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Fresh Political Player in the Politically Disrupted Union Territory of J&K: An Evaluation of J&K Apni Party

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ABSTRACT: The changing of state status of Jammu and Kashmir on 5th of August 2019 resulted into the formation of more two Union Territories of Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh. This reorganization and de-operationalisation of Article 370 by the BJP government under the prime ministership of Narendra Modi has slapped the politically representative voices of Jammu and Kashmir in the form of regional political parties. The pro-Indian political leadership was jailed by the centre for a number of months and some important representatives are still behind the bars. Most of the political parties were against the move of the centre and they formally formed an alliance known as People's Alliance for Gupkar Declaration (PAGD or popularly known as Gupkar Alliance) for the restoration of Article 370. It was in this backdrop that an ex-MLA from Amira Kadal constituency of Srinagar for Jammu and Kashmir People's Democratic Party Altaf Bukhari founded a new political party "Jammu and Kashmir Apni Party" with the help of 31 members of J&KPDP and INC in March, 8, 2020, with the aim to do the politics of truth and not to give empty slogans but say what is achievable. The party started their political journey from the 2020 DDC elections and secured total 12 seats. This paper will focus on the emergence of Jammu and Kashmir Apni Party in the political scenario of Jammu and Kashmir with organizational structure, main objectives and achievements.

KEYWORDS: Organisational structure, Floor Crossing, Political player, Ideology, CMP, Commoners, Union Territory.

I. INTRODUCTION

A Political player is a sharer in politics who is recognized in a region to have influence or power on a smaller scale in the world. The phrase basically refers to an individual who has been given mandate or is elected as a political member, but more commonly refers to someone who is not in office but still wield power or influence. Political players fulfill the basic pre-requisites of a democratic system. We can not think of a democracy without political parties. They educate the general masses, whether in power or opposition and form a public opinion regarding the redressal of the problems which society has to face. Political parties promote the interests of their voters. They draw up party programmes in accordance with the contemporary challenges. They seek political power either individually or in collaboration with other political parties. As Joseph Schumpeter has termed: "The first and foremost aim of each political party is to prevail over the others in order to get into power or to stay in it".

The political player J&KAP was founded in March 8, 2020, (Former PDP leader Altaf Bukhari launches "Apni Party", The Times of India 08,03,2020), by 31 former members of the J&KPDP & INC. (Altaf Bukhari launches J&KAP, 31 leaders from PDP, NC, Congress to join, India Today, March, 8, 2020). The Ex .MLA from Amira Kadal constituency for the PDP, Altaf Bukhari was elected as the party's first president.

Research Methodology: This paperwork will be carried out by the application of the collective method. The collective method is a way to explore and recount the situations given by the information which is already available in secondary type. In this context, our research is based on these secondary data collection method, such as, reviewing books, journals, papers, articles etc.



II. POLITICAL PROGRAMMES OF J&KAP

- JKAP has emerged due to the political disruption of the state politics after the breakdown of the alliance between JKPDP and BJP. The common minimum programme (CMP) duly signed between them was not respected in the true sense. The newly formed political party describes itself as being “of the commoners, by the commoners and for the commoners”.
- The president of the party has made it crystal clear that, “we have resolved to create a viable, political platform that functions in accordance with the wishes of people and where the people are the real stake holders of the political process”. (Firstpost, 08 March 2020). If these highlighted principles will be given due consideration in the time to come, the future can be well expected bright.
- JKAP is completely against the dynastic politics adopted by the NC, which is being dominated by the Abdullah family, the PDP, which is commanded by the Syed family and the INC, which is controlled by the Nehru-Gandhi family. (India Today, March 8, 2020).
- JKAP desires that displaced Kashmiri Pandits be safely returned to their own homes in Kashmir valley. They must be given the right to enjoy their life peacefully and not be used as means for contemptible political interests. (Firstpost, 08 March 2020).
- The party is in favour that the government jobs should be reserved for the residents of region. The president of the party welcomed the centre’s move for bringing the changes in the new domicile order and reserving all groups of jobs both in non-gazetted and gazetted services for the residents of J&K. He made it clear that the efforts will continue to get this law revisited in its entirety to remove the remaining loopholes till it satisfies the aspirations of the people of J&K. (Zee News, 04 April 2020).
- The full restoration of statehood, land and property protection for Jammu and Kashmir are the key demands of the party. JKAP wants that the all people must unite and struggle to get statehood and other protections for Jammu And Kashmir. (PTK News, 04 April 2020).

III. ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE OF J&K APNI PARTY

JKAP has the following office bearers:

- (a). Chief patron
- (b). President
- (c). Vice Presidents
- (d). General Secretary
- (e). Chief Spokesperson
- (f). Provincial Presidents
- (g). Treasurer
- (h). Secretaries

IV. COMMITTEES IN THE ORGANISATION OF J&K APNI PARTY

- ❖ Political Affairs Committee:- The Political Affairs Committee is comprised of 15 members. Its members are nominated by the President in consultation with the chief patron.
- ❖ Central Executive Committee:- The committee comprises of not more than 40 members including the office bearers.
- ❖ General Council:- The JKAP General Council comprises of assembly constituency heads, district presidents and all the members of Central Executive Committee.
- ❖ Subordinate Committees:- The JKAP have executive committee at the provincial, district, block, panchayat and at the Wards level.
- ❖ Frontal Organizations:- The party has some frontal organizations for women, youth, students, farmers, ethnic groups etc. (Kashmir latest news network, 08 March 2020)

V. PERFORMANCE OF JKAP IN THE DDC ELECTIONS

The JKAP has contested the first elections in the form of DDC & the party has won total 12 number of seats & the total votes polled in their favour were 38147. Below is the table which thoroughly throws light on the performance of the political parties in the DDC elections.



S.NO.	Name Of The Political Party	Total Seats Won
1	BJP	75
2	J&K	67
3	IND	50
4	J&KPDP	27
5	INC	26
6	JKAP	12
7	JKPC	8
8	CPIM(M)	5
9	JKPM	3
10	JKNPP	2
11	PDF	2
Total		277

The DDC elections can be summarized as a victory of democracy & a victory for the locals. (www.timesnownews.com).

VI. VIEWPOINT OF THE TWO MAIN POLITICAL PARTIES OF J&K, NAMELY, NC AND CONGRESS ON THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE NEW POLITICAL PARTY

The NC spokesperson Imran Nabi Dar has said that, “the emergence of a new political formation is a handwork of those who want to blunt the true representative voices of J&K. The move is aimed to ditch genuine political aspirations of the people of J&K”.

The J&K Congress President G.A.Mir has termed “The new political formation is an offshoot of the Saffron party. It is a creation of various quarters, which have always been hell bent upon to create chaos and division in the political system of J&K”. (Former PDP leader Altaf Bukhari launches Apni party, The Times of India, 08 March 2020).

VII. CONCLUSION

This newly formed political party has added extra colour to the politically vibrant society of Jammu and Kashmir. The critics from the differently acknowledged political voices cannot snatch recognized political rights of these people from engineering a different political structure. However crossing of the floor day in & day out may have serious repercussions for the political development of the stable political culture in the J&K. A political leader who has not done justice with his/her own political ideology, how can he/she prove fruitful to the general masses or for their own vote bank. To be a part of a political organizational structure or ideological set up always means differentiation with others. When an associate or a member has proved disloyal arises question mark for his/her being politically strong & motivating personality. However it has been experienced throughout India that the members of different political parties cross the floor time and again, which can never be seen as a good sign for the mature model of democracy in the world.

To conclude, we can say that this is the flavour which we can taste in a democratic culture. This is basically the democratic ideology which teaches us to believe, accept and tolerate the ground realities which can be in power or against a particular political group or ideology. Let us see this new creation with the hope that the future of politics in the state of Jammu & Kashmir will flourish for overall development and peaceful resolution of disputes with all the stakeholders in the region.

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