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COALITION POLITICS IN JAMMU AND KASHMIR

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ABSTRACT: — THE COALITION POLITICS IN JAMMU AND KASHMIR” focuses on the nature of coalitions in disturbed state of Jammu and Kashmir and the way National and Regional political parties make alliances for enjoying the power rather than solving the vexed problem of the state. Data collected from different governmental and non-governmental institutions has been analysed for depicting the real picture of the coalitions in Jammu & Kashmir. It has been assumed that no stable and principled coalition was formed in the past and the coalition in the state was based on political opportunism.

I INTRODUCTION

A coalition is formed when many splinter groups in a house agree to join hands on a common platform by sinking their broad differences and form a majority in the house. It is an astonishing chorus of discards. Though externally a coalition appears to be one solid mass but internally it is ridden by party foibles and frantic party fervours and it is for the reason that coalition prove to be transient. It will not be a wrong to call it –Political Orange. Prof. William Riker said the political parties forming a coalition seek to maximize their strength up to a point of subjective certainty of winning i.e. to maintain them at the size of minimum winning coalition. Generally speaking, coalition and alliances in government is an essential feature of multi-party system, especially a system where there is absence of a majority party and where no single opposition party is regularly regarded as an alternative government.

There is a mushroom growth of the political parties and this phenomenon added a new dimension to the working of political system in India as a whole. But the phenomenon of coalition politics in Jammu and Kashmir has become a very significant part of Indian political realities. This has inevitably added dimension to politics in the country with far reaching consequences for the norms and the goal of Indian political system such as democracy, political development, socio-economic justice and secularism. The study of coalition politics in Jammu and Kashmir is particularly significant in another sense also. With the marked background of communal cleavages and communal politics the important

political parties e.g. PDP, BJP, NC even today are more or less organized to represent separate communities. Since 1950s the state has witnessed polarized politics. Kashmir, Jammu and Ladakh have different tunes to dance. So, the purpose of study is to understand the nature and function of coalition governments in Jammu and Kashmir, its failures and achievements, truth of accords and alliances and merger of extremely opposite ideologies. The coalition government in Jammu and Kashmir came into existence for the first time in February 1975, when NC and INC headed by sheikh Mohd. Abdullah formed the government. Second coalition government in the state was formed under the leadership of Mr. G.M Shah (Farooq’s brother-in-law) in 1984 when he framed his new party after the name of Khalida Begum (daughter of Sheikh Abdulla) NC (K), it was an alliance between NC (K) and INC, but in 1986 NC (F) managed to grasp the occasion and formed coalition government with congress by entering into accord with congress party – popularly known as Rajiv- Farooq Accord. In 1987, 8th Assembly elections were fought jointly and succeeded to form the government in Jammu and Kashmir but by the retrospective internal and external pressures the government was toppled in 1989 and the governor rule was imposed. It is believed that 8th assembly election in state has witnessed large scale central interference and people’s mandate was hush-upped, but it adds fuel to the fire, the unorganized anti-national elements and Pak sympathizers got life line by this poll rigging, they succeeded in showing the dark side of the

mirror of Indian democracy to the people and active and aggressive voice was raised against India in Kashmir valley, actually it was miscalculation of the Indian think tanks on the part of Kashmir, the then government at center misjudged themselves and misguided by the Kasmeri political elite regarding the sentiments and emotions of the Kashmiri people and the entire nation is paying for that blunder. Since 1989 militancy took ugly turn and due to its aggressive waves elections were not held in the state up to 1996. In the election of 1996 NC managed to form the government with full majority but with extremely low polling percentage.

In 10th assembly election of the state, fractured mandate was given by the voters of the state and coalition government was formed among newly emerged PDP and Congress in Oct. 2002 with rotational Chief Ministership of three years each. Coalition government was headed by Mufti Sayed for first 3 years (Oct. 2002 –Nov. 2005) and then by G.N. Azad for another spell of 2 ½ years because PDP withdraw its support over the allotment of land to Amarnath Shrine Board. In next assembly election again fractured mandate was given by the voter of the state and consequently coalition government was formed by the NC and Congress, which completed its full tenure but didn't manage to survive in next assembly election under strong Modi wave. BJP made its first ever doorway in the government formation with its ideological opposite PDP and formed coalition in 2015 but cracks surfaced soon and collapsed in June 2018.

Out of five coalition governments in JK since 1947 only Congress-NC coalition (2009-2015) lasted a full term others collapsed mid-way, triggering instability to the state. Opportunistic politics is being practised in the state since independence, evil designed political mandate by the people has ruined the basic fabrics of the state, franchise is being exercised for petty private interest instead of broader political interest, there is a vacuum of firm political agenda in the state, even national political parties have changed their vision for the sake of power. The big political giants of the state weather belongs to one or other political party have regionalised tunes for getting political mileage which is not enough for the peace and progress of the state, it requires firm and crystal clear political agenda for its safety and security, it requires visionary and bold leadership with the character of fox and lion.

The state of Jammu and Kashmir historically consisted of four political regions - Ladakh towards the East bordering China, Jammu towards the South bordering the states of Himachal Pradesh, Punjab and Pakistan, Kashmir Valley towards the West bordering Pakistan administered Kashmir and Baltistan areas towards the North bordering Xinjiang and Gilgit Baltistan. Baltistan and a part of Kashmir are under Pakistan control. Aksai Chin, claimed by India to be a part of

Ladakh, is under Chinese control, while the rest is under Indian control. Pakistan and Indian controlled parts are separated by Line of Control (LOC)¹. Like all the states of India, Jammu & Kashmir has a multi-party democratic system of governance. The Constitution of India grants Jammu and Kashmir special status as a temporary provision through Article 370. However, some Muslim Kashmiris demand greater autonomy and sovereignty and some even demand independence from India, while all Hindus, Ladakhis, Gujars, Bakarwals and Muslims of Jammu province would like to see the state fully integrated into India. A portion of Kashmiri Muslims also have inclination towards Pakistan since a small part of Kashmir is under Pakistan's control. There has been a number of separatist movements also, both political and militant, mostly led by hardliner Muslim leaders. However, some Kashmiri Muslims have been leaning towards being in India due to multipronged economic and political reasons². Jammu and Kashmir was the only Indian state that has its own flag. Designed by the Government of India, the state flag of Jammu and Kashmir is the native plough on a red background which is a symbol of labour. The three stripes represent the three administrative divisions of the state, namely Jammu, Kashmir, and Ladakh. Its three divisions- Jammu, Kashmir and Ladakh are further divided into 22 districts. The Siachen Glacier, although under Indian military control, does not lie under the administration of the state of Jammu and Kashmir³. A historic decision was taken by the Modi led government on 5th August 2019 by passing "The Jammu & Kashmir Reconstruction Bill". The state was bifurcated in to two Union Territories- Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh. Much awaited Art. 370 and 35 A of the Indian constitution was abrogated and the special status of the state was snatched, the slogan of PrajaParishad "EkDesh Ma Do Nishan , Do Vidhan, Do Pradhan---Nahi Chalayan Gay", was given actual shape by the mighty BJP led government of the New Delhi.

II SOCIAL FABRICS:

The Muslim and Hindu peoples of Kashmir have lived in relative harmony and friendliness since the 13th century when Islam first became the majority religion in Kashmir. The Sufi-Islamic way of life that ordinary Muslims followed in Kashmir complemented the Rishi tradition of Kashmiri Pandits (Hindus), leading to a syncretic culture where Hindus and Muslims revered the same local saints and prayed in the same shrines.

Periodically however, there have been rulers and leaders who have had a narrow view of Islam, and have subjected Hindu minorities to great cruelties and discrimination. The current armed secessionist movement in Kashmir mostly derives its inspiration from these people. A canard is now being spread past few years by the secessionist-terrorists and their

sympathizers that in 1990 Kashmiri Pandits left Kashmir willingly, having been "tricked" by the then Jammu and Kashmir Governor Jagmohan. Nothing could be farther from the truth. The fact is that Kashmiri Pandits were driven from their homeland after a campaign of intimidation and harassment was launched against them by the military-wing of the secessionists⁴. Kashmiri Pandits were forced from their hearths and homes at the point of gun. The objective of this ethnic cleansing was to create a minority free Kashmir valley where the goal of Islamization could be easily forced on the ordinary people. Although the majority community people in general are not in favour of such thought, they really feel the vacuum of minority in the valley of Kashmir or in some pockets of erstwhile district Doda.

In my opinion, the Indian government has been rather poor in both their conceptual as well as executive endeavours; it sounds nowhere as true as in our tackling of the terrorist menace in Kashmir. It has not been errors but blunders all the way. Kashmiri Hindus (Pandits) are in exile since early 1990 after religious fundamentalists in the valley of Kashmir took to armed subversion and terrorism and drove them out of their

centuries old habitat. Today, Kashmir is on the brink of being separated from India. It is a comprehensive plan to bring about the total disintegration of India - a fact not realized by most of the Indians. The echo of succession in the valley is the talk of the day, hundreds of thousands of Kashmiri Pandits who were forced to leave their sacred land because of the war waged by Islamic terrorists must now live in despicable conditions in their own country and are on the verge of extinction as a race are being called "migrants" by the administration, the Kashmiri Pandits are in fact refugees in their own country due to total failure of the Indian State to provide security and safety to them when they were ruthlessly persecuted, threatened, tortured and murdered by the terrorists⁵. Since independence of the state the role of political parties has remained unfair towards the national as well as regional interest, people's mandate has been misused by one or the other and the fundamental issues of the state have been linger on, the inhabitants of the state have been fooled by the cunning political elites and no permanent solution of the vexed problem has been searched. District wise population data:

Division	Name	Headquarters	Area (km ²)	Population 2001 Census	Population 2011 Census
Jammu	Kathua District	Kathua	2,651	550,084	615,711
	Jammu District	Jammu	3,097	1,343,756	1,526,406
	Samba District	Samba	904	245,016	318,611
	Udhampur District	Udhampur	4,550	475,068	555,357
	Reasi District	Reasi	1,719	268,441	314,714
	Rajouri District	Rajouri	2,630	483,284	619,266
	Poonch District	Poonch	1,674	372,613	476,820
	Doda District	Doda	11,691	320,256	409,576
	Ramban District	Ramban	1,329	180,830	283,313
	Kishtwar District	Kishtwar	1,644	190,843	231,037
	Total for division	Jammu	26,293	4,430,191	5,350,811
Kashmir Valley	Anantnag District	Anantnag	3,984	734,549	1,069,749
	Kulgam District	Kulgam	1,067	437,885	423,181

	Pulwama District	Pulwama	1,398	441,275	570,060
	Shopian District	Shopian	612.87	211,332	265,960
	Budgam District	Budgam	1,371	629,309	755,331
	Srinagar District	Srinagar	2,228	990,548	1,250,173
	Ganderbal District	Ganderbal	259	211,899	297,003
	Bandipora District	Bandipora	398	316,436	385,099
	Baramulla District	Baramulla	4,588	853,344	1,015,503
	Kupwara District	Kupwara	2,379	650,393	875,564
	Total for division	Srinagar	15,948	5,476,970	6,907,622
Ladakh	Kargil District	Kargil	14,036	119,307	143,388
	Leh District	Leh	45,110	117,232	147,104
	Total for division	Leh	59,146	236,539	290,492
Total			101,387	10,143,700	12,548,925

III THE PERIOD FROM 1947-1996:

India formally achieved its independence from Britain on August 15, 1947, but Maharaja Hari Singh of Jammu and Kashmir delayed in taking a decision- whether to join India or Pakistan? Mehr Chand Mahajan of the Indian National Congress (INC) served as Prime Minister in the state of Jammu and Kashmir from October 15, 1947 to March 5, 1948. After Pashtun tribesmen from neighboring Waziristan along with Pakistan army regulars invaded Jammu and Kashmir in October 1947, Maharaja Hari Singh requested military assistance from the government of India but Indian government refused to do so prior to the accession of the state with India. The then state think tanks and public representatives in convenience with Maharaja Hari Singh decided to sign the instrument of accession with India for serving the best interest of the state people, and ultimately on

October 26, 1947, the Instrument of Accession with the Indian government was signed and Indian troops entered Jammu and Kashmir on October 27, 1947⁶. After fierce battle with Pakistan army and tribals the maximum portion of the state was protected by the Indian arm forces but Pakistan also captured few parts of the state unlawfully. Sheikh Mohammed Abdullah was appointed as Emergency Administrator of the state of Jammu and Kashmir by Maharaja Hari Singh on October 30, 1947. India referred the Jammu and Kashmir dispute to the United Nations Security Council on January 1, 1948. Sheikh Mohammed Abdullah was appointed as Prime Minister of an interim government in the state of Jammu and Kashmir by Maharaja Hari Singh on March 5, 1948⁷. The UN Security Council mediated a ceasefire agreement that went into effect on December 31, 1948. Some 8,000 individuals were killed, and some 1.5 million individuals were displaced during the war.

Maharaja Hari Singh abdicated as the head of state in favor of his son, Dr. Yuvraj Karan Singh, on June 20, 1949. On May 1, 1951, Dr. Yuvraj Karan Singh issued a proclamation for the elections of a Constituent Assembly in the state of Jammu and Kashmir. Elections were held in the state of Jammu and Kashmir in August and September 1951, and the Jammu & Kashmir National Conference (JKNC) won 75 out of 75 seats in the Constituent Assembly. The Praja Parishad boycotted the elections. The Constituent Assembly convened on October 31, 1951 to frame the constitution of the state⁸.

On August 8, 1953, Prime Minister Sheikh Mohammed Abdullah was dismissed by Dr. Yuvraj Karan Singh. Bakshi Ghulam Mohammed was appointed as Prime Minister on August 9, 1953 and Sheikh Mohammed Abdullah was imprisoned in the infamous "Kashmir Conspiracy Case". Bakshi Ghulam Mohammad, who was installed as Prime Minister of Jammu & Kashmir, said in his radio broadcast that, "A fraud was being committed on the interests of the country. The slogan of independence was dangerous. Under the control of an imperialist power an independent Kashmir would have been a serious danger for the people of India and Pakistan...."

On February 6, 1954, the Constituent Assembly voted to ratify the state of Jammu and Kashmir's accession to India. The Constitution of the Indian state of Jammu and Kashmir was formally adopted by a Constituent Assembly on November 17, 1956, and the Constitution entered into force on January 26, 1957. Elections were held in the state of Jammu and Kashmir from February 24 to March 25, 1957, and the Jammu & Kashmir National Conference (JKNC) won 68 out of 75 seats in the Legislative Assembly. The Praja Parishad won five seats in the Legislative Assembly. Sheikh Mohammed Abdullah was released from prison on January 8, 1958, but he was re-arrested by government police on April 29, 1958.

The next assembly Elections was held in the state of Jammu and Kashmir on February 17-18, 1962, in which the Jammu & Kashmir National Conference (JKNC) won 70 out of 75

seats. Bakshi Ghulam Mohammed became the Prime Minister but resigned on October 4, 1963, and gave place to Khwaja Shams-ud-Din (JKNC). Prime Minister Khwaja Shamsuddin also resigned on February 29, 1964, and Ghulam Mohammed Sadiq of the Indian National Congress (INC) became the Prime Minister⁹.

IV ARREST AND RELEASE OF SHEIKH MOHD

ABDULLA:

On 8 August 1953 Mr. Abdulla was dismissed as Prime Minister by the then Sadr-i-Riyasat (Constitutional Head of State), on the charge that he had lost the confidence of his cabinet (not the house). He was denied the opportunity to prove his majority on the floor of the house and his dissident cabinet minister Bakshi Ghulam Mohammed was appointed as Prime Minister. Sheikh Abdullah was immediately arrested and later jailed for eleven years accused of conspiracy against the State in the infamous "Kashmir Conspiracy Case".

According to Sheikh Abdullah his dismissal and arrest were engineered by the central government headed by Prime Minister Jawahar Lal Nehru. He has quoted B.N. Mullick's statements in his book "My Years with Nehru" in support of his statement. A.G. Noorani writing in Frontline supports this view, as according to him Nehru himself ordered the arrest. On 8 April 1964 the State Government dropped all charges in the so-called "Kashmir Conspiracy Case". Sheikh Abdullah was released and returned to Srinagar where he was accorded an unprecedented welcome by the people of the valley".

After his release he was reconciled with Nehru. Nehru requested Sheikh Abdullah to act as a bridge between India and Pakistan and make President Ayub to agree to come to New Delhi for talks for a final solution of the Kashmir problem. President Ayub Khan also sent telegrams to Nehru and Sheikh Abdullah with the message that as Pakistan too was a party to the Kashmir dispute any resolution of the conflict without its participation would not be acceptable to Pakistan. This paved the way for Sheikh Abdullah's visit to Pakistan to help broker a solution to the Kashmir problem.

Sheikh Abdullah went to Pakistan in spring of 1964. President Ayub Khan of Pakistan held extensive talks with

him to explore various avenues for solving the Kashmir problem and agreed to come to Delhi in mid June for talks with Nehru as suggested by him. Even the date of his proposed visit was fixed and communicated to New Delhi. On 27 May while he was en route to Muzaffarabad in Pakistani-administered Azad Jammu and Kashmir news came of the sudden death of Nehru and the Sheikh after addressing a public rally at Muzaffarabad returned to Delhi. On his suggestion President Ayub Khan sent a high level Pakistani delegation led by his Foreign Minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto along with him to take part in the last rites of Jawahar Lal Nehru.

After Nehru's death in 1964, he was interned from 1965 to 1968 and exiled from Kashmir in 1971 for 18 months. The Plebiscite Front was also banned. This was allegedly done to prevent him and the Plebiscite Front which was supported by him from taking part in elections in Kashmir.

As a result of the 6th amendment to the Constitution of Jammu and Kashmir which came into effect on May 30, 1965, the position of Prime Minister was changed to Chief Minister. The mode and method of appointment of state head under section 27 of the Jammu and Kashmir constitution was also changed. The Jammu & Kashmir National Conference (JKNC) merged with the Indian National Congress (INC) on June 6, 1965.

Pakistani troops launched a military offensive within the state of Jammu and Kashmir on September 1, 1965. Indian troops launched a counter-offensive against Pakistani troops on September 5, 1965 and gave severe defeat to the Pak army but by the active involvement of UN the parties agreed to a ceasefire on September 22, 1965. Representatives of the India and Pakistan signed the Soviet Union-mediated Tashkent Declaration (Appendix-ii) on January 10, 1966 and the territory which was conquered by the mighty Indian army by shedding their blood and flesh was given back to Pakistan, which I think was the diplomatic defeat to the then Indian statesmen. Some 20,000 individuals were killed, and some 40,000 individuals were displaced during the crisis

but state got no permanent settlement. I think it was an appropriate to finalise the Kashmir issue once for all.

Sheikh Abdullah's splinter Plebiscite Front faction later appropriated the name of the original party when Abdullah was allowed to return to power in February 1975 after striking a deal with the central government. In 1977, National Conference led by him won the state assembly elections, and Sheikh Abdullah became the Chief Minister. His son Farooq Abdullah succeeded him as the Chief Minister on his death on 8 September 1982. In June 1983 elections, the JKNC led by Farooq Abdullah again won a comfortable majority but in July 1984 Farooq's brother-in-law Ghulam Mohammad Shah split the party. Acting on the behest of the central government, the Governor dismissed Farooq as a Chief Minister and installed Ghulam Mohammad Shah in his place. His government was dismissed in March 1986 and President's rule was imposed. In 1987 fresh elections were contested in the state, the JKNC, which formed an alliance with the INC, was claimed to have won the majority and Farooq Abdullah again became the Chief Minister and under Abdullah's watch, an insurgency against the State government and India began. Abdullah was dismissed again in 1990 by the Union Government and President's rule was imposed in the state. In 1991 the state elections were cancelled due to a revolt by the people.

V GOVERNMENT FORMATIONS FROM 1965 -2002:

In 1965 the National Conference merged with the Indian National Congress (INC) and became the Jammu and Kashmir branch of the Indian National Congress. Sheikh Abdullah was again arrested in 1965 for Kashmir conspiracy case and remained caged until 1968. In 1967 assembly elections were held in the state and the Indian National Congress (INC) won 61 seats and the Jammu & Kashmir National Conference (JKNC) faction headed by former Prime Minister Bakshi Ghulam Mohammed won 8 seats. Congress formed the government with Ghulam Mohammed Sadiq as Chief Minister who died on December 12, 1971, and was succeeded by Syed Mir Qasim. When Sheikh Mohammed was released in 1968, he reorganized his

party and developed a faith among the congress leadership of New Delhi. Elections were held in the state of Jammu and Kashmir on February 8, 1972, and the Indian National Congress (INC) won 58 out of 75 seats and formed the government. Sheikh Mohammed Abdullah and Prime Minister Indira Gandhi signed the Kashmir Accord on November 13, 1974 and with the support of the Indian National Congress (INC) coalition government headed by Sheikh Mohammed Abdullah was formed on February 25, 1975 and Syed Mir Qasim was let down from the throne. But Jammu & Kashmir National Conference (JKNC) was re-established as an independent political party in the state of Jammu and Kashmir in July 1975 by Mr. Abdullah and the Indian National Congress (INC) withdrew its support for the government on March 16, 1977. Chief Minister Sheikh Mohammed Abdullah resigned, and the state of Jammu and Kashmir was placed under presidential rule on March 17, 1977¹¹.

In June, 1977, elections were again held in the state of Jammu and Kashmir and the Jammu & Kashmir National Conference (JKNC) won 47 seats, Janata Party (JP) won 13 seats and 15 seats won by others. Jammu & Kashmir National Conference (JKNC) headed by Mr. Sheikh Abdullah formed the government on July 9, 1977 and after his untimely death on September 8, 1982 his son Dr. Farooq Abdullah became Chief Minister of the state on same day. In June 1983 fresh Elections were held in the state of Jammu and Kashmir and the Jammu & Kashmir National Conference (JKNC) under the new leadership of junior Abdullah managed 46 seats in the Legislative Assembly and Dr. Farooq Abdullah was sworn as Chief Minister. But due to internal conflicts in the party his government was toppled down by none other than his brother-in-law Mr. Ghulam Mohammad Shah on July 2, 1984, and by the support of INC formed the government and himself became the Chief Minister.

However, following the death of Mrs. Indira Gandhi on 31 October 1984, Dr. Farooq Abdullah diluted his anti-Centre and anti-Congress (I) utterances and moved towards reconciliation with the Congress (I) and the new Prime

Minister Rajiv Gandhi. This change in the attitude of Dr. Farooq Abdullah led to an accord between Congress (I) and the National Conference in November 1986 and a coalition Government under Dr. Farooq Abdullah was reinstated on 7 November 1986. It was stated that the main plank of the accord was fighting subversive, fundamentalist and pro-Pakistan forces and to bring about an all round economic development in the State. Four months after the assumption of power by Dr. Farooq Abdullah, fresh elections were held for the State Assembly on 23 March 1987 which was contested by the Congress-I and the NC, in coalition. Before the elections, various secessionist and fundamentalist forces joined hands to form a 'Muslim United Front' mainly pointing out that the NC(F) had capitulated before the Centre for the sake of the power and bartered away the special identity of the state. Efforts were made to arouse Muslim sentiments along communal lines. The NC-congress combine contested all 76 seats and the MUF 43 seats. However, the alliance managed to 66 seats and the MUF secure only 4 seats in the valley even though it had polled 31 percent votes. This led to widespread allegations of rigging and misuse of power¹². This election in a way was a watershed in the politics of the state. The NC-Congress (I) coalition left a vacuum in the secular/democratic politics of the state which was gradually filled in by the secessionist and fundamentalist forces. Allegations of malpractices and rigging by the NCF led to the disillusionment of the new generation of Kashmiris. Accompanied by rampant corruption, mal-administration and strains within the coalition, the government failed to administer the State effectively. In this environment, secessionist and subversive elements started claiming that they had been denied democratic rights illegally and began justifying recourse to unconstitutional and other methods. It was in this environment that Pakistan capitalised and encouraged the Kashmiri youth to come across the border and receive arms training to begin an armed secessionist movement. The coalition government paid no heed to the simmering secessionist forces since April 1988 and the things took ugly turn. When the Abdullah government was toppled

by the Governor Jag Mohan in January 1990, the disease has affected the whole body till then¹³.

The presidential rule was imposed for a long period for eradicating the anti-national elements and it was only in September 1996 that an effort was made to bring back the lost democracy in the state. Elections were held in the state from September 7 to September 30, 1996. This time the Jammu & Kashmir National Conference (JKNC) won 57 and the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) won 8 seats in the Legislative Assembly.

VI ETHNIC COMPOSITION OF JAMMU AND KASHMIR:

The ethnic stock of Jammu and Kashmir State is a record of constant impulses of immigration from the North-West, West, South and East directions. The alien races, ethnic groups and various religions have influenced the cultural ethos and mode of life of the people of this region.

Ethnic group, in the opinion of Jordon is a group of people possessing a common ancestry and cultural tradition with a feeling of belonging and cohesiveness, living as a minority in a larger society. Each social group is the keeper of distinctive cultural traditions and the nucleus of various kinds of social interactions. An ethnic group provides not only group identity, but also friendship, marriage patterns, business success, and the political power base. The mosaic of ethnic group in Jammu and Kashmir State is complex and the race structure cannot be explained without understanding the pre-historic movements of people¹⁴. In the process of peopling of the region, the Dards in the North-West, the Ladakhis in the East, the Gujjars and Rajputs in the south and Paharis in the South-East have closely influenced the existing ethnicity of the people. The racial composition of the State was also influenced by the immigrants from the territories of Turkmenia, Tadzkistan, Uzbaikistan, Kazakistan, Georgia, Azerbaijan (U.S.S.R.) Turkey, Iraq, Iran and Afghanistan. The various ethnic groups of the Jammu and Kashmir State though intermingled have their areas of high concentration. For example, Kashmiris are mainly concentrated in the Valley bottom; Dards occupy the valley of Gurez; Hanjjs are

confined to water bodies of Kashmir; Gujjars and Bakarwals are living and oscillating in the Kandi areas; Dogras occupy the outskirts of the Punjab plains, while Chibhalis and Paharis live between Chenab and Jhelum rivers. Moreover, there are numerous small ethnic groups like Rhotas, Gaddis and Sikhs which have significant concentration in isolated pockets of the State.

VII KASHMIRIS:

Kashmiris are well spread in various parts of the State but their major concentration lies in the Valley of Kashmir, Kishtwar, Doda, Banihal and Ramban districts of the Jammu Division with a minority living in the PirPanjal region. 'Kashmiri' is a wide term which has loosely been applied for several streams, immigrated mainly from Turkey, Iran, Central Asia and Afghanistan, and settled in the valley. There is a close bearing of the Indo-Aryans on the racial composition of the Kashmiris. In fact, the Indo-Aryan religions and languages have substantially affected the mode of life of the Kashmiris. The influence of Sanskrit on Kashmiri language is strong and cogent to this day. Moreover, Kashmir has also received racial impulses from Indo-Greeks which have influenced the race structure of the people considerably. The influence of Dards, Ladakhis and Punjabis has also moulded the ethos of Kashmiri culture. Kashmiris are broad shouldered and usually of medium to tall stature¹⁵. They are much dolichocephic, have a well-developed forehead, a long narrow face, regular features and a prominent straight and finely cut nose. Most of the Kashmiris live in villages and are dependent on agriculture. Paddy, orchards, saffron are the main crops grown by them while the urban Kashmiris are engaged in business, tourism, hotel-management, carpet making, silk industry, shawl-making, woodwork, pieper-mache and several other handicrafts. Before independence, Kashmiris are deprived of land ownership and their economic conditions were very poor. The visionary leader Mr Sheikh Mohd Abdulla gave this community new idea of independence and socio-economic rights. He organized them against the autocratic rule of Dogras and emancipated them from autocracy and

thereby got political mileage for his party National Conference. Since the time of Sheikh Mohd Abdulla National Conference has strong political sport among Kashmiris. Although the staunch followers of Jamat among the Kashmiris are strongly opposing the National Conference but in general NC has strong grip among this community. A section of this community is fleeing they supported Muslim United Front (1987), Jhadiees, PDP and some times even Congress. Basically their bent of mind is towards radicalisation of the Jammu and Kashmir and in these nefarious designs they succeeded to some extent between 1989-2000. Actually they want to bring Nizam-i-Mustafa in the Muslim majority state and with the help of Pakistan, sponsor terrorism, evacuate valley from oldest ethnic community of Pandits in 1989 and give air to secessionism. Kashmiris in general were the followers of suffism, believer of oneness, tollerent and are peace loving people but the waves of terrorism has jitter the very basic fabrics of the society, every where in country they are being looked with doubtful eyes irrespective of the fact how generious they are.

In Jammu and Kashmir the political party who enjoys the support of this particular community enjoys the government because of their numerical strength and it has been seen for maximum period the state has been governed by the National Conference which I wrote have had a strong support base in this community.

Kashmeri pandits: pandits are the oldest among all ethnic groups existing in Kashmir. The inhabitants of Kashmir were followers of the Proto-Indo-Iranian religion before the formalization of Rigvedic Hinduism in the period 1700–1100 BC. Therefore, the region has been associated with Hinduism since even before the origin of the religion. The name Kashmir is said to be derived from Kashyapa, one of the seven Rishis in Hindu mythology. The religious philosophy of Kashmiri Hindus is rooted in Kashmir Shaivism, a school of Shiva philosophy that originated near Kailasha in Himalayas around 400 AD. Kashmiri Shaivism, also known as Pratyabhijna (meaning “recognition”) school of Shaivism, adopts a purely monistic metaphysical position. It considers

the Supreme Lord, called Shiva or Maheshvara, as the Supreme Reality, which is innermost as well as transcendent.

Kashmiri Pandit refers to a person who belongs to a sect of Hindu Brahmins originating from Kashmir. Both racially and ethnically, the Kashmiri Pandits are descendants of the (Proto-Rigvedic) people. It has been often mentioned by experts that the region of Kashmir is the original home of the Aryan Race. But a large number of Kashmiri Pandit families were forced to migrate to the plains in the early fifteenth century during the reign of Sikandar Butshikan, and in the late seventeenth century during the reign of Aurangzeb. However, Mughal emperors before and after Aurangzeb invited Kashmiri Pandit scholars, who were fluent in Persian, Sanskrit, Avestan and several other classical languages, to their courts. Several princely states in Northern and Central India, such as Patiala, Jaipur, Jaisalmer, and Ratlam have had Kashmiri Pandit Prime Ministers (dewans).

The largest concentrations of Kashmiri Pandits were found in medieval urban centres such as Lahore, Delhi, Agra, Lucknow, Hardoi, Kanpur, Allahabad, Gwalior, Jaipur and Jodhpur. Substantial numbers were also found in Shimla, Ambala, Multan, Ajmer, Dehradun, Ujjain, Indore, Bhopal and Cuttack. Most of the Kashmiri Pandit families that migrated to the plains before the twentieth century have a strong influence of the Muslim culture of Awadh in their language, and to some extent, in their food.

According to political scientist Alexander Evans, approximately 99% of the total population of 160,000–170,000 of Kashmiri Brahmins, also called Kashmiri Pandits, (i.e. approximately 150,000 to 160,000) left the Kashmir Valley in 1990 as militancy engulfed the state. According to an estimate by the Central Intelligence Agency, about 300,000 Kashmiri Pandits from the entire state of Jammu and Kashmir have been internally displaced due to the ongoing violence. In last quarter of 20th century they mercilessly dragged out of their mother land by the fundamentalist forces operating in Kashmir, thanks to the Dogras who adopted them and provide shelter to them in different regions of the province.

This ethnic group is pro-Indian and generally shows their tilt towards the BJP who supported them in the period of exile. Earlier, National Conference also had a strong support base among this community, they have grand leaders like P.L. Handoo, Vijay Bakaya of pandit community with them but the fundamentalism in valley has destroyed all secular credential. Now they are staunch supporters of the rightest parties. Even this community demands for separate home land in valley, they have launched “Panun Kashmir Movement”. Panun Kashmir is an autonomous frontal organisation of Kashmiri Hindus formed in December 1990, whose primary demand is a separate homeland for Kashmiri Hindus in Kashmir Valley with status of Union Territory. Panun Kashmir means our own Kashmir in Kashmiri. The Panun Kashmir organization was founded in 1990 after the exodus of Kashmiri Hindus from Kashmir, under threat from Islamic terrorists sponsored by Pakistan's intelligence services. Approximately 300,000 to 600,000 Kashmiri Hindus fled from Kashmir due to rising Islamic terrorism in Kashmir. However, Panun Kashmir estimates nearly 700,000 refugees. The organization passed a resolution in 1991 demanding that:

- (a) The establishment of a Homeland for the Kashmiri Hindus in the Valley of Kashmir comprising the regions of the Valley to the East and North of river Jhelum.
- (b) That the Constitution of India be made applicable in letter and spirit in this Homeland in order to ensure right to life, liberty, freedom of expression and faith, equality and rule of law.
- (c) That the Homeland be placed under the Central administration with a Union Territory status.
- (d) That all the 700000 Kashmiri Hindus, including those who have been driven out of Kashmir in the past and yearn to return to their homeland and those who were forced to leave on account of terrorist violence in Kashmir, be settled in the homeland on an equitable basis with dignity and honor.

The advocates of Panun Kashmir wish that the majority of the valley of Kashmir and cities such as Srinagar, Anantnag,

Sopore, Baramulla and Awantipora be included in the Kashmiri Hindu homeland. However, the organization claims that it in fact does not seek a Hindu homeland rather; it seeks a homeland for Kashmiri Pandits who are Hindus and are ready to live peacefully with their Muslim neighbours. The appeal by the intellectuals of a small yet distinct ethno-religious community, the Kashmiri Pandits (Hindus) who have a history of more than five thousand years of a rich cultural tradition and a unique religious philosophy of the universality of man, peace and amity amongst peoples. Down the ages, this aboriginal community of the valley of Kashmir has readily opened itself to foreigners of all faiths, creeds and professions who came as travellers and settlers. However, it has repeatedly been the tragic victim of religious persecution, forcible conversion, violence and brutal massacre at the hands of invading Muslim zealots and religious fanatics leading to repeated exodus of the community, rendering it a minority in its own land.

The barbarities that the community faced at the hands of the despotic Muslim rulers since the heydays of Islamic fundamentalism, as it made inroads into Kashmir after the 13th century. It traces the present escalation of human rights violations amounting to genocide of this community to a cruel and criminal conspiracy by the fanatical and fundamentalist forces which gained ascendancy and got fresh impetus during the last four decades.

The present plight of the community is that it was once given to academic, philosophical and spiritual pursuits, and now rootless and without identity. Over one thousand members of the community have been killed by the terrorists and the thousands are dying in the miserable camps for want of basic amenities, shelter, medicare and family support; and thousands of its youth are getting scattered in search of livelihood²⁰. It is feared that at the present rate of dispersal the community is disintegrating beyond redemption and facing total extinction. Need is to invoke the conscience and compassion of the civilized world to grasp the grim tragedy facing the Kashmiri Pandit community and to stand up and speak for it and help it regain its lost status and get

rehabilitated once again, with honor and dignity in its own homeland.

For this kind of thought of pundits, they are being supported by the rightest parties, so the political party like BJP got popularity among dispersed pandit community.

Dards:

Dards have a long history. Ptolemy in his book 'Almagast' has used the word Daradrai for Dards of the Western Himalayas. Before embracing Islam, they were the followers of Buddhism and Hinduism. At present their major concentration lies in Dardistan (Derdesa), the area to the North of Kashmir Valley, especially in the catchment of Kishanganga, North of Sardi, Gurez and Tilel. Leitner says, Dards belong to Aryan stock, which is also endorsed by Ray who states that the Dardic Aryans parted from the main Aryan mass just after their entrance into India. Dardic Aryans then colonized in the Pamir region from where they spread to Chitral and Gilgit. In physical appearance the Dards are broad shouldered, moderately stout-built and have wellproportionate bodies. In face they are not handsome, their hairs are usually black but sometime brown in complexion they are moderately fair. Their eyes are either black or hazel. They are known for their ferocity. In the social hierarchy they are divisible into:

- (i) Renu (ruling class),
- (ii) Shins (religious sect),
- (iii) Yashkun (cultivators) and
- (iv) Dum (menial class).

Dards are dependent on agriculture, pastoralism, cottage industries and trade. Politically, they are not well organized. They are the supporter of Congress, National Conference, PDP, CPI (M), etc. in a fragmented manner.

Ladakhis:

Ladakhis have been named as the people of snow-living in an arid plateau, surrounded by mountains, where cultivation of crops is hampered by severe cold and non-availability of water for irrigation. Ladakhis are a mixture of Mongoloid and Aryan races. The Aryans who settled originally in the sub-continent's Northern parts were the early Buddhist people from

Kashmir and the Dards from Gilgit. The Mongolian stock is traced to Tibet, from where the shepherds and nomads came to the valleys of Ladakh to graze their flocks. The present day population of Ladakh is the result of blending together of Dards and the Mongolians.

Politically this community is divided, generally Buddhist supported National political parties and the Muslims to the regional political parties but they voted for developmental issues of the Ladakh. Their vote is not fixed for any particular political party, they are fragile in nature. As such, the BJP, MP Mr. Chhewang resigned from the party on the basic issues of Union territory status to Ladakh and inclusion of Bhoti language in the eighth schedule of the Indian constitution which has been promised by the party high command earlier. So, Ladakhi community supports political parties on general issues not for petty political gains.

Other ethnic groups living in Jammu and Kashmir are Dogras, Gujjars/Bakarwals and Paharis. The Dogras are ethnically, linguistically and culturally related to the neighboring Punjabi people and mostly live in the Udhampur, kathua, Reasi, Samba and Jammu districts of the state. While the southern area of Jammu includes many communities tracing their ancestry to the nearby Indian states of Haryana and Punjab, as well as the city of Delhi.

They are very strong and brave people. Since independence Dogra people of the state are pro-Indians and are in favour of having strong bonds with Indian federation, abrogation of article 370 and 35A and above all citizenship rights for west pak refugees. The national political parties having strong support base among dogras are Jan Sangh turned BJP and Indian national congress and the regional parties like JK Panthers Party, Jammu State Morcha, Dogra Soabhimansanghathan are also enjoying little bit support of this ethnic stock.

The nomadic Gujjars and Bakerwals practice transhumance and mostly live in the Pirpanjal region. They do not have any particular political affiliation. Their vote bank is always floating. Although National conference show some support base among this community in Kashmir valley since long by

giving mandate to Main Basher Ahmed veteran gujjar leader upto 80s from Kangan constituency and then his son Main Altaf Ahmed who proved to be an instrumental for motivating this community in Jammu region also.

The Pahari-speaking people mostly live in and around the PirPanjal region with some in the Northern Kashmir valley. They are soft spoken, truthful and peace loving people having no political party on its own but generally seem to support INC.

In Jammu and Kashmir the political parties give ticket to the candidate on basis of the ethnic composition of the particular constituency and by considering the cast factor. Suppose In Kashmir, Dogra candidate will not be given ticket for elections by any party whether it is national or regional political party and in Dogra dominated region, Kashmeri candidate has no space. So it means paharies are represented by Pahari, Kashmeri by Kashmeri and Ladakhis by Ladakhi candidate.

Jammu and Kashmir is one of India's two administrative divisions (the other being the Union territory of Lakshadweep which is overwhelmingly Muslim) with a Muslim majority population. According to the 2011 census, Islam is practised by about 68.3% of the state population; while 28.4% follow Hinduism and small minorities follow Sikhism (1.9%), Buddhism (0.9%) and Christianity (0.3%). About 96.4% of the population of the Kashmir valley is Muslim followed by Hindus (2.45%) and Sikhs (0.98%) and others (0.17%) Shias live in the district of Badgam, where they are a majority. The Shia population is estimated to comprise 14% of the state's population.

In Jammu, Hindus constitute 62.55% of the population, Muslims 33.45% and Sikhs, 3.3%; In Ladakh (comprises Buddhists-dominated Leh and Shia Muslim-dominated Kargil), Muslims constitute about 46.4% of the population, the remaining being Buddhists (39.7%) and Hindus (12.1%).

The pre-independence Census of 1941 recorded Muslims as constituting 72.41% of the population, and Hindus 25.01%. In the 1961 census, the first one to be conducted after the partition of the State, Muslims constituted 68.31% of the

population and Hindus 28.45%. The proportion of Muslims fell to 64.19% by 1981 but recovered afterward, reaching 68.31% again by 2011.

Activist Groups prior to 1930:

1. Dogra Sadar Sabha founded in 1905 by Lala Hansraj. It mainly represented the Hindus of the Jammu Province, even though it was not sectarian in character.
2. Sanatana Dharma Yuvak Sabha often called the Yuvak Sabha, Founded by Pandit Damodar Bhat Hanjura in the Kashmir Valley, the party represented the interests of Kashmiri Hindus.
3. Kisan Mazdoor Party, founded in 1925 under the leadership of Sardar Budh Singh represented the interest of peasants and worker.
4. All Jammu and Kashmir Muslim Conference, breakaway group of the National Conference, revived under the old name of the party in 1941. The principal leader was Chaudhry Ghulam Abbas. The party allied itself with the All-India Muslim League and advocated accession to Pakistan in 1947. It spearheaded the Azad Kashmir rebellion in 1947, leading to the region's secession from the state. The party continued to be the predominant party in Pak occupied Kashmir after it came under Pakistani control.
5. All Jammu and Kashmir Rajya Hindu Sabha: It is believed to have been affiliated to the Akhil Bharatiya Hindu Mahasabha, founded in 1909. Led by Prem Nath Dogra in 1947, it supported the independence of the princely state. After the state's accession to India, it largely merged into the Jammu Praja Parishad.
6. Kashmir Socialist Party and Kisan Mazdoor Conference, founded by Prem Nath Bazaz who advocated for the independence or the accession of the state to Pakistan until 1964.

National Conference; pre-independence period:

The Jammu & Kashmir National Conference (JKNC) is a state political party in the Indian state of Jammu and Kashmir. Founded as the All Jammu and Kashmir Muslim Conference by Sheikh Abdullah and Chaudhry Ghulam Abbas in 1932 in

the princely state of Jammu and Kashmir, the organisation renamed itself to "National Conference" in 1939 in order to represent all people of the state. It supported the accession of the princely state to India in 1947. Prior to that, in 1941, a group led by Ghulam Abbas broke off from the National Conference and revived the old Muslim Conference. The revived Muslim Conference supported the accession of the princely state to Pakistan and led the movement for Azad Kashmir. In 1946, the National Conference launched an intensive agitation against the Maharaja Hari Singh of Jammu and Kashmir with the slogan of "Quit Kashmir" and played a yeomen's role in eradicating the autocracy.

The post-independence period:

Since 1947, the National Conference leaders were in power in Jammu and Kashmir State in one or another form till 2002, and again between 2009 –2014. The party succeeded in bringing the land reforms in the state, ensured the state's autonomy under the Article 370 of the Indian Constitution, introduction of Article 35A in Indian constitution and formulated a separate Constitution of Jammu and Kashmir in 1956. Sheikh Abdullah's son Farooq Abdullah (1981–2002) and grandson Omar Abdullah (2002–2009) have led the party after Sheikh Abdullah's death. In the elections held in September 1951, National Conference won all 75 seats of the Constituent assembly of Jammu and Kashmir. Sheikh Abdullah remained the Prime Minister until his dismissal in August 1953 on the grounds of conspiracy against the state of India. Bakshi Ghulam Mohammad became the Prime Minister of the state after the imprisonment of Sheikh Abdullah.

In 1965 the National Conference merged with the Indian National Congress (INC) and became the Jammu and Kashmir branch of the Indian National Congress. Sheikh Abdullah was again arrested in 1965 until 1968 for conspiracy against the state. Sheikh Abdullah's splinter Plebiscite Front faction later appropriated the name of the original party when Abdullah was allowed to return to power in February 1975 after striking a deal with the central government. In 1977, National Conference led by him won

the state assembly elections, and Sheikh Abdullah became the Chief Minister. His son Farooq Abdullah succeeded him as the Chief Minister on his death on 8 September 1982. In June 1983 elections, the JKNC led by Farooq Abdullah again won a comfortable majority. In July 1984 Farooq's brother-in-law Ghulam Mohammad Shah split the party. Acting on the behest of the central government, the Governor dismissed Farooq as a Chief Minister and installed Ghulam Mohammad Shah in his place. His government was dismissed in March 1986 and President's rule was imposed. In 1987 assembly elections were contested in the state. The JKNC, which formed an alliance with the INC, was claimed to have won the majority and Farooq Abdullah again became the Chief Minister and under Abdullah's watch, secessionist forces raised against the State government and India. Abdullah was dismissed again in 1990 by the Union Government and President's rule was imposed in the state. In 1991 the state elections were cancelled due to active insurgency.

In 1996, assembly elections in Jammu and Kashmir were again held and the JKNC led by Farooq Abdullah managed 57 seats out of a total 87 and formed the government. But in 2002 state assembly elections, the JKNC won only 28 seats and confined up to opposition benches. It happened by the emergence of Jammu and Kashmir People's Democratic Party (PDP) in the Kashmir Valley as a contender for power. In the December 2008 state assembly elections, no single party was able to get the majority. The JKNC led by Omar Abdullah emerged as a single largest party by winning 28 seats again. The JKNC formed an alliance with the INC which had won 17 seats. Omar Abdullah became the Chief Minister of this coalition government on 5 January 2009 and completed his full tenure of 6 years.

During Jammu and Kashmir Legislative Assembly election, 2014, INC broke its alliance with JKNC. JKNC contested all the assembly seats but won only 15 seats.

Jammu and Kashmir Peoples Democratic Party:

The PDP was founded in 1998 by the former Union Home Minister Mufti Mohammed Sayeed. It captured power in Jammu and Kashmir in October 2002 Assembly elections. In

2004 it had one member each in the Lok Sabha and in the Rajya Sabha. It was an alliance partner of the ruling United Progressive Alliance until the 2009 general election. Sayeed headed the PDP-Indian National Congress Coalition Government between October 2002 and November 2005 and he was the party's Patron until his death on 7 January 2016. The PDP is now headed by Mehbooba Mufti, Sayeed's daughter.

The PDP operates on the ideology of self-rule, as distinctly different from the issues of autonomy. It believes that self-rule as a political philosophy, as opposed to autonomy, ensures the empowerment of the people of Jammu and Kashmir, while further engaging in debates over new political territoriality of Jammu and Kashmir³¹.

In the 2014 general election, three of its members were elected to the Lok Sabha. Its strength in the Legislative Assembly was 28 and in the Rajya Sabha are two. The party formed Coalition government in Jammu and Kashmir with its ideologically opposit Bharatiya Janata Party in 2014 under the leadership of Mufti Mohd Sayed but his untimely death gave place to his daughter and party lieutenant as a new Chief Minister of the state but she failed to maintained the balance with her coalition partners and government was toppled in a mid term. The BJP abandoned the coalition on June 19, 2018 due to concerns about terrorism and radicalization in Kashmir.

Election performance of PDP:

Year	Election	Seats Won
2002 Legislative Assembly election	8th Assembly	16
General election, 1998	12th Lok Sabha	0
General election, 2004	14th Lok Sabha	1
2008 Legislative Assembly election	9th Assembly	21
General election, 2009	15th Lok Sabha	0
General election, 2014	16th Lok Sabha	3
Legislative Assembly election 2014	10th Assembly	28
General Election, 2019	17 Lok Sabha	0

Jammu and Kashmir Self-Rule Framework:

The People’s Democratic Party prepared and offered this working paper on J&K as an act of hope. The hope lays in the belief that if the decision-makers and responsible political parties discern the categorical imperatives that have impelled this formulation, realize its intent and motive and examine its contents on merits, objectively and realistically, and not on partisan considerations or with chauvinistic mind-set, it will be possible to forge a consensus on the way forward.

1. The J&K issue cannot be resolved on the basis of exclusively intra-state level initiatives. It requires a combination of intra-state measures with inter-state and supra-state measures. This approach, which is underlying the concept of self-rule, is a practical way that would eliminate the sources of ethno-territorial conflicts, entrenched in the traditional notions of sovereignty, self-determination, national and ethnic borders.
2. Self-rule is a formulation that will integrate the region without disturbing the extant sovereign authority over

delimited territorial space. It doesn't impair the significance of the line of control as territorial divisions but negates its acquired and imputed manifestations of state competition for power, prestige, or an imagined historical identity. It is a way of "sharing sovereignty", without need or commitment to political merging. It is based on the creation of innovative international institutional arrangements that have a political, economic and security character. Self-rule encompasses the society, the state, and the economy. Self-rule, being a trans-border concept, has a pan-Kashmir dimension but at the same time seeks to regionalise power across J&K³².

3. Self-rule as a political philosophy is being articulated around the conception of federalism and confederation that allow for sharing of power between two levels of government, for the sharing of sovereignty in a coordinated but not subordinated to one another, each exercising supreme sovereignty in its constitutional prerogatives. The comprehensive formulation of self-rule has three subcomponents:

- i. A new political superstructure that integrates the region and empowers sub-regions
- ii. A phased economic integration that transcends borders
- iii. Constitutional restructuring that ensures sharing of sovereignty without comprising political sovereignty of either nation state.

New political superstructure:

4. The centrepiece of the governance structure under self-rule is the cross-border institution of Regional Council of Greater Jammu and Kashmir. The Regional Council of Greater Jammu and Kashmir will replace the existing Upper House of state assembly, and will be a kind of a regional senate. Members of the Regional Council will be from J&K as well as from Pakistan administered Kashmir. At present the state assembly of J&K holds 24 seats for representatives from across the line of control. These will be given up and replaced by the same number of seats in the Regional Council of Greater Jammu and Kashmir. This will serve as a major cross-border institution, which will ensure long-term coordination of matters and interest relating to the state.

5. Moreover, such an institutional structure will provide a framework within which certain matters between the two parts of the State and their respective mainland that needs to be sorted out to infuse in people a sense of empowerment and a feeling of belonging. This will require devising an improved constitutional, political and economic relationship between the two parts of the State and their respective main lands.

6. In order to empower various sub-regions within the J&K state, a tier of sub-regional councils, will be added to the domestic legislative structure. While the national Parliament

will have representations to the sovereign, the state assembly will continue to be a sub-national institution, the sub-regional councils will complete representative character of governance by bringing in the territorial representation in the state.

Economic Integration:

7. A critical element of self-rule is the economic integration across the line of control. This integration can be pursued in different degrees, deepening the process as we go along and as the system and society adapts to change. The process can be started by declaring the intention to establish common economic space and sign an agreement with a roadmap which h envisages³³:

- i. Establishing a common economic space.
- ii. Instituting a dual currency system.
- iii. Coordinating economic policy, harmonization economic legislation and synergising regulations.

8. The process of economic integration of the two parts of Jammu and Kashmir can start with the easiest form of economic integration, a Preferential Trade Agreement. In the PTA the two countries, India and Pakistan would offer tariff reductions, or eliminations confined to the geographical boundaries of "Greater Jammu and Kashmir" and restrict it to some product categories. Stage II would be to make GJAK a regional free trade area, with no tariffs or barriers between with GJAK, while maintaining their own external tariff on imports from the rest of the world, including India and Pakistan. GJAK will set a common external tariff on imports from India and Pakistan.

9. Further, instead of looking for a monetary union, a new system of "Dual Currency" will be created, where the Indian and Pakistani rupees are both made legitimate legal tenders in the geographical areas of GJAK. A better description of this system is a "co-circulation of two currencies" in J&K. It is being proposed that Indian and Pakistani rupees should be the medium of exchange in J&K. To be more precise, it means, allowing circulation of the Pakistani rupee in the Indian part of J&K currency and circulation of Indian rupee in the Pakistan administered Kashmir³⁴. This has to be done if we want cross the Line of control trade to flourish.

10. Our vision is to move towards an economic union, which will maintain free trade in goods, and services, set common external tariffs, allow the free mobility of capital and labour, and will also relegate some fiscal responsibilities to a supra-national agency.

11. Consistent with our legislative design, the economic integration will be deepened through sub-regional integration; that is formation of different sub-regional groups. Appearance of different sub-regional projects can generate multi-speed integration. It needs to be understood that GJAK is being

proposed as a regional organisation to facilitate political cooperation as well as promote cooperation between India and Pakistan, and regaining Kashmir's place at the heart of Central Asia.

Constitutional Restructuring:

12. Self-rule cannot exist without adequate constitutional safeguards. As the Constitutional position stands today, Article 356, undermines the core of Self-rule and has to be made non-applicable to J&K. In a similar vein, Article 249, applied to the State in amended form, should be rolled back so that the Parliament cannot exercise legislative jurisdiction over a matter that, otherwise, falls under the State jurisdiction.

13. Sixth Amendment of the Constitution of the State that undermines its original scheme of a comprehensive and accountable executive (inclusive of the Head of the State) a critical component of Self-rule, will have to be repealed. Prior to this amendment, the State Legislature elected Sadar-e-Riyasat, the head of the State.

14. The proviso, limiting the powers of State Legislature, has been added to Article 368, which deals with the powers of the Parliament to amend the Constitution of India and not the power of State Legislature to amend its own Constitution. The proviso is, therefore, totally and grossly out of place and ultra vires the constitutional scheme. The State Legislature's constitutional power of amendment is the core of empowerment or Self-rule of the State and this cannot be destroyed by an order passed under Article 370. All India Service Act, 1951 and Article 312 be rolled back and the local human resources are provided clear and unhindered opportunity to develop their full potential and it is trusted to manage the affairs of the State³⁵.

15. It is a part of the design of self-rule that Head of the State be elected from the regions of Jammu and Kashmir by rotation. This shall give to the people of all the regions an equal and equitable sense and feeling of empowerment and shall strengthen their bonds.

Ahead of assembly elections 2014, the PDP ranked up its favourite "self-rule" plank, demanding that Article 356 which gives the president the authority to dismiss a state government should not be applicable to Jammu and Kashmir. A 40-page document titled 'the Self Rule Framework for Resolution' of Kashmir Valley issue, that was released by PDP patron and former Chief Minister Mufti Mohammad Sayeed in presence of party president Mehbooba Mufti and senior leaders in Srinagar, also demanded that the Governor of the state be elected on rotation from the Valley and Jammu.

"Government of India has to find a modus operandi to see that

Article 356 is not applicable to Jammu and Kashmir. The president or the governor should not have the powers to dismiss a government or dissolve the Assembly ... It should be left to the legislature," Sayeed told reporters.

Referring to the "musings" by former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee, the PDP patron claimed that even Vajpayee spoke of flexibility while resolving Jammu and Kashmir issue.

"Jammu and Kashmir has a special status in the constitution of India ... We have as separate state constitution," Sayeed said. The governor, he said, should be elected "for six years from Jammu and for six years from the Valley."³⁶ He said the legislative assembly of the state was authorised to restore the Sadr-e-Riyasat and Prime Minister before a presidential order issued in 1965 abolished that. "Although the nomenclature does not matter, these powers should be restored to the state assembly."

The coalition governments of Jammu and Kashmir:

Out of five coalition governments in Jammu and Kashmir since 1947, only the National Conference-Congress alliance (2009-2015) lasted a full term. Others collapsed mid-way, triggering instability to the state

First Coalition: The year 1975 has witnessed to an accord between National Conference leader Sheikh Abdullah and Prime Minister Indira Gandhi allowing the former to become Chief Minister after more than two decades. Congress despite having 58 assembly seats offered Chief Ministership to Mr. Abdulla. But the coalition didn't survive for longer period and in 1977, the Congress with draw its support to Mr. Sheikh Abdulla lead government because of the conflicting party interest. At that time neither people nor political parties were mature enough to accept the coalition politics, they have had a habit of one party dominant government. The assembly was dissolved and fresh elections were held, JKNC gained thumping majority and formed the government³⁷.

Second coalition: After the death of Sheikh Mohd Abdullah, National Conference president Farooq Abdullah won the assembly elections of 1983 and got a majority to form the government. But, the Congress engineered a defection in NC party and toppled the Farooq government in 1984³⁸. His

brother-in-law Ghulam Ahmad Shah who came out of the NC party with few members with a tag of JKNC (K) and was propped up as Chief Minister with the support of Congress party. It happened because of the unhappiness of the congress party with Farooq government. But, as soon as the Farooq Abdullah entered into an accord with INC, the NC (K) coalition government headed by GM Shah was also toppled in 1986 like previous Farooq government. Thus the experiment of coalition government again failed in the state.

Third coalition: The PDP, Congress, Panthers Party, and independents stitch up a coalition government with rotational Chief Ministership of three years each. Mufti Mohammad Sayeed was at the helm upto November 2006 and paves the way for Ghulam Nabi Azad of Congress. But the coalition collapses after PDP pull out its support to Congress in 2008 over the allotment of land to the Amarnath Shrine Board in Kashmir. Mr Azad is undoubtedly a good statesman of the country, during his Chief Ministership Jammu and Kashmir witnessed some drastic reforms in administration and developmental sector which otherwise was not digested by the political black sheep and his government was toppled by the PDP on the pretention of Amaranth land issue but in actual sence his growing political popularity was alarming the political career of PDP in the valley and BJP in Jammu. He was the man who tries to bring work culture in the public offices and eradication of corruption but unfortunately got little time. In June 2008, Azad's government announced plans to transfer land to the board of a Hindu shrine. Many Muslims were angered by this decision and protested, leading the government to cancel the transfer; however, this reversal provoked Hindu protests. Seven people were killed in violence that accompanied these protests in different parts of Hindu dominated Jammu province. The People's Democratic Party, a coalition partner of the Indian National Congress in Jammu and Kashmir, withdraw its support to Azad lead government and rather than attempt to sustain his government by requesting a vote of confidence, Azad resigned on 7 July 2008, and later left office on 11 July 2008³⁹. In the political history of the state he was the first Chief Minister from Jammu province. Under his leadership to the state an efforts were made to fill the gaps of regional imbalances in developmental sector.

Fourth coalition: after the fractured mandate given by the state electorate in 2009, National Conference and Congress formed the coalition government and Omer Abdulla became the Chief Minister of the state. It was first coalition government of the state which completed its full tenure. By his able guidance and efficient leadership Omer succeeded in steering the ship of coalition government smoothly and completed the full tenure of his government from 2009-2015⁴⁰. By this time the state voters in general and political parties in particular has fully realized that coalition politics is the future politics of the state because of the political polarization. Neither national nor regional parties are in a position to secure absolute majority in the house, mashroom growth of political parties have fragmented the voters of the state and the only way to survive, is the formation of coalition government by submerging the mutual differences.

Fifth coalition: PDP, BJP, PC and independents form a coalition of two parties that are ideologically poles apart but

brought together by a hung assembly. While the PDP got all of its 28 seats in Muslim-majority Kashmir, the BJP romped home to an unprecedented victory in Hindu-dominated Jammu. The two stitched up a power-sharing pact but cracks surfaced soon after forming rainbow government and the government under the Chief Ministership of Mabooba Mufti burst like pumpkin in the high temperature of June 2018, when BJP superemo Amit Shah call all BJP ministers to New Delhi and decided to withdraw its support to government. Although Jammu based BJP leaders particularly with ministerial berths were not in a mood to withdraw support but they were handicapped before the dictates of party high camand⁴¹. To pullout of coalition had become obligatory for BJP because of its side effects at national level.

Coalition governments in Kashmir have always been unstable. Since 1947, of the five coalition governments that the state witnessed, only the National Conference-Congress alliance from 2009 to 2015 lasted a full term. The other four collapsed mid-way, triggering long spells of violence, instability and democratic vacuum.

With a history of central government interventions, unstable coalition government formations are not new to the sensitive state. One of the very first coalition governments formed in Jammu and Kashmir was in 1984. After the death of his father Sheikh Abdullah, National Conference (NC) president Farooq Abdullah won the elections and got a clear majority. However, the Congress engineered few defections in NC and toppled the Farooq government. His brother-in-law Ghulam Ahmad Shah was propped up as the Chief Minister with the support of Congress. However, his government was dismissed on March 12, 1986, by the then Governor Jagmohan following communal riots in south Kashmir.

In 1987, the National Conference headed by Farooq Abdullah formed a government with support of the Congress. The 1987 elections were widely reported to have been rigged. The phase also saw the beginning of militancy in the state, which led to violence at large scale. The NC-Congress coalition lasted till 1990 before it was dismissed by the central government⁴². The state was then placed under Governor's rule, which lasted for six years until the next elections in 1996.

Jammu and Kashmir saw its third coalition government in 2002 when the newly formed Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) headed by Mufti Mohammad Sayeed and the Congress came together. Even though the NC emerged as the single largest party in the state, it was the PDP-Congress alliance that formed the government with a three-year rotational Chief Minister formula tried out for the first time. Sayeed was CM for the first three years from 2002 to 2005, while Ghulam Nabi Azad of the Congress took control for the remaining period. The coalition, however, collapsed after the PDP pulled

out in 2008 over the allotment of land to the Amarnath Shrine Board for the construction of permanent huts/ sheds for the pilgrims of Amaranth Yatries.

In 2009, the fourth coalition government of Jammu and Kashmir began this time with the NC-led by Farooq Abdullah's son Omar Abdullah in an alliance with the Congress. The Congress was the kingmaker after the party bagged 17 seats in the state. It was in a position to ally with either the PDP, which had 21 seats, or NC, which had 28 seats. The Congress, however, ditched its previous coalition partner and backed Omar Abdullah, who at 39 became the youngest CM of the state. This government lasted its full term of six years before the state delivered a region-based split verdict in the Assembly elections held in 2014⁴³ Majority of voters from the Muslim-dominated Kashmir valley voted for the PDP which won 28 seats, while the Hindu-dominated Jammu region opted for the BJP with 25 seats. NC was limited 15 seats and the Congress bagged 12 seats.

This fractured mandated paved way for the fifth and the most controversial coalition government in the state of Jammu and Kashmir. The PDP and the BJP formed a coalition of two parties that were ideologically poles apart but brought together by a hung House. A common minimum programme with a focus on development was drawn up as the basis of this unusual alliance. BJP even forget the poll promises-like, abrogation of article 370 of the Indian constitution, "Ek Dash May Do Vidhan Do Nishan NahiChalayn Gay" citizenship right to West Pak refugees in Jammu and Kashmir, permanent settlement of Kashmiri pandits, delimitation of the state etc. PDP even set aside its agenda of self-rule and pro-hurry attitude. By hook or crook, two stitched up a power-sharing pact but cracks surfaced soon after the government formation. This coalition lasted for three years only. The BJP opted out of the alliance citing the deteriorating law and order situation in the state leading to killings of acclaimed journalist Shujaat Bukhari and above all squatting its image in national politics. The political pandits of the nation severely criticized the unholy alliance of the PDP-BJP as such the Kashmir centric policy of BJP was derailing.

Saga of Rainbow Governments:

In today's political setup, terms like coalition and alliance have become imperative as much as politics itself, more so ahead of, during and after the elections. The two terms seem to have the same general meaning and in broader sense can be construed as coming together of two otherwise divergent ideological partners or parties to pursue a common interest or benefit. The use of both terms may go beyond the political perspective, say military, financial, commercial, technological, and so on. However coalition is used most often in the political context for a temporary alliance of

political parties forming a government in states or even at the centre. In a coalition or alliance, the parties unite temporarily for mutual benefit on the basis of similarity of political aims and interests.

Thus parties of varied political ideologies make it convenient to enter in alliance for a common purpose of forming and running a government called a coalition government with a commitment to achieve common goals while making the common ideas and thoughts on the basis of working together. Alliance is an agreement between two or more political parties that exists solely to stand in elections and form government in case winning numbers achieve. Each of the parties within the alliance has its own policies but chooses temporarily to put aside differences in favour of common goals and ideology. A broader vision of efficient governance and people based policies has a potential to keep the two parties bound together and succeed.

Whereas the concept of alliances and the coalitions for effective governance became an efficient option, although a compulsion, in the situations of fractured mandates, and worked reasonably well for the Centre and some more states but it did not go well in the state of Jammu & Kashmir. The state got its coalition governments of a newly emerged political party, the PDP and the Congress party in year 2002 after National Conference failed to make it to the treasury benches after tasting an unexpected backlash in the elections. The coalition government came into existence after the two parties formed an alliance with great fanfare and promises. However the glamour soon started to fade as the parties started pulling the rope towards their own ends. Sour relations soon started to be appearing as the parties continued to wash the dirty linen in the public domain. Be it distribution of ministries, the appointment of bureaucrats, the issue of balanced regional development – nothing went right. In fact the already fragile state started to show a steep decline towards an ugly state of instability, which has been progressing since then. Thus, whereas the concept of coalition governments elsewhere did prove beneficial in perusing people friendly governance, it proved counter productive in Jammu and Kashmir. When the individual party interests, personal agendas and the regional preferences takes the front row, efficient governance is bound to disappear from the priorities. However the greed of sticking to power kept the coalition together with rotational change of ministries as well as of the Chief Ministers post. The alliance of the PDP and the Congress disappeared on a very bitter note when the Amarnath land row hit the state and flames of regionalism engulfed the entire state. The alliances and with it the government ended, but not before the entire state of Jammu and Kashmir was plunged into the bog of regional hatred and communal divide, from which the state has not recovered yet.

In fact the state is neck deep in it now following the repetitions of more so-called unholy alliances and coalitions.

The principle of coalition would demand that each of the parties within the alliance though not shunning their own policies choose temporarily to put aside differences in favour of an efficient governance and healthy political atmosphere. In fact in today's political scenario, situations do demand that an electoral alliance is manufactured by parties with very different policy goals, but agree to pool resources in order to stop a particular candidate or party from gaining power. However the idea only meets a long term success when the alliance parties stick to their commitment of delivering of efficient governance and balanced development. How can the coalition meet success when the partners in government start fighting on the issues on which they campaigned together or agreed upon to pursue them together from the same coalition platform?

Born in 2008, the coalition of NC and Congress did live its full term, the relations were far from healthy and peaceful. All along the period of the coalition rule, the parties continued in mudslinging, and the government continued not for the benefit of the people but for pursuing personal benefits and political goals. In the meantime the seeds of instability and the regional drift took firm roots in the state. The alliances did survive the full term of the assembly, but failed to provide much needed political stability to the state or peace to the valley. The 2010 turmoil was one of the manifestations of the failed alliance.

Again in 2014 assembly elections no party could manage majority to form government on its own and ideologically opposite political parties – BJP and PDP entered in to alliance to form the government. People's Democratic Party leader Mufti Mohammad Sayeed took oath to become Chief Minister of Jammu and Kashmir State. Sayeed's taking charge ended 49 days of Governor's Rule since the assembly election results were announced in December 2014. Bharatiya Janata Party leader Nirmal Singh took oath as Deputy Chief Minister. The new Jammu and Kashmir State government was the first time alliance between the PDP and the BJP. 79 year old Sayeed, who founded his party in 1998, has dubbed the PDP-BJP alliance as the meeting of "North Pole and South Pole." "We have to merge North Pole and South Pole,"⁴⁴ he said after taking oath on Sunday. "We want to make this alliance a turning point. We want to do justice for all people. Sayeed was administered the oath at General Zorawar Singh Auditorium of Jammu University shortly after 11 am. The function was attended by Prime Minister Narendra Modi and other senior BJP leaders including L.K. Advani and Murli Manohar Joshi. Modi described the alliance as a "historic opportunity."⁴⁵ PDP-BJP government is a historic opportunity to fulfil the aspirations of the people of J&K and take the

State to new heights of progress, said Mr. Modi. The December 2014 assembly election, which recorded one of the highest voter turnouts in Jammu and Kashmir, led to PDP emerging as the single largest party with 28 seats, BJP 25, National Conference 15 and Congress 12. Besides Sayeed, PDP's 13 and BJP's 11 lawmakers also took oath as ministers. Separatist-turned-politician Sajjad Gani Lone, who met Modi ahead of the elections at Delhi, was also sworn-in as a minister. In 2002, Sayeed headed a PDP-Congress coalition government for a three-year term. The PDP and BJP have agreed that Mufti will be the Chief Minister for the full six-year term. Although the BJP and PDP have struck a deal, there is concern over whether the two parties will be able to function together given their vast ideological differences on critical issues like Article 370, which gives special status to Jammu and Kashmir State, and the AFSPA law, which shields soldiers from prosecution in conflict zones. BJP has stood for the abrogation of Article 370, but PDP has pushed for "self rule" than what is available under the current constitutional scheme. BJP backs AFSPA as necessary to battling the low-intensity insurgency in Kashmir, but PDP wants its withdrawal. The J&K government released its Common Minimum Programme, a document that aims to give some insight into how the two parties plan to tackle some of these tough issues. On AFSPA ; The coalition government will thoroughly review security situation in state with a view to examine need and desirability of all the special laws being applied to state. On Article 370: While recognising the different positions of both parties the present position will be maintained on all the constitutional provisions including special status. In a press conference, Sayeed said that he favoured a dialogue with Pakistan, and the Indian government should consider the view point of the Hurriyat Conference. Sayeed also said that Pakistan, Hurriyat & militants had allowed for the peaceful conduct of elections in November-December. Political opponents of the BJP and PDP have reacted to their alliance with skepticism. "If these two political parties can come together this clearly indicates that power is a very potent clue and some day the sun can rise from the West," Manish Tewari, Congress leader told ANI.

In 2014, the coalition government formed between PDP and the BJP was beginning of the end of the political constancy and regional harmony in the state. An alliance was announced after weeks of parleys and discussions for the coalition to agree upon and publish a common developmental and economic programme. However the marriage turned sour right on the day of swearing ceremony when the BJP showed open displeasure over a particular statement of the CM Mufti Mohammad Sayeed in which he thanks to the Pakistan for smooth elections in the state. The alliance faced rough weather with political and personal clashes between the two parties right from day first of the coalition. The ugliness of

the alliance started resulting in the continuous drift of the two regions of Jammu and Kashmir and even a sharp divide started becoming visible on the basis of the religions. Acute arrogance of the BJP and the mute surrender of the PDP ultimately paved the way for a nauseating political disaster particular for the valley.

Even after the death of Mufti Mohammed Sayeed, when PDP got a chance of revisiting the alliance, they decided to continue with it, probably after getting fresh assurances from BJP. However the association again started to fall off and as there was no visible harmony visible between the two parties. While as PDP tried its best to push a balanced developmental and political agenda, the BJP ensured to project valley as a hateful commodity and Jammu a victim and a darling. After the coalition fell in 2018, the communal polarisation and the regional divide was almost complete as the state fell under the direct control of BJP through Governor Rule.

VIII CONCLUSION :

Today the regional divide between Jammu and Kashmir is at all-time high, and the communal divide and the hatred are more than visible. It is impossible that any single party can emerge in the coming elections to govern the state. The alliances and the coalitions have more than once proved their failure. The state is thus set to witness another spell of chaos, confusion and uncertainty once the elections are announced and conducted. The state owes the current mess to the political parties who preferred to pursue their individual agendas to a common developmental and governance programmes thus turning the purposeful alliances into unholy marriages. With regional drift and the communal passions are at their peak, coming elections will prove to be challenge for all those who celebrate the situation as well as those who regret it. Political alliance and coalition governments will be the only option available. Let there be a healthy and people-friendly pacts instead of lousy and selfish deals.

Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) president Mehbooba Mufti in her statement to counter Mr Omar Abdulla said coalition governments deliver better results than single-party majority regimes, citing the example of the BJP-led government at the Centre. Mufti was reacting to National Conference (NC) leader Omar Abdullah's statement asking people of Jammu and Kashmir to give a clear mandate to any one party. "Brute majority has had a history of sell-outs in Jammu and Kashmir. With 60 members, NC sold out power houses, brought Ikhwan, Task force, Special Operation Groups, POTA, even earlier when NC had an absolute majority and unqualified political mandate it only yielded powers, resources of state to Centre,". To the contrary what BJP-PDP coalition established a high bar of achievements, opening of cross LOC roads the singular political achievement post-independence.

Even at national level it seems post Indira Gandhi coalition governments have delivered better than majority party rule e.g. Vajpayee coalition, UPA -I compared to present BJP single party rule . In our opinion coalition is better option than one party domination but it should not be formed out of fear to loose political grounds in the state rather than conscious.

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