-	-	-	2	1	-	-
Baramulla	7	1	-	-	2	3	-	1
Srinagar	8	-	-	-	8	-	-	-
Badgam	5	-	-	-	2	2	-	1
Pulwama	4	-	-	-	-	4	-	-
Leh	2	1	-	-	-	-	-	1
Kargil	2	-	-	-	2	-	-	-
Doda	2	2	-	-	-	-	-	-
Kishtwar	2	1	-	-	1	-	-	-
Reasi	3	1	1	-	1	-	-	-
Udhampur	3	1	-	-	-	-	2	-
Kathua	5	1	3	-	-	-	-	1
Samba	2	-	-	-	1	-	1	-
Jammu	11	3	7	-	-	-	-	1
Poonch	3	1	-	-	1	1	-	-
Rajouri	4	1	-	-	2	1	-	-
Shopian	2	-	-	-	-	2	-	-
Kulgam	4	-	-	1	1	2	-	-
Anantnag	6	2	-	-	-	4	-	-
Ramban	2	2	-	-	-	-	-	-
State	**87**	**17**	**11**	**1**	**28**	**21**	**3**	**6**

Source: Election Commission of India

* Others include J&K Democratic Party (Nationalist) and Independents

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IV. IDEOLOGY AND PARTY MANIFESTO

Competitive politics has forced parties to raise local concerns.[18] Thus, there has been a shift in the political discourse towards local issues. According to Rekha Chowdhary, Kashmir is experiencing deepening of democracy in terms of parties reflecting popular concerns in political discourse and rooting politics in local milieu.[19] This shift was brought about by PDP in order to project itself as a pro-Kashmiri party to counter the pro-India outlook of the National Conference. The party introduced the healing touch policy which became the core and single-minded goal of the party. The healing touch approach was evident in the Party Manifesto of 2002 which promised[20]-

- Withdrawal of Prevention of Terrorism Act (POTA)
- Disband the Special Operation Group (SOG). Set up a Commission to enquire into the actions of the SOG over the years.
- Releasing detainees held without trials over long period of time.
- Stop custodial death and stern action against those responsible for custodial death.
- Rehabilitation of surrendered militant.
- Unconditional talks with militants and separatists.
- Return and rehabilitation of Kashmiri Pandits.

The party also formulated the J&K Youth Development policy to educate and empower the youth which has been victim of decade long militancy in the state. It was based on the healing touch approach of the party. It was a tool to mobilize the youth in favour of PDP and the implementation of the policy was a major promise of the Party Manifesto 2008. The policy outlined the mission of PDP: Educate Employ and Empower the youth of the state.[21] Party declared 2008 as the Year of the Youth and the Manifesto 2008 promised to dedicate 2009 to the youth as well.

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[18] Chowdhary., op.cit., 15.
[19] Ibid.
[20] *The Tribune,* September 10, 2002.
[21] PDP: J&K Youth Development Policy (2007)

The party promised to create Youth Leadership Network to promote and develop next generation leaders at grass root level. Party also devised a Youth Employment Strategy which offered series of programmes like career counseling, imparting skills, summer work experience and a programme of employment insurance. Party planned to set up a Youth Opportunity fund to raise money for projects. The Party also promised to organize a Sub-Continent Youth gathering event to involve young people from India, Pakistan, Bangladesh and Afghanistan in cultural exchange and discussions. However, PDP is not in office now to implement the policy, but as a major opposition party it can put pressure on the National Conference-Congress government to provide welfare measures for the youth in the state.

Apart from the healing touch policy and the youth oriented schemes, PDP also used its discourse on self-rule to project it as a solution of the Kashmir dispute from within the mainstream politics and as an alternative to autonomy discourse of National Conference. Earlier, this issue was dealt with by the centre only. Kashmir became a dispute in 1947 and Nehru had to find a political solution to the problem. Subrata Mitra gives an insight into Nehru's policy on Kashmir. Nehru's policy was based on the firm belief that instrument of accession was lawful and legitimate. However, he never emphasized it and kept the channel of negotiation open.[22] In order to win the debate between secularism and two-nation theory, Kashmir had to be retained by India. The twin objectives of Nehru's policy were to secure borders and legitimize India's control over Kashmir through popular consent.[23] Since Sheikh Abdullah was a popular leader and more importantly, his position was pro-India, Nehru supported his leadership in Kashmir to legitimize India's claim over the region. Nehru was confident of people favoring India if there was a plebiscite. Ramachandra Guha writes about an interesting development which took place in 1964. Many scholars have ignored the developments in 1964 in regard to the resolution of Kashmir conflict. It was

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[22] Subrata Mitra, "Nehru's Policy on Kashmir: Bringing Politics Back In Again," *Journal of Commonwealth and Comparative Politics* 35, no. 2 (1977): 57-74.
[23] Ibid.

C.Rajagopalachari who played a crucial role in trying to resolve Kashmir because by 1964 Nehru was not in a strong position, both in terms of health and as leader of the Congress Party. Sheikh Abdullah and Rajagopalachari held meetings in Madras and came up with the 'Rajaji Formula' to resolve the dispute.[24] Rajaji formula suggested the creation of a condominium over Kashmir with India-Pakistan joint responsibility for defense and foreign affairs.[25] Nehru's idea of a plebiscite was rejected by Sheikh Abdullah as one side would be left dissatisfied and the problem would continue. Nehru and Abdullah discussed the Rajaji Formula and Sheikh was to discuss it with the leadership of Pakistan. However, Nehru died and the formula could not be discussed. In the following years, the relations between India and Pakistan deteriorated and efforts were directed towards maintaining a favorable atmosphere for talks and negotiations.

The National Conference has been advocating autonomy as a solution to the Kashmir dispute. The party argues that Kashmir should remain an integral part of India but Kashmiris should be allowed to manage their own affairs without interference from the centre. In 1996, the party formed the State Autonomy Committee to shape Kashmir's political future. The Committee recommended[26]-

- Change the 'temporary' status of Article 370 to 'special' status.
- The Indian Parliament should legislate only on three matters namely defense, external affairs and communications.
- The original nomenclature for the title of head of the state and head of the government.
- State Election Commission to conduct elections in the state.
- The Part III of Indian Constitution on Fundamental Rights would not be applicable to the state. Instead, the Constitution of the state should include a separate chapter on Fundamental Rights.

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[24] Guha., op.cit., 355.
[25] Ibid.
[26] For details see Behera (2000)., op,cit., 257.

The recommendations of the committee could not be implemented as there was no debate or discussion on the matter. Jammu did not approve of the Kashmir-centric proposal and thus, a consensus could not be arrived at.[27]

The idea of self-rule became a part of the conflict resolution discourse in recent times. The idea was proposed by the then President of Pakistan, General Pervez Mushrraf, in his autobiography *In the Line of Fire*. His approach has four main points:[28]

- Identify the regions of the state including *Azad* Kashmir and Northern Areas.
- De-militarize the region to build a favorable environment for peace initiatives.
- Allow Self-Rule or Kashmiris managing their own affairs.
- Set up an India-Pakistan joint mechanism to over see the Self-Rule in Kashmir.

PDP adopted self-rule perspective and included it in its manifesto to seek the approval of the people. In a way, the party tried to involve the people in the process of finding a long term solution to the problem which has affected their lives since 1947. In a resolution adopted by the Executive Committee of the party in 2007, PDP criticized the formula of autonomy advanced by National Conference.[29] According to the party, autonomy addresses the relationship between Indian side of the state and the Union of India. Self-Rule notion of PDP, on the other hand, empowers the people of the entire state including the areas administered by Pakistan. In party's view, the Kashmir problem has four dimensions[30]-

i. Problem between India and Pakistan.

ii. Problem between Center and State

iii. Relationship between people living on two parts of the state

iv. Discord between the three regions of the state: Jammu, Kashmir and Ladakh.

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[27] Rekha Chowdhary, "Debating Autonomy," *Seminar* 496 (2000), http://www.india-seminar.com/496%20rekha%20chowdhary.html.

[28] *The Hindu*, September 25, 2006.

[29] PDP Executive Committee Resolution, (11 February 2007).

[30] Ibid.

In October 2008, the party released self-rule document which is the framework for resolution of Kashmir dispute. This framework was also incorporated in the Party Manifesto 2008. The self-rule framework includes[31]-

- Sharing of sovereignty without commitment of political merger. This will integrate the entire region without disturbing the sovereign authority.
- Self-rule framework has three sub-components: a new political structure, economic integration and constitutional restructuring. The new political structure will have governance under the institution of Regional Council of Greater Jammu and Kashmir which will act as the Senate. It will be a major cross border institution. In order to empower the sub-regions, a tier of sub-regional councils will be added. Economic integration includes a common economic space, a system of dual currency and coordinating economic policies. There will have to be amendments to the Constitution in order to implement the framework of self-rule.
- The Head of the State will be elected from regions by rotation so that all regions have equal and equitable sense and feeling of empowerment.
- Before the implementation, demilitarization and troop reduction will have to take place on both sides of the border.
- This proposal will have to be discussed between India and Pakistan and also with the people living in Pakistan administered Kashmir and Northern areas.

V. PDP IN GOVERNMENT

After the 2002 elections, PDP and Congress formed a coalition government in the state. PDP was to head the government for the first three years and Congress would lead the coalition for the remaining three years.[32] The alliance adopted a

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[31] PDP Self-Rule Framework for Resolution, (October 2008).
[32] The term of state government in Jammu and Kashmir is six years.

Common Minimum Programme (CMP) which included many of the promises made by PDP in its Party Manifesto. The main elements of the CMP were[33]-

- The main goal of the coalition government was to heal the physical, psychological and emotional wounds of the people inflicted by fourteen years of militancy. The coalition government will request the Government of India to hold unconditional talks with elected representatives and all segments of public opinion to restore peace in the state.

- The government will encourage young people involved in the militant movement to return to their families and mainstream.

- Government shall review all cases of detainees being held without trial for long periods.

- Government shall review the operation of all such laws that have been depriving the people of basic rights. The Government shall not implement POTA in the state.

- All cases of custodial cases will be investigated and government shall strengthen the State Human Rights Commission.

- Kashmiri Pandits are essential component of *Kashmiriyat*. The government will take necessary steps to ensure safety of the Pandits and make atmosphere conductive for their return.

- Government shall give priority to rid administration of corruption and nepotism.

- Government shall set up a Commission to reform the police and assimilate the Special Operations Group (SOG) within the regular police establishment.

- Government shall press for the inclusion of Dogri in the Eighth Schedule of the Constitution.

- The Government shall strive for the extension of Scheduled Tribe status for the Pahari speaking population in the state.

- The government shall make sincere efforts to ensure that all three regions receive equitable share of resources available for development.

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[33] "Common Minimum Programme of PDP-Congress," *World Focus* 23, no. 10-12 (2002): 63-64.

- High priority to be given to the development of power resources and extend the benefit of electricity to all villages of the state.

- A comprehensive plan to develop environment friendly tourism in the state will be prepared.

- Special emphasis on safe drinking water, sanitation, roads, health care and education.

This segment of the chapter will show that the promises made by the party were not merely rhetorical, but an effort was made to fulfill them. The performance of the government was not extraordinary; however, there were few achievements and some failures. The most important policy of the government, healing touch was a partial success. The first beneficiary of the healing touch policy was Shaukat Bakshi, who was accused of kidnapping Mufti's daughter Rubya Sayeed in 1989, was released from the prison.[34] His release was followed by the release of the top separatist leaders. The Mufti government also handed 234 letters of appointment to victims of militancy in Baramulla district within few days of assuming office.[35] The government claimed that it has provided 2000 jobs to the next kin of militancy victims over the years. A major achievement was the decrease in the number of custodial deaths, which has dropped by 95%.[36] Yet another achievement was the decrease in the number of disappearances. According to Human Rights Watch Report on Jammu and Kashmir (2006), the new disappearances dropped from 81% in 2003 to 18% in 2005. The Institute of Conflict Management has presented data on the decrease in violence and killings in the state. (See Table 9). The PDP-Congress government under the leadership of Sayeed succeeded in bringing the separatists and the Government of India on the dialogue table. Mufti held many meetings with prime minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee and deputy prime minister Lal Krishna Advani to persuade them to hold unconditional talks with the separatist leaders in order to bring peace and normalcy in the state. Finally, Advani met a delegation led by separatist leader

[34] *The Tribune*, November 7, 2002.
[35] *The Tribune*, November 15, 2002.
[36] *The Hindu*, October 18, 2007.

Abbas Ansari in 2003.[37] The government fulfilled its objective of starting a dialogue between the centre and the separatist groups. It is this context that the concept of an independent chief minister emerged in Kashmir politics who was not dependent on the centre for his political survival. However, the success of the healing touch policy was partial. From the very first day of the government assuming power, many PDP leaders and party workers have been killed by militants. Prominent leaders killed were Abdul Aziz Mir and Ghulam Nabi Lone. Moreover, even the militant activity continued in the Kashmir region. The first blow to the healing touch policy came in November 2002 when the Raghunath Temple was attacked. The Government of India directed the Mufti government to re-arrest some of the released prisoners in the wake of violence in the valley.[38] Violence and killings have continued despite healing touch policy thus, making it a partial success.

Table 9 Data on the Number of Killings During 2001-2007

Year	Civilians	Security	Terrorists	Total
2001	1067	590	2850	4507
2002	839	469	1714	3022
2003	658	338	1546	2542
2004	534	325	951	1810
2005	520	216	996	1732
2006	349	168	599	1116
2007	164	121	492	777

Source: Institute of Conflict Management

The return and rehabilitation of Kashmiri Pandits was the top priority for Mufti as he took over as the chief minister.[39] However, many incidents of violence against

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[37] *The Tribune*, October 24, 2003.
[38] *The Tribune*, November 29, 2002.
[39] *The Tribune*, November 4, 2002.

the Pandits continued in the state. A major incident happened in 2003 when 24 Kashmiri Pandits were killed in Nandimarg by suspected militants in army uniforms.[40] Only significant development in rehabilitation of Pandits took place at Sheikhpura, 30 kilometers from Srinagar, where a colony of 200 flats for the Pandits was constructed. However, only 30 flats were occupied as Pandits still don't feel safe in the valley. Therefore, PDP failed to restore *Kashmiriyat* which was eroded in the wake of militancy in the early 1990s.

PDP made a significant contribution to democratic politics by conducting civic elections in 2005 after a gap of twenty-seven years. The National Conference had revived grass root institutions by conducting Panchayat elections in 2001. The PDP took the process forward by holding municipal elections in the state. The turnout was encouraging[41] and conveyed that common Kashmiri was convinced about democratic politics as a means of solving day to day problems. George Mathew argues that Kashmir needed vibrant democratic institutions at all levels to address the alienation of the people.[42] Further, he notes that militancy could be contained if Kashmir politics had strong grass root institutions responsible for people oriented development and community participation. The civic election was a beginning in the direction of revitalizing institutions of democracy.

PDP-Congress alliance had promised to recommend the inclusion of Dogri, a language spoken in Jammu region, in the Eighth Schedule of the Constitution. The Mufti government sent a recommendation to the Center which was accepted and Lok Sabha passed a bill in December 2003 to recognize the Dogri language. PDP expressed satisfaction over fulfilling its promise. However, the demand to include Dogri was raised much before the PDP was formed. The language is a recognized regional language of the state but in 1992, the Dogra Sangharsh Morcha started a movement to pressurize the government to recognize the

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[40] *The Tribune*, March 25, 2003.
[41] Navnita Chadha Behera, *Demystifying Kashmir* (New Delhi: Pearson Longman, 2007), 63.
[42] George Mathew, "Kashmir Quest for Local Democracy," *The Hindu*, September 29, 2001.

language.[43] PDP claimed the credit for the inclusion of the language in order to expand its support base in the Jammu region. Also, BJP, which is the prominent party in Jammu, was in power at the Center when the bill was passed in Lok Sabha. Therefore, BJP ensured the inclusion of Dogri to appease its votebank in Jammu. However, the involvement of PDP in ensuring the inclusion of Dogri had a major political implication for the state. A Kashmir based mainstream political party trying to seek the political attention of Jammu bridged the divide between the two regions to a certain extent.

The revival of tourism was an achievement of the Mufti government.[44] Mufti visited many foreign countries to request their government to withdraw travel adversaries on the visit of their nationals.[45] He also met tour operators to help them organize tours in the state. The Mufti government succeeded in making the state a tourist destination. This not only revived the tourism industry but also changed the image of Kashmir which was once described as the most dangerous place in the world. The change of image was a matter of restoring the honour and dignity of the people.

A major achievement of the Mufti government was in the field of education. 93% of the population has access to schools within one kilometer of their homes.[46] According to the 2001 Census, literacy rate in the state was 55.5% which increased to 65.33% in 2004. The educational statistics[47] reveal that the number of enrollments in higher education during 2000-01 was 53,179 which increased to 80,405 in 2004-05. Further, the number of universities in the state during 2000-01 was 3 which increased to 9 in 2004-05. Thus, the government has brought improvement in the field of education.

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[43] P.N. Pushp and K. Warikoo, eds., *Jammu, Kashmir and Ladakh: Linguistic Predicament* (New Delhi: Har-Anand, 2000), http:// www.koshur.org/Languages/Warikoo.html
[44] *The Tribune*, November 3, 2004.
[45] *The Tribune*, December 27, 2003.
[46] *The Hindu*, March 18, 2008.
[47] Data from Laveesh Bhandari and Sunita Kale, *Jammu and Kashmir: Performance, Facts and Figures* (New Delhi: Pearson, 2009), 85-94.

On the economic front, the data shows that the GDP in the 1990s was 4.3% and increased to 5.7% in 2005.[48] The per capita income of the state was 14,301 in 2000-01 and 22,537 in 2007-08. The rise in figures show the economic performance of the state has improved yet when compared with the per capita income of India which is 33,229 or per capita of the neighboring states like Punjab 43,092, Himachal Pradesh 39,849 and Uttarakhand 30,767, that one realizes the economic backwardness of the state. But it must also be kept in mind that the decade long insurgency was responsible for slow rate of growth which no government can change in a short span of time. Moreover, the lack of conditions necessary for democracy and absence of strong institutions had a negative impact on economic development in the state. Siddhartha Prakash presents a political economy view of the state and writes about the minimal industrial development, lack of job opportunities, economic mismanagement and political corruption in the state.[49] He argues that militancy has roots in the economic conditions as well. The state had failed to satisfy both political and economic needs of the people. However, when democracy re-emerged in the state, the economic development improved.[50] Democracy promotes economic development and well being of the people and thus, preserving democratic regime becomes crucial for economic development of the state.

There are some promises which the Mufti government failed to fulfill. State experienced violence and militant activities during the regime of PDP. The State Human Rights Commission accused the government of jeopardizing its autonomy and how the government did not respond to the recommendations made by the Commission.[51] The Kashmiri Pandits did not returned to the valley as their safety had not been ensured by the government. The Mufti government also failed to

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[48] *The Tribune*, August 5, 2005.

[49] See Siddhartha Prakash, "Political Economy of Kashmir since 1947," *Contemporary South Asia* 9, no. 3 (2000): 315-37.

[50] See Gautam Navlakha, "The State of Jammu and Kashmir's Economy," *Economic and Political Weekly* 42, no. 40 (2007): 4034-38

[51] *The Tribune*, April 13, 2005.

check corruption in the state.[52] Further, the government discriminated against Jammu in the distribution of Financial Grants by the Center.[53] The government did not fulfill its promise of granting Scheduled Tribe (ST) status to Pahari community. The promise of providing 24 hours electricity was not fulfilled by the government.

CONCLUSION

The emergence of PDP has rejuvenated the politics of the state in the post-insurgency period. Politics of the state experienced single-party dominance and constant intervention of the centre. And since 1990s, the mainstream politics was sidelined due to insurgency and violence in the state. The period from 1996 witnessed the dominance of single party again, low participation of people and the absence of opposition or an alternative. With the formation of PDP in 1999, the state found a viable alternative to National Conference and a presence of a strong opposition force.

Electoral politics of the state became competitive in nature and as a consequence, the parties started raising local issues to garner the support of the people. PDP introduced people friendly agenda in the form of healing touch policy to address the alienation of the people. Therefore, the process of democratizing the polity of the state had begun. The state experienced highly contested elections and people oriented issues became a part of mainstream politics.

PDP as a strong regional force transformed the state into an active participant in the peace process and conflict resolution. It played an intervening role between the centre and the separatists. By engaging itself as representatives of Kashmiris,

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[52] *The Tribune*, November 3, 2004
[53] Ibid.

it gave the peace process a stamp of legitimacy as Kashmiris were taking part in the process.

Finally, a significant development took place in the politics of the state as a mainstream party offered solution to the Kashmir dispute. The party released the document pertaining to the solution of the dispute during the elections in order to seek the approval of the people. Self-rule became a debatable issue in the public domain. The move to involve Kashmiris in the deliberation of the solution to Kashmir dispute bolstered the prospects of democratizing the politics of the state which is not only essential but the need of the hour.

CHAPTER FOUR

COALITION POLITICS: A PARADIGMATIC SHIFT IN THE POLITICS OF J&K

"The immediate political context of coalition politics was the decline of the one-dominant Congress Party and the continuing failure of any party from the centre, left, or right of the party system to win a working majority of its own to govern India."[1]Further, the rise of state level and regional parties has transformed the party system from one-party dominance to a regionalized multi-party system. According to K.B.Saxena, "coalition government is the effect of which multi-partyism is the cause."[2] Although, Congress as an organization had coalitional framework with leftist and right-wing within the party, its belief in maintaining a strong centre gave way to demands for autonomy and rise of regional parties. When Indira Gandhi was at the helm of affairs, she stamped out its plurality[3] and Congress started losing its appeal among the masses. The decline of the Congress created a political space which was occupied by the BJP and other regional parties, inaugurating a regionalized multi-party system in India. Coalitions are formed in a multi-party system when no party commands a majority. Thus, alliances are formed in order to attain political power, influence the agenda to serve one's own constituencies and secure votes to fulfill the preceding two objectives.[4]

Alliance formation takes place at three different levels: Electoral, Parliamentary and Governmental.[5] The alliance between National Conference and Congress in

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[1] M .P .Singh, "India's National Front and United Front Coalition Governments: A Phase in Federalized Governance," *Asian Survey* 41, no.2 (2001): 328.

[2] K. B. Saxena, "Theories and Concepts Associated with the Formation and Working of Coalition Governments," in *Coalition Governments In India: Problem and Prospects*, ed. K.P. Karunakaran (Shimla: Indian Institute of Advanced Study, 1975), 21.

[3]Singh., op.cit., 329.

[4]Sanjay Ruparelia, "Managing the United Progressive Alliance," *Economic and Political Weekly* 40, no.24 (2005): 2407.

[5] Saxena., op.cit., 22.

1987 in J&K was an electoral alliance as the two parties decided not to field candidates opposite each other. Recently, the two parties again decided to field joint candidates for the 2009 Lok Sabha elections. At the parliamentary/legislature level, if the single largest party fails to secure a majority in the House, it asks other groups for support. The Communist supported the PDP-Congress government in J&K state legislature by lending outside support. An alliance at governmental level results in inclusion of ministers from different parties in the government. A new political trend at this level is heading the alliance and the government through rotation. This kind of arrangement has been experimented in Uttar Pradesh (BSP-BJP), Karnataka (JD(S)-BJP) and Jammu and Kashmir (PDP-Congress). The PDP-Congress alliance can be best characterized as alliance at the governmental level because the two parties never reached an understanding on electoral alliance and opposed each other in legislature on certain issues like Permanent Resident Bill 2004, troop reduction in the valley etc.

A remarkable achievement of coalition politics in India has been its role in strengthening Indian democracy. "It has allowed diverse constituencies to share power,"[6] it has soften extremism as parties with extreme views have to shelve their agenda to accommodate coalition partners[7] and coalitions have also strengthened decentralization by giving more weight and voice to federal units.

The first experience of a coalition government at the national level took place in 1969 when the Congress split and the government was reduced to a minority. However, it survived when a parliamentary coalition was formed with the support from leftist and regional parties.[8] Later, in the post-Emergency period, non-Congressism ideology was strong enough to unify the opposition as Janata Party. By the 1990s, multi-partyism had ushered the era of coalitions. The National

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[6] Pratap Bhanu Mehta, "Constraints on Electoral Mobilization," *Economic and Political Weekly* 39, no.51 (2004): 5399.

[7] Susanne Rudolph and Lloyd Rudolph, "New Dimensions of Indian Democracy," *Journal of Democracy* 13, no.1 (2002): 57.

[8] Singh., op.cit., 329.

Front and United Front governments were based on anti-Congress and anti-BJP unity, and thus, their foundation was weak. The National Front government survived for 11 months only and fell due to internal divisions. The United Front coalition, on the other hand, managed to reconcile internal heterogeneity, which can be considered a remarkable achievement of the coalition[9], however, its differences with the Congress brought down the government in 17 months.

After the fall of the United Front coalition, the BJP led National Democratic Alliance (NDA) came to power at the centre. The BJP, which was considered a political 'untouchable' because of its Hindutva ideology, softened its stand on the Ram Temple, Article 370 and Uniform Civil Code to accommodate coalition partners. The BJP took advantage of the non-coalescent behavior of the Congress. Infact, E. Sridharan argues that the major reason for the rise of BJP has been its strategy to exploit coalition opportunities.[10] BJP's coalition at the national level facilitated coalition making in the states as well because the party was in a position to offer ministerial positions.[11] For instance, BJP formed an alliance with the National Conference and Omar Abdullah was accommodated in the Union Cabinet.

From 1998-2004 Congress was the main opposition party. It belonged to the era of single party dominance and found it difficult to coalesce with smaller parties. However, it changed its mindset and entered into the realm of coalitions in 2004 forming the United Progressive Alliance (UPA). Like the BJP, Congress entered into alliances at the state level- with PDP in J&K, RJD in Bihar, NCP in Maharashtra and TRS in Andhra Pradesh.[12] Although, the Congress was inexperienced in running a multi-party government, the UPA successfully completed its tenure. A major challenge to the coalition emanated from the withdrawal of support by the Left parties in the wake of the Indo-US nuclear deal.

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[9] Ibid., 347.
[10] For details see E. Sridharan, "Coalition Strategies and the BJP's Expansion 1989-2004,"*Journal of Commonwealth and Comparative Politics* 43, no.2 (2005): 194-221.
[11] Ibid.
[12] Ruparelia., op.cit., 2409.

The Congress managed to garner the support of the Samajwadi Party to save the government from collapsing. This indicated the changed mindset of the Congress and the party's political leaning of the skills and tactics used to run a coalition successfully.

Coalition politics is not a national level phenomenon. Indian states are increasingly experiencing formation of coalition governments. National parties no longer have hegemony in the states. The emergence of regional parties has intensified electoral competition in the states. The contest is further intensified by the presence of more than one regional party in a state. For instance, the Kashmir valley witnessed a direct contest between National Conference and the Congress party but with the emergence of PDP, the elections have become a triangular contest. The Jammu region has intense competition as the contest is between two national parties: Congress and the BJP and regional parties like National Conference, PDP and Panthers party. In such a scenario, political parties, knowing that they cannot capture the entire state, nurture few constituencies and strengthen their position in specific areas. Like, PDP has made South Kashmir its political bastion. Thus, no party is in a position to win a majority in the House and coalitions become an imperative. And, just as national parties cannot ignore state parties at the national level, similarly, state parties cannot ignore national parties at the state level. Mufti Mohammad Sayeed argued that he advanced a regional party to keep national parties out of Kashmir[13], but he had to relent and accept the alliance with Congress. Thus, the state of J&K got its first coalition government in 2002 and the politics of the state made a paradigmatic shift from one party rule towards coalition politics and a new arrangement of power sharing. . Power sharing is an important element of democracy and it became a means for furthering the process of democratization in Kashmir. The following segment of the chapter examines the political alliances between 1987-2002 which were marred by imperfection and political opportunism. However, the coalitional nature of politics from 2002, introduced a new power sharing arrangement which

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[13] *Frontline*, October 26- November 8, 2002.

democratically accommodated divergent interests and put in place a system of checks and balance within the government. Thus, the chapter will argue that the coalitional nature of politics brought a political transformation that restored the process of democratizing the politics of the state.

I. COALITION POLITICS IN J&K (1987-2002)

The onset of coalition politics in the state of J&K emerged for the first time, when a formal alliance between major parties of the state (although Congress is a national party, the state unit is a prominent player in J&K politics) took place in 1987. The National Conference and Congress decided to form an alliance before the 1987 state assembly elections. Considering the political backgrounds of the parties, the alliance was amazing.[14] The negotiations between the two parties resulted in a political arrangement under which Farooq Abdullah was reinstalled as the chief minister and both the parties decided not oppose one another's candidates in the elections.

This sort of a political arrangement in which two major parties work out seat equations before elections erodes procedural notion of democracy which is based on electoral competition. According to Sten Widmalm, the National Conference-Congress alliance was a 'tactical' alliance which he defines as "cooperation between two parties that are significantly different ideologically." Consociationalism or grand coalition counters political polarization but in the case of National Conference-Congress alliance, "consociationalism was taken too far."[15] The pre-poll alliance between National Conference-Congress left no choice for the electorate. The National Conference put up 46 candidates and Congress put up 31. Widmalm concludes that in a total of 76 assembly seats, the alliance put up 77 candidates, which indicates competition in only one seat. Thus, ignoring the preference of the electorate was a big blow to democratic procedures.

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[14]Sten Widmalm, "The Rise and Fall of Democracy in Jammu and Kashmir," *Asian Survey*, 37, no.11 (1997): 1017.
[15]Ibid.

The alliance was crucial in the politics of the state as it became a reason for the alienation of the Kashmiris[16] and also proved to be a setback for democratic politics. National Conference was the most popular party and its alliance with the Congress, which was perceived as an outsider and a party which was responsible for removing and installing chief minister according to its convenience, did not augur well with the people. "The immediate fallout of the alliance was the creation of a political vacuum."[17] There was no opposition or an alternative party in the politics of Kashmir. This vacuum became a catalyst for activating the secessionist movement.[18] Insurgency picked up momentum in the 1990s and mainstream politics went into oblivion. It revived itself in 1996 when the state assembly elections took place but the political vacuum continued and popular disillusionment with the democratic process resulted in low voter turnout.

The further alienation of Kashmiris took place with the National Conference-BJP alliance in the late 1990s. The alliance between National Conference and BJP was formed when the latter was in power at the centre. The policy of National Conference to support the party at the centre resulted in the alliance. Both reached an understanding to divide the state into respective spheres of political dominance. National Conference in the valley and BJP in Jammu left little political space for parties like the Congress which had support in both the regions. prime Minister Vajpayee inducted Omar Abdullah of the National Conference into the Union cabinet to further consolidate the alliance. Since Farooq Abdullah was the chief minister in the state, he wanted to launch his son at the national level.

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[16]Rekha Chowdhary and V.Nagendra Rao, "Alienation in Kashmir and Election 2002,"*World Focus* 23, no. 10-12 (2002): 36.
[17] Ibid.
[18] Reeta Chowdhari Tremblay, "Kashmir: the Valley's Political Dynamics," *Contemporary South Asia* 4, no.1 (1995): 98.

An analysis of the National Conference-BJP alliance reveals that the partnership between the two defied political logic.[19] The BJP had been a bitter political rival of the National Conference in the state for decades. The rivalry started in the 1950s when the Jan Sangh supported the Praja Parishad movement against Sheikh Abdullah. The movement demanded full integration of the state with India, abrogation of Article 370 and opposed the land reforms initiated by Sheikh Abdullah. Even after Jan Sangh became BJP in 1980, it continued to advocate full integration of J&K and abolition of Article 370. In this context, it is difficult to understand the alliance formation between the two parties. However, a positive outcome of the alliance was BJP softening its extreme position on Article 370.

The alliance had serious implications for both parties in the 2002 state assembly elections. The NDA led by the BJP had to remove the demand for abrogating Article 370 from its agenda which hurt its supporters in the Jammu region. As a result, it could manage to win only one seat in the elections. The National Conference suffered even more. The people felt betrayed as the party being a part of the central government could not take up the case of autonomy vigorously and did not insist on moving towards the pre-1953 period.[20] Moreover, two issues became a major source of embarrassment for National Conference in the valley: the enactment of POTA and Gujarat riots. [21] People of the valley oppose the existence of harsh laws and the riots reminded the people about the gross human rights violations. The fact that National Conference was supporting and was part of the government tarnished the image of the party.

As a consequence, PDP emerged on the political scene as an alternative to National Conference and the Congress revived itself in Jammu and hence the alliance between PDP-Congress received acceptance from the people. The formation of an alliance between PDP and Congress was not difficult as the PDP

[19] Rekha Chowdhary, "BJP's Alliance with the National Conference," *Economic and Political Weekly* 39, no.48 (1999): 3342.
[20] Ibid., 3343.
[21] Rekha Chowdhary and V. Nagendra Rao, "National Conference of Jammu and Kashmir: From Hegemonic to Competitive Politics," *Economic and Political Weekly* 39, no. 14-15 (2004): 1542.

founder and leader Mufti Mohammed Sayeed was a senior member of the Congress Party till 1999 and parted ways with the party as he had differences with the central leadership.

II. PDP-CONGRESS COALITION (2002-2008)

State Assembly elections in 2002 resulted in a hung assembly with no party close to the majority mark. National Conference and BJP suffered because of their alliance and as a consequence, gains were made by PDP and the Congress. Although, National Conference was the single largest party, it could not muster a majority in the House. The Congress, which had earlier aligned with the party, refused to a form an alliance because National Conference was a part of the BJP-led NDA at the centre. Therefore, PDP and Congress were ideally suited to form a coalition. But the rigid stand adopted by PDP made the negotiations difficult with the Congress. Both could not arrive at a consensus. The PDP wanted chief ministership for a Kashmiri, while the state unit of the Congress did not approve of a junior partner[22] heading the coalition. According to Mufti Mohammad Sayeed, the mandate of the people was in favor of PDP and Congress but the chief minister should be from the valley.[23] Even his daughter Mehbooba was of the opinion that an ethnic Kashmiri chief minister would be able to address the core problem, alienation of Kashmiris.[24] Meanwhile, Farooq Abdullah refused to carry on as the caretaker chief minister and Governor's Rule was imposed on the state.[25] This brought tremendous pressure on Mufti from his party ranks to adopt a more understanding approach.[26] On the other hand, Congress President Sonia Gandhi agreed to allow PDP occupy larger space in the coalition as it would demonstrate Congress' change of attitude towards Kashmir.[27] Congress was identified with installing and removing chief ministers. By allowing PDP, a valley

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[22] The Congress had won 20 seats and PDP 16 in the State Assembly Election 2002.
[23] *The Tribune*, October 16, 2002.
[24] *Frontline*, October 26- November 8, 2002.
[25] *The Tribune*, October 18, 2002.
[26] *The Tribune*, October 24, 2002.
[27] *The Hindu*, October 25, 2002.

based party, to head the coalition first; the Congress could show it had transformed its authoritarian image and has become more understanding towards the Kashmiris. However, the state unit of the Congress revolted as it opposed PDP heading the coalition and dictating terms to Congress. Thus, a power sharing arrangement was worked out in which the six years tenure would be split between the two parties on rotation basis.[28] The Congress allowed PDP to head the government for the first three years and bargained for the post of deputy chief minister, Speaker and key portfolios. This arrangement suited PDP as well because it did not want the people of the state to believe that it deprived Jammu of the chief ministership. Being a new party, it wanted to expand its base in Jammu and so by rotation a Congress chief minister from Jammu would help PDP garner some support from the people of Jammu region. Therefore, the alliance arrived at a perfect power sharing arrangement. Another hurdle in the formation of the coalition was the blending of Congress' mainstream nationalist policy and PDP's sensitive approach towards Kashmir.[29] The Congress accepted the inclusion of promises made in the PDP manifesto as a part of the Common Minimum Programme. Thus, different interests were democratically accommodated in a Common Minimum Programme which became a blueprint for democratic governance. Moreover, a government consisting of two main parties also put in place a system of checks and balance within the government as each party would keep a check on the performance of the other. When PDP, a state party, was heading the government, the Congress, which was also in power at the centre, would build pressure on PDP to perform well and when the Congress was at the helm of affairs, PDP would keep a check on the performance. Thus, the alliance between the two parties enhanced the level of accountability as the government became accountable to the people, the opposition and the alliance partner.

For the first time, the state of J&K had a coalition government with a power sharing arrangement on rotation basis. Uttar Pradesh and Karnataka had

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[28] *The Hindu*, October 28, 2002.
[29] Ibid.

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experienced similar power sharing arrangement but the experiment failed as the governments collapsed mid-way. In J&K, the coalition almost completed its tenure. It was nearly at the end of its term when the Amarnath land transfer controversy took place and PDP withdrew support, to the Congress led government, keeping in mind the upcoming assembly elections. Like any coalition, PDP-Congress alliance also had its share of problems:

As alliance partners, PDP and Congress never reached an agreement to support each others candidates during elections. For the Lok Sabha elections 2004, the Congress decided not to field candidates from Srinagar and Anantnag and support PDP candidates. But PDP fielded a candidate from Baramulla where Congress was expecting a *quid pro quo* from PDP. Although, both parties termed it as a 'friendly contest',[30] the votes in favour of the alliance got divided between the two parties and the National Conference candidate was able to win the seat. Even, during the Municipal elections in 2005, both parties could not reach an understanding. However, by not putting up joint candidates, the alliance did not ruin the competitive sprit of elections.

A major issue that created differences between the coalition partners was the Permanent Resident (Disqualification) Bill 2004. The Bill had provisions which denied a woman state subject rights if she married an outsider, i.e. non-Kashmiri. PDP and National Conference were in favor of the Bill while Jammu based parties like Congress, BJP, and Panthers Party were opposing the Bill. The Congress which was a part of the coalition government that introduced the Bill decided not to support it in the legislature and demanded formation of a Committee to examine the provisions[31]. The PDP and National Conference considered the criticism as a threat to the special status enjoyed by Kashmir.

[30]*The Hindu*, May 14, 2004.
[31] PUCL Bulletin, April, 2004.

Some other issues that created problems for the coalition were- the soft approach of PDP towards militants was opposed by the state unit of Congress as it would hurt its votebank in Jammu. It did not approve of the release of militants from prisons. To show its discontent, the Congress boycotted an official function held during the visit of the prime minister.[32] The reduction of troops in Kashmir was another issue which created difficulties in running a smooth coalition. The PDP wanted the Congress government at the centre to gradually withdraw troops from the valley. It wanted the government to consolidate the gains of the peace initiative and trust of the people. The Congress felt that the security situation was not right to withdraw troops from the valley. But in order to save the coalition from collapsing, prime minister Manmohan Singh appointed an expert panel to examine the matter.[33]

The Amarnath land transfer controversy brought an end to the PDP-Congress alliance and collapse of the coalition government. The PDP withdrew support from the Ghulam Nabi Azad government in the wake of the mass agitation in the valley against the government order to transfer land to the Amarnath Shrine Board. The Azad cabinet, which included PDP ministers, decided to transfer 800 kanals of land to the Amarnath Shrine Board to facilitate the pilgrimage to the Shrine. The arrangements of the pilgrimage were made by government departments and local Muslims. In order to provide more facilities to the pilgrims, the land was transferred to the Board. However, the word spread that the transfer of land was permanent and was "a part of a plan to settle Hindus from outside to change the demography of the state."[34] PDP ministers were involved in the decision but the outrage caused by the order in the valley made them change their stand and the party threatened to withdraw support if the government did not revoke the order. The agitation in Kashmir became violent and the government had to cancel its order. Yet, PDP withdrew support from the government and lent

[32] *The Tribune*, May 3, 2003.
[33] *The Times of India*, June 18, 2007.
[34] Balraj Puri, "Jammu and Kashmir: The Issue of Regional Autonomy," *Economic and Political Weekly* 43, no. 34 (2008): 8.

support to the agitation in the valley. The revoking of order led to a violent reaction in Jammu. Rumors of a blockade of supplies by Jammu created a rift between the two regions of the state. The separatists and PDP gave a call for Muzaffarbad March and demanded the opening of the route to Muzaffarbad for trade. Mainstream parties were catering to their respective votebank and created a political divide between the two regions. The PDP-Congress coalition was a perfect power sharing arrangement. Power was shared by two parties representing different regions of the state. The land transfer issue crated a divide between the two parties and as a result a political divide was created between the two regions of the state.

CONCLUSION

The state assembly elections 2002 brought a new political experiment in Kashmir: a multi-party coalition government in Kashmir with PDP and Congress as main constituents. The coalition also comprised of Communists, Panthers Party and independents. This coalition brought a change in the politics of the state by ending one party rule and introducing multi-party coalition government. The coalition comprised of mainstream parties from Kashmir, Jammu and Ladakh and as a result the interests and aspirations of divergent regions were democratically accommodated. Regional aspirations and demands could be satisfied since the coalition represented all the regions of the state.

Another significant aspect of the coalition was that it gave the state its first chief minister from Jammu region. Ghulam Nabi Azad is a Muslim from Doda district of Jammu. Jammu always complained of the dominance of Kashmir based leadership in the state but with a chief minister from Jammu, the political aspirations of the region were satisfied. Thus, the coalition was a perfect power sharing arrangement between Jammu and Kashmir. Interestingly, the acceptance

of a Muslim chief minister from a Hindu majority region furthered the process of secularization and strengthened the overall unity of the state of J&K.[35]

The PDP-Congress coalition isolated the National Conference and the separatists from the politics of the state. PDP emerged as a viable political alternative to the National Conference. It raised issues which appealed to the people of Kashmir and it established itself as a political force to reckon with. Moreover, the party raised issues like human rights violation, troop reduction, self-rule which were earlier raised by separatist groups. Thus, people supported the mainstream party and the coalition which was working on these issues rather than follow the separatists who work outside the mainstream. Although, there has not been an overall rejection of separatist politics as people participate in huge demonstrations and express separatist sentiments.[36] Moreover, the separatists act as a pressure group and their presence puts pressure on the government to work for the people and also work towards a solution to the Kashmir problem. Thus, they have an important role in the Kashmir despite being outside the realm of mainstream politics. However, the study argues that a mainstream party like PDP, taking up issues, which are raised by separatists, would appeal to people more because being part of the democratic system, mainstream party, if voted to power, can implement decisions. Like PDP, released prisoners, disbanded the SOG, brought down the number of cases of human right violations, etc.

Further, the Congress party, by joining the coalition, internalized into its agenda the ground realities of Indian politics.[37] Coalitions are an inevitable part of politics both at the national and state level. Congress belongs to the era of single party dominance or one party rule. Post 1990s, there has been a transformation of the polity into a multiparty system. The Congress has accepted the realities of

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[35] Luv Puri, "Right Time for Congress," *Economic and Political Weekly* 40, no. 47 (2005): 4873.
[36] Rekha Chowdhary, "Separatist Sentiments and Deepening of Democracy," *Economic and Political Weekly* 44, no.3 (2009): 13.
[37] *The Hindu*, November 12, 2002.

present day politics and imbibed the spirit of running a coalition which involves compromises and adjustments. Thus, when it formed the coalition with PDP, it allowed a junior partner to head the coalition for the first three years and allowed it to occupy larger space in the state politics. In India, coalition formation is generally accused of being guided by politics of opportunism, but in the case of PDP and Congress, the alliance was a positive step towards a just power sharing arrangement.

CONCLUSION

The analysis of Kashmir politics suggests that consolidation of democracy was prevented in the early years. However, contemporary politics has witnessed a shift towards democratic politics. The rise of PDP and coalition politics is connected to the re-emergence of democracy in the state. At the same time, it is interesting to note the contrast in the democratic experience of India and J&K. Sunil Khilnani makes a significant comment on Indian democracy:

"The historic persistence of India's democratic routines, interrupted only by Mrs. Indira Gandhi's Emergency- a twenty-two-month eclipse during the mid-1970s- is the single most remarkable fact about post-1947 India, distinguishing it from almost all the new nation states that emerged out of the disintegration of European empires. In India, democracy was constructed against the grain, both of a society founded upon the inequality of the caste order, and of an imperial and authoritarian state. If the initial conditions were unlikely, democracy has had to exist in circumstances that conventional political theories identify as being equally unpropitious: amidst a poor, illiterate and staggeringly diverse citizenry. Not only has it survived, it has succeeded in energizing Indian society in unprecedented ways. Introduced initially by mincingly legalistic elite as a form of government, democracy has been extended and deepened to become a principle of society, transforming the possibilities available to Indians. They embraced it, learning about it not from text books but by extemporary practice."[1]

What makes Indian democracy remarkable? According to Khilnani, post-colonial states were unable to maintain democratic regimes and India which was "huge, impoverished, crowded with cultural and religious distinctions and hierarchical social order," was not prepared for democracy.[2] However, Indian democracy has

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[1] Sunil Khilnani, *The Idea of India* (London: Hamish Hamilton, 1997), 9-10.
[2] Ibid., 16.

survived to be regarded as "role model of peaceful transfer of power from one government to another after periodic elections."[3]

India inherited democratic framework from the British rule but the credit for maintaining and consolidating democracy goes to the Indian political leadership. The denial of democratic self rule, under the colonial period, resulted in a mass support for the Indian leadership. In post-independent India, argues Ashutosh Varshney, Nehru preferred democracy over rapid industrialization.[4] State led development was based on the idea of welfare for the poor and weaker sections of our society. Thus, the poor got suffrage rights with welfare measures and this helped in strengthening our democracy in the initial years. It is important to realize that a democratic government cannot ignore the suffering of the poor. If policies are not directed towards the weaker sections, it can lead to the ouster of an incumbent government. Besides, Nehru also stood for parliamentary debates, free press, secularism and tolerance which bolstered the consolidation of democracy in India.[5]

Most scholars predicted that democratic regime in India will not survive because of the diverse ethnic and religious groups. Their struggle for recognition and power will prevent the consolidation of democracy. However, in the initial years Congress emerged as party representing all groups and addressing their demands. The Constitution of India established a federal polity where centre and states would share power. From the 1990s, coalition politics introduced the "ideology of moderation"[6] to curb extremism. Thus, diversity has not been able to hamper the consolidation of democracy.

The creation of institutions has further strengthened democratic regime in India. In the early period, India witnessed the emergence of strong leaders with great

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[3] Bimal Jalan, *Indian Politics: A View from the Backbench* (New Delhi: Penguin, 2007), 1.
[4] Ashutosh Varshney, "Why Democracy Survives," *Journal of Democracy* 9, no. 3 (1998): 38.
[5] Sumit Ganguly, "India's Multiple Revolution," *Journal of Democracy* 13, no. 2 (2002).
[6] Varshney., op.cit., 45.

personalities like Nehru and Patel. Unlike many post-colonial leaders, the Indian leadership displayed remarkable respect for democratic norms and procedures and resisted aggrandizement of power.[7] Indira Gandhi introduced personalized power and weakening of institutions but this kind of centralized politics gave way to formation of new organizations by the marginalized groups and mobilized people to exert democratic pressure on the government.[8] Thus, Indian democracy has been able to tackle the challenges that prevented its survival. It has been hailed as a successful experiment. Infact, it has been referred to as a role model.

Yet, democracy has to face problems emanating from the changing trends in politics and society. India is a land of divergences, inequalities and asymmetries that conflict becomes inevitable and thus, Ramchandra Guha characterizes it as a "laboratory of social conflicts."[9] Conflicts make the practice of democracy difficult. Atul Kohli has argued that India is a democracy but it is not governed well because of personal rule, politicization of bureaucracy and police, violent movements, etc.[10] The challenge for democracy is, therefore, to connect itself with governance in order to remain meaningful. Further, it has to also reinvent itself to grapple with the changes happening in the world and in India. Rajni Kothari explains the challenges to democracy in the present context.[11] The post-Mandal and post-Mandir phase of Indian politics has made casteist and Hindu extremist groups politically active which pose a threat to the survival of democracy. Globalization has spread capitalism in every corner of the world and the neo-liberal economic approach has widened the gap between rich and the poor. Democracy has ensured political equality through one-person one-vote. However, economic inequalities remain unattended. Moreover, the inability of the

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[7] Ibid., 46

[8] Ibid.

[9] Ramachandra Guha, Prologue to *India After Gandhi: the History of the World's Largest Democracy* (London: Picador, 2007): xx.

[10] Atul Kohli, "Crisis of Governability," in *Politics in India*, ed. Sudipta Kaviraj (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1997), 383.

[11] For details see Rajni Kothari, "Issues Before Indian Democracy: An Overview," in *Indian Democracy: Meanings and Practices*, eds. Rajendra Vora and Suhas Palshikar (New Delhi: Sage, 2004), 45-47.

government to tackle the menace of terrorism successfully has raised serious questions about the performance of a democratic regime. Representative democracy is no longer enough to face the problems in the present context. Democracy has to reinvent itself in order to remain relevant by addressing new issues. The Indian state failed to integrate J&K within Indian democracy. Sumantra Bose argues:

"This denial of democracy (to Kashmir by the Indian state) has historically taken two major forms. First, the reduction of representative government to a travesty through repression, fraud, and manipulation of ostensibly multiparty electoral processes; second, the systematic subversion of and destruction of federal autonomy which was a *condition* of Jammu and Kashmir's accession in 1947 to the Indian Union."[12]

India made all attempts to keep Kashmir under its control but effort to integrate it within Indian democratic framework was missing.[13] Infact, to keep Kashmir within the Indian fold, the Indian state had to compromise on democratic norms. Nehru was hailed as the consolidator of democracy in India. However, it is ironical that he ordered the dismissal of Sheikh Abdullah in 1953 and lent support to the authoritative and corrupt regime of Bakshi Ghulam Mohammed. Post-Nehru the politics in India became personalized and centralized under Indira Gandhi's tenure from 1967-1975. This was evident in her approach towards Kashmir. The National Conference was merged with the Congress, opposition parties were banned from contesting and later in 1975, after the Kashmir Accord, she installed Sheikh Abdullah as the chief minister. Thus, Kashmir was not allowed to elect its ruler and instead the central government appointed its own agents or supported pro-India leadership in Kashmir. India is a role model for changing governments through periodic elections but Kashmir was denied free and fair elections most of the times. The manipulations in the 1987 elections became the immediate cause of insurgency and people demanded independence. Democracy may have consolidated in India despite all odds but its success

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[12] Sumantra Bose, *The Challenge in Kashmir: Democracy, Self-Determination and a Just Peace* (New Delhi: Sage, 1997), 19.
[13] Balraj Puri, *Kashmir: After Insurgency* (New Delhi: Orient Longman, 2008), 46.

depends on democratic practice in J&K. It can be said that consolidation of democracy in J&K is the unfinished agenda of Indian democracy.

It has been argued that democracy has consolidated itself in India, yet the process of democratization continues[14] and it has been claimed that India is a case of deviant democratization.[15] Democracy is said to be deviant if the conditions necessary for its survival are unfavorable. Democracy has unexpectedly survived and consolidated itself in India. The level of development is low compared to the West. Moreover, India has a large rural population. Further, illiteracy is high. Society is diverse in terms of religion, caste, class and language. But India has experienced democratic rule for over sixty years. J&K like India has low levels of development, urbanization and education and is as heterogeneous as India in terms of religion, language, race, caste and class. Can the deviant conception be used to describe the process of democratization in J&K? The answer is both yes and no. Kashmir became politically conscious in 1930s and demanded democratic rule in the state. A democratic regime replaced authoritarian rule in 1948 with Sheikh Abdullah at the helm of affairs in J&K. However, the constant interference by Indian state in political affairs of the state, the practice of rigging and manipulating election outcome, the absence of a formidable opposition in the state, the period of insurgency and human rights violations by security forces prevented the consolidation of democracy. After decade long insurgency and violence, democracy resurfaced in 2002. If the process of democratization continues and efforts are made to maintain it, J&K can also become a case of deviant democracy. Thus, the conception of deviant democracy, which presents India as an exceptional case, can be used to characterize the polity of J&K only if democracy is allowed to consolidate itself in the future.

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[14] Rob Jenkins, "The Continued Democratization of Indian Democracy: Regionalization, Social Change and the 1996 General Elections," *Democratization* 3, no. 4 (1996): 501.

[15] Alistair McMillan, "Deviant Democratization in India," *Democratization* 15, no.4 (2008): 733-49.

In practice, democracy in India and in the state of J&K has followed different paths. The re-emergence of democracy in J&K needs further elaboration. In the mid 1990s, there was a growing discontentment with the politics of separatism as it had not yielded results. Instead it unleashed a phase of violence and gross human rights violations by security personnel. The people alienated themselves from the politics of separatism. It is in this context, that mainstream politics revived itself with the 1996 state assembly elections. However, low participation of the people indicated that people did not want to engage in any kind of political activity. They were disillusioned with both mainstream and separatists politics.

The 2002 state assembly elections proved to be a watershed in the political history of the state. Although, people were still not prepared to participate in political process, yet, the elections were significant in terms of the emergence of a system of genuine competition. The competitive streak was present in Jammu but this time it was extended to the Kashmir region as well with PDP, a Kashmir based regional party, posing a serious challenge to the ruling National Conference. Secondly, PDP emerged as an opposition party and was actively engaged in putting democratic pressure on the government. It projected itself as a viable alternative during election campaigning in 2002. In addition, for the first time an incumbent government was changed through a democratic process. People regained confidence in political processes and institutions. Moreover, low participation in elections indicated coercion was not used to force people to vote. Thus, the 2002 elections set in a new course in the politics of the state.

The changed context of Kashmir's mainstream politics can be related to the procedural conception of democracy. Procedures connect rulers with the ruled and give a predominant position to citizens to choose their rulers. The procedural dimension also emphasizes quality of democracy which is ensured through rule of law, participation, competition and accountability.[16] Rule of law was weak and

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[16] Larry Diamond and Leonardo Morlino, "An Overview," *Journal of Democracy*15, no. 4 (2004): 23-26.

not institutionalized in Kashmir. It was unable to defend the political rights of the citizens and procedures of democracy. The ruling party had made a mockery of electoral process by rigging elections and manipulating results. Arguably, it alienated the people from mainstream politics and they diverted their political attention towards politics of separatism to channelize their political aspirations. The alienation resulted in low or negligible participation in democratic processes. Participation is an important element of procedural democracy. Although, the state guaranteed universal adult suffrage, it was meaningless in the context of elections marked by fraudulent practices. However, the participation in 2008 state assembly elections was surprisingly high because of the change in political situation brought about by the 2002 elections in the state. The voter turnout in Kashmir was 52.36% in 2008 compared to 30.13% in 2002.[17] What was the cause of increase in the level of participation? The level of participation improved considerably because people realized it is possible to change an incumbent non-performing government through electoral process. Secondly, they realized that mainstream politics is the right course to address day to day problems and socio-economic concerns. Moreover, 2002 elections inaugurated multi-partyism in the state politics which consequently introduced the element of competition. People could choose from the political alternatives available. For Schumpeter, the element of competition is crucial in a democracy. It enhances the quality of procedural democracy. The emergence of PDP and its subsequent rise indicates the opening up democratic space and introducing the competitive aspect in politics. In 2008, the rise of PDP inspired moderate faction of separatists to contest elections. The implication of competitive politics has been two fold. One, it has ended the system of one party rule and as a result Kashmir has entered a new phase of coalition politics. Two, as Rekha Chowdhary argues that intense competition forced political parties to raise pro-people issues in order to remain relevant in mainstream politics. However, parties have to go beyond raising pro-people issues and make an effort to fulfill their promises. Democratic politics

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[17] Rekha Chowdhary, "Separatists Sentiments and Deepening of Democracy," *Economic and Political Weekly* 44, no. 3 (2009): 15.

brings the notion of accountability into practice. The nature of politics in present context facilitates accountability as people can reject incompetent representatives and ministers in the elections. Moreover, the polity has space for opposition parties who can hold the government accountable in the legislature. Further, coalition politics had also enhanced the level of accountability as coalition partners hold each other accountable. Therefore, three levels of accountability had improved the quality of procedural democracy in the state.

The Institute of Social Sciences conducted a study during the 2002 state assembly elections and the report prepared by the team provides in-depth analysis of the electoral process.[18] The analysis throws light on the procedural dimension of democracy in the state. To note the change in the political course, data of 2002 elections is compared with data and facts from 2008 elections. The ISS report suggested that the 2002 elections witnessed low participation. However, level of participation increased in 2008 in terms of voter turnout and number of candidates contesting elections. There were 727 candidates in 2002 elections, whereas, there were 1354 candidates[19] in 2008 elections. The increase in people's participation is best represented by the Srinagar constituency. Srinagar has always recorded low voter turnout. In 2002, 5.02% votes and in 2008 the figure went up to 21.67%.[20] The team reported that the 2002 elections were fair but not free because militants had called for a poll boycott and threatened to disrupt the process. However, since 1990s, for the first time, militants did not obstruct the polling process in 2008.[21] The ISS team also revealed the use of coercion by security personnel during elections. People are forced to cast their vote. At the same time, the report also stated that some of the complaints of coercion are politically motivated. And interestingly, people who wish to exercise their right to vote also use the excuse of coercion to steer clear of militants. Further, the people of the state used the

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[18] See ISS Study Report, "Fair Elections under the Shadow of Fear," *World Focus* 23, no. 10-12 (2002): 59-62.
[19] Gautam Navlakha, "Jammu and Kashmir Elections: A Shift in Equations," *Economic and Political Weekly* 44, no. 3 (2009): 10.
[20] Chowdhary (2000)., op.cit.
[21] Navlakha., op.cit,.

Electronic Voting Machine or EVM for the first time in 2002. They realized that EVMs facilitate fair and genuine elections. People regained their confidence in the electoral process because of the EVMs and this is also a reason for increase in participation in 2008. Thus, procedural notion of democracy has fundamentally strengthened since 2002 elections.

Polyarchy is a form of procedural democracy and suitable for plural societies like J&K. It demands multiplicity. The Jammu region had parties representing different ideological positions but this was extended to Kashmir since the formation of PDP as it introduced new terminologies like healing touch, self-rule in the political discourse of the state. Further, as elaborated by Robert Dahl, 'polyarchy' manifests itself in two forms: conditions necessary for democracy and institutional form of democracy. This conception explains the slow or lack of democratic consolidation in J&K. The political history reveals that the conditions necessary for the consolidation of democracy were not present in Kashmir. Effective participation was completely missing as people alienated themselves from mainstream politics. The guarantee of voting equality was ensured however, the use of unfair means during elections made the element of voting equality meaningless. Moreover, polyarchy also promises to enhance the understanding of citizens through public discussions. But in Kashmir, the environment of discussion, debate and questioning was never encouraged. Consequently, the agenda of political discourse was also not in control of the public. Citizenship rights were guaranteed to each individual in Kashmir, but the Indian state did not provide an environment where people could freely exercise their rights and express themselves. At the same time, institutions were weak and prevented from being strengthened. Politics was personalized under Sheikh Abdullah or politics was directed by the central government when the Congress was in power in the state. Thus, political power was not institutionalized in Kashmir. The conception of polyarchy explains the problems in the process of democratization in J&K.

J&K has deep cleavages of religion, region, language and race yet plurality has survived. Plurality is a lived experience in the state.[22] However, regional divide in the state is sharp and Jammu and Ladakh have expressed discontentment with Kashmir based leadership. Arend Lijphart recommends power sharing as a means to accommodate divergent interests in societies with deep cleavages. The leaders of rival sub-cultures demonstrate competitive behavior which results in tension and instability.[23] Therefore, grand coalitions with universal participation can mitigate tensions and accommodate differences. Consociational democracy and the polity of J&K need further exploration. The present study only examines impact of power sharing arrangement and its link with re-emergence of democracy in the state. J&K experienced coalition government for the first time in 2002. The coalition was unique as the main constituents belonged to two different regions. The PDP is a Kashmir based regional party while Congress gained maximum seats in the Jammu region. The chief ministership was rotated between parties and consequently between the regions as the Congress chief minister belonged to the Jammu region. Arguably, power sharing played a crucial role in the re-emergence of democracy in the state.

The coalitional nature of politics introduced political bargaining which involves competition and cooperation.[24] During the initial stages of formation of the coalition, both PDP and Congress bargained for the chief minister's post. After much discussion, the parties worked out a strategic power sharing arrangement. The PDP benefited as it got the first chance to implement its agenda. At the same time, it agreed to share the chief ministership with Congress. This political move was aimed at expanding its support base in the Jammu region. The Congress on the other hand, displayed a change in attitude towards Kashmir. It projected an accommodating attitude towards the demands of a Kashmir based party. Moreover, a coalition is maintained if ruling elites agree to coalesce and maintain

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[22] Rekha Chowdhary, "A Living Reality of Kashmir," *Daily Etalaat*, July 8, 2008.

[23] Arend Lijphart, "Consociational Democracy," *World Affairs* 21, no.2 (1969): 211-12.

[24] Pierre du Toit, "Consociational Democracy and Bargaining Power," *Comparative Politics* 19, no. 4 (1987): 420.

the coalescent behavior. PDP and Congress were willing to coalesce and the rationale behind their strategic alliance needs to be clarified. For PDP, the objective was to supplant both National Conference and separatists as the main representatives of the valley Muslims.[25] The Congress had broader political objectives. It was setting stage for 2004 General elections. It wanted to increase the chances of projecting itself as an attractive ally for other opposition parties.[26] In sum, the realization of democracy in J&K demands consociationalism.

Apart from the procedural conception which includes polyarchy and consociationalism, it is suggestive that the process of democratization should also include the substantial notion of democracy. In this context, deliberative democracy can facilitate the process of resolving the Kashmir dispute. There are a wide range of responses that have been offered in regard to the resolution of Kashmir dispute. A democratic regime cannot ignore the Kashmir issue which has affected the lives of the people for more than sixty years. Nehru and Sheikh Abdullah made sincere efforts to resolve the Kashmir dispute. But after Nehru's death, the Indian leadership preferred to maintain status quo on Kashmir. However, in present political context, the mainstream parties of Kashmir are offering their ideas on solving the dispute and have also included their ideas in electoral campaigns. This is a positive development in the politics of the state. In a way, it's a move to involve people in the conflict resolution process.

It may be pertinent to note that mainstreaming of the issue of resolving Kashmir dispute has made it politically possible to resolve the Kashmir dispute. The conception of deliberative democracy can be usefully incorporated in the process of resolving the Kashmir issue. It is beyond the scope of the study to offer a solution but arguably the idea of using deliberative mechanism to arrive at a consensus in regard to the solution of the dispute will serve the purpose of

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[25] Matthew Webb, "Political Change and Prospects for Peace in Jammu and Kashmir: The 2002 State Elections and Recent Electoral Trends in India," *Journal of South Asian Studies* 28, no.1 (2005): 92.
[26] Ibid.

legitimizing decision and at the same time will solve the problem of separatism and end the alienation of Kashmiris. Institutions like panchayats and municipalities can facilitate the conduction of deliberative process. Political parties, peace activists, academicians, NGOs can lead the discussion. Although, the operationalization of the deliberative mechanism needs research but at this stage it seems to be an effective way of resolving he Kashmir problem. For one, it will end the alienation of Kashmiris by engaging them in the process of conflict resolution. Two, it will legitimize the process as well as the outcome.

However, any effort to resolve Kashmir dispute must incorporate the divergent regional aspirations of the people. Therefore, the deliberative process should also engage the people of Jammu and Ladakh. The deliberative mechanism will connect each citizen of the state with the process of resolving Kashmir dispute. The deliberative process implies popular participation and this will help in the realization of substantive democracy. Consequently, this will fundamentally strengthen and improve the quality of democracy in the state.

In essence, the procedural dimension of democracy has emerged in the state but the substantial notion needs to be embedded in the process of democratization for the consolidation of democracy in the state.

At the same time, the consolidation of democracy in J&K faces serious challenge from fundamentalism and politics of extremism. Fundamentalism has assumed a central role in the politics of Kashmir especially in the wake of the Amarnath Land Transfer controversy. This segment of the conclusion deals with the background of fundamentalism in J&K for two reasons:
One, the political controversy over Amarnath land transfer in the summer of 2008 fuelled religious fundamentalism and the extremists took over the politics of the state. And two, the politics of extremism is a serious hurdle in the process of democratization however; the process must continue to tackle the problem of extremism.

The politics in the state never had communal overtones because a lot of importance was attached to preserving *Kashmiriyat*. However, the struggle between the extremist forces belonging to both Hindu wing and Islamic radicals has reduced the ideology of *Kashmiriyat* to mere rhetoric. The Hindu nationalists believe in India being essentially a Hindu nation, while the Islamic groups in Kashmir argue that Hindu India has occupied Muslim Kashmir.

Islam exists in a distinct form in Kashmir.[27] There are two crucial aspects in the practice of Islam in Kashmir which make it different from Islam elsewhere. One, the tradition of Sufism has strongly influenced Islam in Kashmir. Sufism stressed on the values such as peace, harmony, love and fraternity between all creatures of God irrespective of religion.[28] Thus, Sufism popularized the idea of religious tolerance and co-existence of Hinduism and Islam in Kashmir. The presence of Sufi tradition in Jammu region has been described as an inert-community project by Sikand.[29] It not only spread Islam in the region, the teachings were followed by non-Muslims as well. Thus, Sufism played an important role in J&K in maintaining communal harmony and peace. Secondly, the practice of worshipping shrines was more common than praying in mosques.[30] It is a religious tradition in Kashmir to visit shrines of dead saints and both Hindus and Muslims visit these shrines. The most famous saints revered by Hindus and Muslims are Nuruddin or Nund rishi and Lalla Arifa or Lalleshwari. Sufism and worshipping common saints made Islam adopt a distinct form in the state of J&K.

The politics in Kashmir has always revolved around the Kashmiri identity and communal polarization was witnessed only from 1990s. The movement in 1930s against the Dogras was not an uprising of the Muslim community against a Hindu

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[27] Rekha Chowdhary, "The Muslim Identity and the Politics of Fundamentalism in Kashmir," (QEH Working Paper Series Number 19, October, 1998).
[28] Yoginder Sikand, "Kashmir Sufism: Theological Resolution for Peace Building," (2006), http://www.countercurrents.org/Kashmir-Sikand210706.html.
[29] Ibid.
[30] Chowdhary., op.cit,.

ruler. Of course, the Dogra rule perpetuated atrocities on the Muslims and followed a policy of discrimination against the community; yet, the movement was against the treatment towards the Muslims and not directed towards the ruler being a Hindu. Sheikh Abdullah, who founded the first political party of the state called the J&K Muslim Conference, changed the name of the party to National Conference keeping in mind the plural character of the state. He evolved the concept of Kashmiri nationalism. Moreover, the Kashmiri Muslims cannot associate themselves with Muslims in other parts of India because culturally they are very different. The Muslims in Kashmir speak Kashmiri and not Urdu. The language bridges the gap between different communities in Kashmir as all people in the region speak Kashmiri. This helped the National Conference to pursue Kashmiri nationalism as the people in the region were united. However, with the rise of Islamic fundamentalists, the Kashmiri identity was replaced by a strong assertion of Muslim identity.

The political importance of religious leaders came into the forefront only in the early 1960s when the Holy Relic was stolen from the Hazratbal.[31] The violent expression of Muslim emotions created a sensitive situation in the valley. The *Mirwaiz* or the religious head of Kashmir became a central figure during the agitation. He formed a political outfit called Awami Action Committee. Many other Islamic groups started mobilizing people in Kashmir. Thus, the fundamentalists started entering the realm of politics. Balraj Puri argues that the death of Sheikh Abdullah in 1982 was a blow to Kashmiri nationalism and it crumbled under the rise of Islamic fundamentalist groups.[32] The vacuum created by the decline secular politics of Abdullah was filled in by religious extremists. In the 1987 elections, all the Islamic groups came under the banner of Muslim United Front[33] to challenge the alliance of National Conference-Congress. These

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[31] Ibid.

[32] Balraj Puri, "Fundamentalism in Kashmir, Fragmentation in Jammu," *Economic and Political Weekly* 22, no. 22 (1987): 835.

[33] Muslim United Front comprised of the following political organizations: Jama'at-i-Islami, Umaat-i-Islami, Anjumane Ittehad-ul-Musalmeen, Islamic Study Circle, Muslim Education Trust,

groups mobilized people on the basis of Muslim identity and campaigned against India stating that India treated Kashmir like a colony and demanded right to self-determination and restoration of democratic rights for Kashmiris.[34]

The secular politics of Kashmir transformed due to the rise of Islamic fundamentalists groups. The MUF lost elections which were accused of being manipulated by the NC-Congress combine. As a result, the JKLF started a violent movement demanding *azadi* from India. The struggle received support from the people as they were also disillusioned with Indian regime's subversion of democratic norms. However, Jama'at-i-Islami and few groups based in Pakistan joined the movement and changed the objective and direction of the movement. These groups wanted Kashmir to join Muslim Pakistan, thus, changing the course of a nationalist struggle to Islamic jihad.[35] The basis for their demands was the fundamentalist ideology of holy war between Muslims and non-believers like Hindus. The nationalist approach of JKLF stood for secularism and democracy. But the extremist hijacked and communalized the movement by forcing Kashmiri Pandits to leave the valley. The JKLF attacked government officials who were Kashmiri Pandits but they were targeted because of their association with the Indian state and not for their religious identity. Today, the JKLF stresses on the rehabilitation of Kashmiri Pandits. The exodus of the Pandits took place when groups like *Hizbul Mujahadeen* threatened the community to leave Kashmir as Islamic extremist supported by Pakistan did not approve of Hindus and Muslim living together.[36]

Rekha Chowdhary explains two forms of fundamentalist responses in Kashmir. One, the rise of militant organizations which indulged in violence and killings and

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Muslim Welfare Society, Islamic Jamiat –ul Tulba, Majlis Tahafazul –ul-Islami, Jamiat-ul-Hadis, Shia Rabita and People's Conference.

[34] Navnita Behera, *State, Identity and Violence: Jammu, Kashmir and Ladakh* (New Delhi: Manohar, 2000), 158.

[35] Yoginder Sikand, "Changing Course of Kashmir Struggle: From National Liberation to Islamist Jihad," *Economic and Political Weekly* 36, no. 3 (2001): 218.

[36]See Alexander Evans, "A Departure from History: Kashmiri Pandits, 1990-2001," *Contemporary South Asia* 11, no. 1 (2002): 19-37.

wanted merger with Pakistan. The other kind of fundamentalist politics was pursuing the agenda of Islamisation of the Kashmiri society. The banning of any activity perceived as anti-Islamic was forced by the fundamentalists. Thus, Islamic fundamentalists destroyed the secular and plural fabric of Kashmir.

The ideology of *Kashmiriyat* was further eroded by the politics of the Hindu fundamentalists. J&K is the only Muslim majority state in India and as a result receives attention from Hindutva ideologues. In cultural terms, Hindutva is about the past traditions and in political terms, it uses the cultural past to declare India a Hindu nation and argues that Hindus should be entitled to exercise authority, precedence and dominance over the others.[37] This ideology gives a new dimension to nationalism. A Muslim can be an Indian only if he accepts Ram and denounces Babar who was a foreigner.[38] Thus, non-Hindus can be Indians if they believe in the Hindu traditions. Political parties translated the ideology into anti-Muslim slogans to create a Hindu votebank. This kind of divisive politics poses serious challenge to Hindu-Muslim unity and at the same time invigorates Islamic fundamentalism.

In 1947, the Hindu ruler of Kashmir could not decide about the accession of the state. He did not want to join Pakistan as this would pose a problem for the Hindu population of the state. At the same time, he was not convinced of joining India and sacrifice his position. Narendra Sehgal claims that Maharaja Hari Singh met RSS chief Guru Golwalkar and the later insisted that the state joined the Indian Union.[39] There is no mention of the meeting in any book and the claim needs to be investigated. However, the important point is that Hindu nationalist wanted Kashmir to accede to India.

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[37] Sumanta Banerjee, "Hindutva: Ideology and Social Psychology," *Economic and Political Weekly* 26, no. 3 (1991): 97.
[38] Ibid.
[39] Narendra Sehgal, *Memorial of Mistakes: Converted Kashmir* (New Delhi: Utpal, 1992), http://www.kashmir-information.com/ConvertedKashmir/Chapter19.html.

After signing the instrument of accession, the Ruler of J&K had to abdicate his throne, and accept the democratic political system of India. Sheikh Abdullah became the prime minister of J&K and in order to accommodate Kashmir, Nehru granted special status to the state under Article 370. Sheikh Abdullah implemented his Naya Kashmir manifesto by initiating land reforms across the state under the slogan 'land to the tiller.' These two points became a point of contention. The Hindu nationalists argued that Muslims are disloyal to India was reaffirmed by the fact that J&K did not fully integrate with India.[40] They also attacked Sheikh Abdullah as his land reforms had affected Hindu landlords. To protest against the incomplete integration and land reforms, Praja Parishad, a political outfit of the RSS started a movement in the Jammu region. The Parishad attacked Sheikh Abdullah on the grounds that he prevented the full integration of the state with India, Kashmir-centric leadership was dominating Jammu and the government was Islamizing the state administration.[41] When Nehru ordered the dismissal of Sheikh Abdullah, the Hindu fundamentalists took credit and claimed victory of their movement.

In the 1980s, the Congress government was facing challenges emanating from Kashmir and Punjab. At the same time, BJP emerged as a new political party invoking the cause of Hindutva. Kashmir nationalism and Sikh nationalism could push the Hindus towards the BJP. Thus, the Congress prepared a strategy of embracing Hindu chauvinist ideas to gain Hindu support.[42] Thus, politics was being pursued in communal directions. The early 1990s created political circumstances which communalized the politics of Kashmir. The demolition of Babri Mosque was reassertion of Hindu nationalists in the wake of the rise of Islamic movement in Kashmir and the migration of Hindus from the region. The communalization of politics jeopardized the harmony among different communities. In the mid 1990s, there was a growing discontentment with the

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[40] Ibid.

[41] Navnita Behera, "Kashmir: A Testing Ground," *Journal of South Asian Studies* 25, no. 3 (2002): 347.

[42] Behera (2002)., op.cit., 353.

violent movement demanding separation. The BJP was in government but the compulsion of coalitions forced it to adopt a moderate path. Thus, the politics of fundamentalism was gradually marginalized and the revival of mainstream politics and efforts to ensure credibility of political institutions began. However, in 2008 the Amarnath Land transfer issue brought back the communal influence and the mainstream parties were responsible for initiating the communal response to the issue.

In conclusion, it may be stated that the polity and society of J&K requires strict adherence to democratic fundamentalism.[43] Democratic fundamentalism means firm commitment towards democratic norms and procedures. It is based on the idea of democracy being a universal value.[44] The lack of democratic opportunity in J&K created a sense of disillusionment which culminated into insurgency and gave rise to the politics of religious fundamentalism. The Indian state needs to change its attitude towards Kashmir in order to win the support of the people. The state leadership also needs to commit itself to the idea of democratic fundamentalism and to power sharing among different regions in the state. The change in the political landscape of the state, since 2002, needs to be preserved. Regional divide and plurality can bring the politics in a confrontational mode. Thus, the need of the hour is to effectively mobilize people in favor of adopting the idea of democratic fundamentalism. Democracy will play a pivotal role in bringing honour and peace back in the state. The real issue for the future is to resolve the Kashmir dispute and by committing to democratic fundamentalism, maintain and preserve democracy in the state. Thus, if democratic fundamentalism becomes an integral part of the political discourse of the state, then it is possible to complete the unfinished agenda of Indian democracy: the consolidation of democracy in Jammu and Kashmir.

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[43] The term democratic fundamentalism has been borrowed from an editorial article written by Harish Khare in *The Hindu*, August 23, 2008.
[44] See Chapter 1, 12.

Appendix I

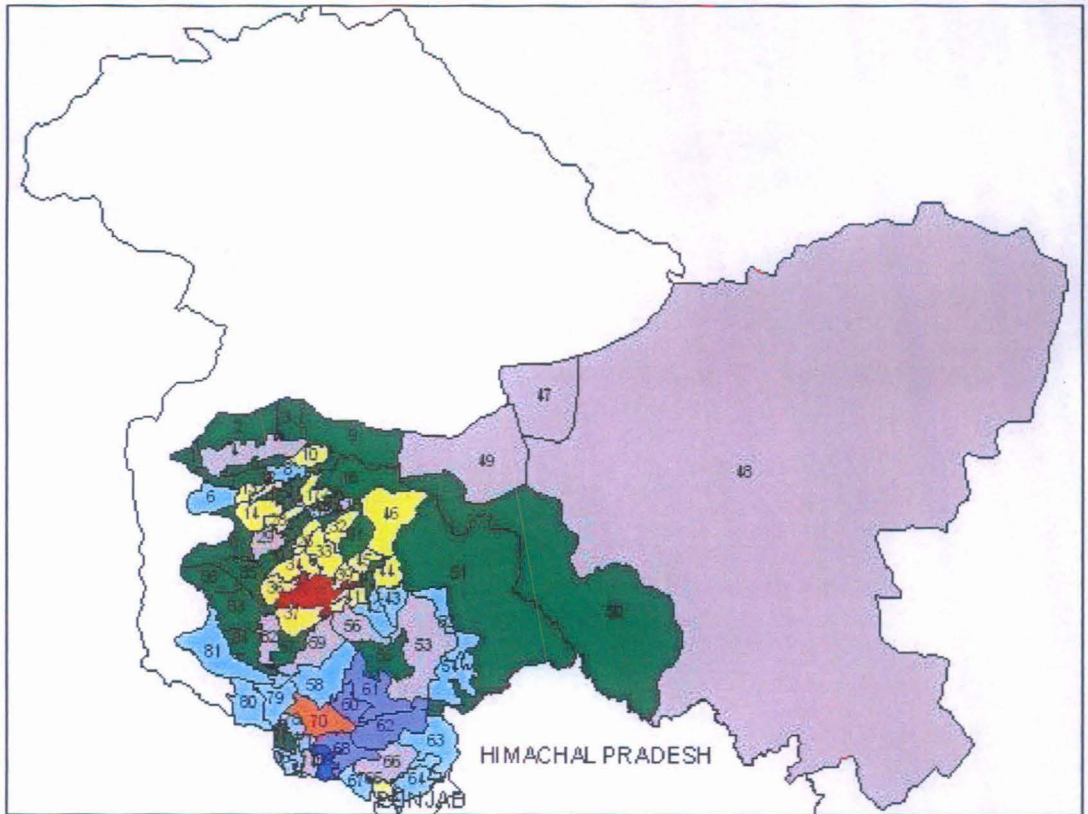## Political History of J&K 1948-2002

Years	Party in Government	Leader	Parties in Opposition	Political Alliances
1948-53	National Conference (NC)	Sheikh Abdullah	Praja Parishad (based in Jammu)	Bhartiya Jan Sangh took part in the Parishad-led agitation against Sheikh Abdullah in Jammu.
1953-64	NC	Bakshi Ghulam Mohammed	Democratic National Conference (split from NC), Plebiscite Front, Praja Parishad Praja Socialist Party	The Congress government at the Centre installed Bakshi as the Prime Minister after dismissing Sheikh Abdullah. NC under Bakshi became close to the Congress, although no formal alliance between the two parties.
1964-75	Congress (NC merged with the Congress)	Ghulam Sadiq and Mir Qasim	Plebiscite Front (banned from contesting in elections), Praja Parishad, Bhartiya Jan Sangh.	Plebiscite Front shared political platform with Awami Action Committee led by Moulvi Mohammed Farooq to oppose the Congress government. No formal alliance between parties.

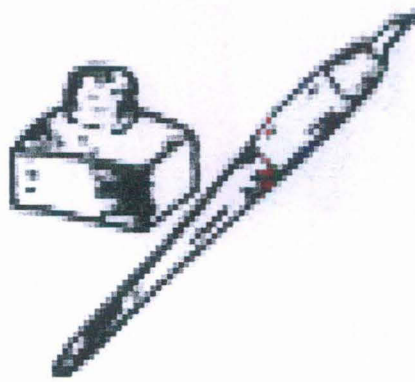| 1975-84	NC	Sheikh Abdullah (till 1982) and Farooq Abdullah	Congress, Janata Party and BJP (since 1980)	NC was supported by Congress in the legislature. The Congress withdrew support in 1977 and elections took place in the state.
1984-86	Awami NC	G.M. Shah	NC, BJP	NC faction led by G.M. Shah was supported by the Congress.
1986	Governor's Rule	-	-	-
1987-90	NC	Farooq Abdullah	Muslim United Front, BJP	Congress-NC had an electoral alliance for the state assembly elections.
1990-96	Governor's Rule	-	-	-
1996-2002	NC	Farooq Abdullah	Congress, BJP, PDP (formed in 1999)	NC joined the BJP-led National Democratic Alliance at the Centre in 1998, but no formal alliance with BJP at the state level.

2002 J&K State Assembly Election Results

Total Seats (87)

DM 1	IND 13	JKNPP 4	BJP 1	CPM 2
INC 20	BSP 1	JKN 28	PDP 16	JKAL 1

Source: Election Commission of India

PDP PARTY SYMBOL

A politically significant symbol chosen by PDP represents it as an alternative to National Conference since the inkpot was the symbol of Muslim United Front which challenged the dominance of National Conference in the 1987 state assembly elections. This symbol epitomizes the anti-National Conference sentiments of the PDP.

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