

# 2016

Gandhara Research  
Society, Pakistan

Ghulam Mustafa Bali,  
Chairman,  
Department of Pakistan  
Studies,  
Govt. Postgraduate College  
Mansehra,  
Pakistan

## Gandhara Journal of Research in Social Science

ISSN: 2415-2404

Volume 1, No. 2, Summer 2016



### **The Politics of Coalitions: Theory and Practice**

*Coalition politics has been a topic of considerable interest for the scholars of political studies. Despite cumulative sophistication of coalition literature, its recent assessments conclude that our understanding of the subject still remains undeveloped. In Western democratic tradition understanding on coalition politics has been developed that is well known in the academic circles, but there is no significant work on politics of coalitions in the third world's authoritarian and semi-authoritarian traditions. The emergence of multi-partism, increasing recognition of democracy and frequent democratic reversals has made coalition politics a common phenomenon here also. The pre-electoral coalitions are formed to maximise chances of electoral victory, the post-electoral are formed to gain and retain power while the democratization coalitions are formed for restoration of democracy. This paper focuses on theory and practice of coalition politics with special reference to third world countries.*



## **The Politics of Coalitions: Theory and Practice**

*Ghulam Mustafa Bali*

### **Introduction**

Forming political coalitions is a process of organizing political parties collectively in pursuit of a common goal or objective. The elements that entail this process include among others the pooling of resources, forming binding commitments and agreements on the distribution of pay-offs that may result from achieving this objective.<sup>1</sup> According to Lupia and Strom “coalition is the union of different political parties or groups for a particular purpose, usually for a limited time.”<sup>2</sup> William Gamson defines alliances as “temporary, means oriented coalitions among individuals or political groups.”<sup>3</sup> It may be concluded in the light of these definitions that a political coalition is a team or grouping of political parties united for a common objective for a specific period of time.

The coalition may be forged either by giving serious considerations to ideological positions of respective parties on political chessboard or by ignoring them altogether. Political parties seek to control the executive mainly through these coalitions. But this does not mean that coalitions are not forged for any other purpose. They are also built to safeguard the interests of smaller parties by providing them representation in the legislature, overthrowing a government, protecting the opposition from the repression, pressurizing the government or restoring democracy.<sup>4</sup>

In multiparty systems in which no single party can win a necessary majority the alliance may normally occur in two ways. One, pre-electoral coalition occurs before the elections and is



made openly with the aim of informing the public about what the parties are going to do if they win enough seats. Two, post-electoral coalition occurs after the elections when the final distribution of seats or votes is known. In this case no explicit information about coalition membership or leadership is given to the public before elections. This type of alliance may also occur when the previous government has failed but new elections have not been called. In such situations dialogues are held and bargaining occurs among different parties capable and interested in potentially forming a ruling coalition. In authoritarian and semi-authoritarian regimes the party coalitions are also structured purely for the sake of strengthening the opposition or to promote its agenda.<sup>5</sup>

In the third world where transitions to and from democracy have been frequent, besides pre-electoral and post-electoral coalitions, democratisation alliances have also remained a common phenomena. These countries, like Pakistan, time and again fall victims to military autocracy which compels their political parties to struggle for restoration of democracy. When military or any other type of authoritarianism is imposed, political parties come together to form alliances against these autocratic regimes to press them for the commencement of democratization process. Due to differences in nature of their working and behaviour they are called democratisation or opposition alliances.<sup>6</sup> This paper presents an analysis of the politics of coalitions with special reference to third world's experience where political parties have to forge coalitions to promote the cause of democracy in their respective countries.

### **Politics of Pre-Electoral Coalitions**

Sona N. Golder, an expert of politics of pre-electoral coalitions, is of the view that understanding about the formation of electoral alliances is important for at least three reasons.



First, electoral coalitions can have a significant impact on election outcomes and types of policy that are ultimately implemented. Second, the coalition strategies employed by parties may also have important implications for the representative nature of governments. Third, electoral coalitions are not a rare phenomena.<sup>7</sup>

In spite of well-developed literature on coalition politics, there is little theoretical or empirical research addressing pre-electoral coalitions since Duverger first mentioned them in the 1950s.<sup>8</sup> The literature on coalition politics focuses predominantly on ruling coalitions that are formed after elections. The most likely place to find references about pre-electoral coalitions is in single country case studies. Studies focusing on post-election coalitions of particular countries have briefly addressed electoral alliances which are formed in certain elections. Despite occasional references these alliances have never been at the centre of any systematic research. Sona N. Golder addressed this oversight recently in her pioneering work on the subject by examining the conditions under which electoral coalitions are likely to form.<sup>9</sup>

Golder defines a pre-electoral coalition as “a collection of parties that do not compete independently in an election. Rather, they publicly agree to coordinate their campaigns by running joint candidates/lists or agreeing to enter government following the election.” Golder’s definition shows that electoral alliances are publicly stated and member parties in coalition cannot compete in elections as independent entities.<sup>10</sup>

Debus says “the term pre-electoral alliance is used to mark those party combinations that favour governing together.” He further says that parties establish such coalitions by preparing a common election manifesto and a common list of candidates. However, political actors may also choose a more informal way by simply telling the public that they are in favour of forming the



coming government despite separate lists of candidates and individual election manifestoes. Debus uses both possibilities—the formal coalition and the informal one—to identify pre-electoral alliances.<sup>11</sup>

These definitions lead us to the conclusion that electoral coalitions are made up of political parties that function as a conglomerate in the context of competitive multi-party elections. Such alliances aim to gain an electoral majority and they can do so by organizing the exchange of votes. These alliances make highly effective schemes for gaining an electoral majority to guarantee victory. “The Pre-electoral alliances,” Golder states, “are formed more easily between parties with similar ideological positions. This is because the utility loss associated with having policy set at coalition’s ideal point rather than one’s own ideal point is minimized to the extent that the coalition members appear ideologically to be similar or connected.”<sup>12</sup> Ideologically connected alliances are more durable and stable.

Ideologically dissimilar parties can also form an alliance against a common opponent. If the allies have reached the agreement on the common programme, their relations are much easier. Duverger says that “such a programme may however be vague, being made up of slogans and general headings, more calculated to attract votes than to formulate a plan for positive action. In particular it generally defines aims rather than means.”<sup>13</sup> Coalitions of ideologically diverse parties are very common in countries where democracy has yet to take roots. When parties coalesce solely for the purpose of winning elections, these ideological differences soon begin to take their toll by making their termination imminent.<sup>14</sup>

Coalitions among parties can take on different forms and degrees. Firstly, they can forge coalitions whose lists include candidates from each one of them. Secondly, they may decide to



alternatively put up lists of either of the parties in each of the constituencies with the object of optimizing the electoral support that they envisage for each other. This is common practice in mature party systems, thus ensuring maximum effectiveness of their campaigns and avoiding the negative effects of the dispersal of votes on themselves or on the parties from which they can expect certain support or cooperation. Lastly, in simple majority double ballot system they can agree on the withdrawal of the candidacy which has obtained the least votes in the first round and request their supporters to back the candidacy of the allied party's candidate.<sup>15</sup> At the same time, these agreements can be applied to very different areas:

- to all the constituencies or only to some
- to presidential or general elections
- for a given or undetermined period

Pre-electoral coalitions occur when the elections are announced. These alliances vary according to ballot procedure and the ideological closeness or distance of the union. Parties either put up joint candidates or joint lists at the first or at the only ballot. Agreements are also made for the distribution of remainders in certain proportional systems. There may be tacit or explicit and local or national alliances. In second ballot system the simple withdrawal of the candidate without officially asking his/her voters to transfer their vote to a neighbouring candidate is often the result of a tacit alliance. Tacit coalitions are fairly common in electoral system with a second ballot as well as single ballot system if there are several parties while in proportional representation they are not possible. As compared to tacit coalitions formed at local level the open alliances are more effective and lasting. When parties forge national coalitions they have to depend on local committees to honour the pledge of the alliance and avoid local adjustments. In this case the elector is not given the freedom to cast his vote at his will. He is



bound to give vote to the list or candidate nominated by the coalition while in the tacit one the voter enjoys greater freedom. In latter case many electors would not follow the party's choice or even abstain from or vote for the candidate nearest to their party ideology. In second ballot system such independence on the part of the elector is fairly common. The open alliances are then transported to parliamentary or governmental level but in case of tacit coalitions this does not happen due to their self-contradictory nature (allies in each constituency are different).<sup>16</sup>

Pre-electoral alliances tend to be dominated by the most extreme party. By natural inclination a large number of electors give their votes to those who defend their point of view with the greatest energy. At the electoral level coalition is, therefore, dominated by the extremist elements of the alliance.<sup>17</sup>

In dominant party systems as part of opposition politics, political parties often enter into pre-electoral coalitions in order to limit the electoral gains of a dominant governing party. These parties also form coalitions for the purpose of securing enough votes or combining a sufficient number of parliamentary seats to govern. India and Ireland had dominant party system for long. The opposition formed electoral coalitions that sent a signal to the voters that member parties would form an effective governmental alliance. This encouraged the electorate to vote for them and bring the permanent rule of dominant parties in these countries to an end.<sup>18</sup>

Pre-electoral alliances are easier to form between parties which are proportionate to one another. If this does not happen then the weakest party will be completely annihilated by the strongest one. But this does not mean that coalitions between asymmetrical parties are never formed. The local disparities can correct the inequality of an alliance: one ally will be at the head of the poll in some constituencies, the other elsewhere. The major parties forgo presenting



candidates at the first ballot in some constituencies in order to allow a weak ally to obtain at least some representation, and to benefit from its withdrawal elsewhere where it might be in a position to hold balance between almost two equal parties.<sup>19</sup>

The pre-electoral alliances are more likely to form if the party system is polarized and the electoral institutions are disproportional. In polarized party systems there exists an extreme party in the system. Moderate parties try to do all that they can to keep an extreme party out of power. Parties are likely to form a pre-electoral coalition in these circumstances if the probability of entering into government is greater as a coalition than it is after contesting elections independently.<sup>20</sup>

The literature investigating the factors that determine coalition formations argues that disproportional electoral systems encourage formation of pre-electoral alliances. Strom, Budge and Laver, state in their study on the subject that “the more disproportional the electoral system, the greater the incentives for pre-electoral alliance formation.”<sup>21</sup> The electoral rules that consistently benefit larger parties also encourage smaller party leaders to forge pre-electoral coalitions. The goal of pre-electoral coalition formation is to gain more seats in legislature to form or become part of the government. Office seeking and policy realization are far greater incentives for parties to form alliances with other parties than coalescing only for vote seeking. If a pre-electoral coalition wins a majority it, then, inevitably results in a ruling alliance. But this does not mean that an electoral coalition is a prerequisite for a ruling coalition. Office seeking, policy realization or vote seeking are the main incentives for political parties to form electoral alliances.<sup>22</sup>





## **Politics of Post-Electoral Coalitions**

Post-electoral coalitions are formed after elections in multi-party parliaments. They are subdivided into parliamentary and governmental coalitions. In most cases, however, governing and parliamentary coalitions are often two sides of the same coin (a parliamentary coalition does not exist without a governing coalition).

### **Parliamentary Coalitions**

In situations where none of the parties possesses the majority of the parliamentary seats, then, they must necessarily form a ruling coalition. Sometimes the government consists of representatives of one party while the members of other parties support it in debates and votes in the parliament. The coalitions in which governmental responsibilities are not shared are called parliamentary/legislative alliances. Parties that agree to support the government without getting cabinet representation are called support parties.<sup>23</sup>

In some cases a coalition or a party governs with the support of its own parliamentarians and those of nearby parties which give it their votes without agreeing to share power with it. They support the executive in legislative affairs without shouldering the responsibility of the executive office. Thus they combine a simulation of pure disinterestedness in the office. The All India National Congress in the late 1990s and the Pakistan Awamy League in the late 1950s remained support parties of governments. Mostly extremist parties adopt this attitude to benefit themselves from criticising the government. This type of parliamentary alliance attempts to combine the advantage of power with the freedom of opposition. They have a great check on government policies which may be in accord to their likeness if the government has to survive or legislate. In case of differences, support parties withdraw their support and leave the government



in lurch. In some situations the executive seeks ephemeral alliances in the parliament with different parties to pass legislation. They may be temporary coalitions in order to pass the legislation, to support the government or to overthrow it.<sup>24</sup>

Leading parties in the coalitions always try their best to make post-electoral alliances durable and well organized. But the support parties keep them fragile. They provide support only to block the rival government coming into power led by parties with whom ideological differences are greater. This pressure influences party behaviour in the parliament. Their withdrawal of support either can provide the chance to rival party or parties to come into power or lead to early elections for which these parties are not ready. To avoid paying this price they provide necessary support to government in the parliament but criticize its policies with great freedom. These critics try to lay the responsibility for unpopular acts on the shoulders of the executive and take the credit of popular ones.<sup>25</sup>

Parliamentary coalitions of the opposition are also common. The opposition may form both heterogeneous and homogeneous coalitions. In opposition it is feasible even for the extreme parties to sit together in the parliament and work to achieve a common objective. Where opinion is divided and democracy is not mature, mostly such alliances in parliament exist and function as an opposition but where democracy is more mature and institutionalized with stable parties the opposition forges parliamentary alliances in rare cases (only to pass a negative vote of confidence).<sup>26</sup>

In new and fragile democracies opposition alliances in parliament are formed to keep check on the government, to overturn the government or to strengthen the opposition by pooling the resources and maintaining its unity. Sometimes these alliances also invite extra-parliamentary



political parties or pressure groups to their ranks to exert greater pressure on the government.<sup>27</sup> Pakistan went through this experience in 1970s and 1990s.

Parliamentary coalitions in opposition play their role as political opposition. These coalitions may be organized and strong or unorganized and weak. The allies criticize and oppose government policies in the parliament as well as the outside. They maintain unity in parliamentary votes in case of organized and strong alliances but in case of fortuitous and exceptional alliances component parties of the coalition can behave independently. By criticizing the government and its policies they ensure chances of their success in the future elections by defeating incumbents if the alliance manages to stay intact till that time.

Opposition to the government policies not only benefits these parties in future but also makes the system more democratic as no democracy can mature and consolidate without constructive role of the opposition.<sup>28</sup> The parliamentary coalitions of the opposition shoulder no responsibility of government and implementation of policy, therefore their behaviour in the parliament, more or less, remains demagogic. Mostly extreme parties dominate such alliances. They are often extra-critical to the government and its policies. This way they score points and prove their existence. These extreme parties always share a common opposition to moderate parties, and sometimes a common opposition to the regime. The coalitions of extreme parties are not possible in government but are quite common in the opposition. At parliamentary level the alliance attempts to establish a common attitude and voting discipline amongst the component parties. Certain alliances are formed only to unseat the party in power. They are set up for an event and become irrelevant after accomplishing this objective.<sup>29</sup>



## **Governmental Coalitions**

The governing coalition is mainly formed when no political party holds a majority of seats in the legislature. If the party with largest number of seats does not want the advantages of being a minority government, it has no other choice but to cooperate with other parties—by sharing government's posts with them—to form a coalition government. A parliamentary coalition then naturally shapes up to ensure that the government enjoys majority support in the legislature.<sup>30</sup> Political interests not the ideals lie behind the formation of a ruling alliance.<sup>31</sup> The Pakistan People's Party led coalition between 2008 and 2013 and that of Pakistan Muslim League (Nawaz) thereafter are the best examples of such coalitions.

In multi-party systems one party rarely forms the government. Coalition formation becomes the norm in such countries. These coalitions are formed by parties to come into power. Every ruling alliance takes ministers (in proportion to coalescing parties' seats in the parliament) from different parties. The parties of the ruling alliance have to make agreements upon a programme which demands a deeper similarity. Those who govern are compelled to take into account all the interests involved, which permit them to give no more than partial satisfaction to each. They have to face the facts which limit the scope of their action. The moderate section of the coalition meets the necessities of government and is most capable of governing without deviating from electoral programmes and promises. Unlike opposition coalitions the governmental coalitions are dominated by the moderate parties.<sup>32</sup>

The respective strength of parties in ruling alliance determines their position and relations. The larger the allied party the more influence it exerts within the alliance.<sup>33</sup> The party that heads the alliance shoulders the responsibility of presiding over the government. But it has



never been general or absolute rule that larger parties would always take the leadership role. This may be due to the respective position of the allies on political chessboard or political circumstances.<sup>34</sup> The smaller party may be led to assume the responsibility of government because it is more moderate. On account of the necessities of government the extreme party enjoys least influence in government. This pattern is very general. In the long run it seems that the coalition is finally dominated by the most moderate party. The extreme party has to live with this reality by making compromises and gradually moving towards moderation. Dialectic of alliances works as a major factor in this shift. If extreme parties take leadership role they have to go moderate with the passage of time by adopting moderate policies to save the government. In three party alliances the party enjoying the central position on the political spectrum takes the role of an arbiter and enjoys strong position in spite of numerical weakness. Alliances with centre or core party are more durable than others.<sup>35</sup> Where parties are strongly organized and disciplined the governmental coalitions are stable. While where the parties are less organized and less disciplined the coalitions are more fragile and governments less stable.<sup>36</sup>

The literature on coalition formation has grown considerably in recent years. Yet, this literature remains somewhat divided on the basic issue of how to model the preferences of politicians. Some have proceeded by assuming that politicians are office seeking while the others have assumed that they are policy oriented. The two assumptions lead to different predictions about the types of coalitions that form. The office seeking politicians are expected to form minimal winning coalitions to maximise their benefits from holding office whereas policy seeking politicians are expected to form coalitions with a little ideological distance that may have minority or super majority support.<sup>37</sup>



People who disapprove of coalition governments believe that such governments have a tendency to be fractious and prone to instability and disharmony. This is because coalitions are comprised of different parties with different beliefs, who may not always agree on the required path of governmental policy. Sometimes the results of an election are of such nature that the coalitions that are mathematically most probable are ideologically unfeasible. A second problem may be that the minor parties become “king makers” and gain far more than their vote would indicate.

### **Politics of Democratization Coalitions**

Democratization is a process through which a country makes transition to more democratic political regime. It may be the transition from an authoritarian regime to a semi or fully democratic regime or transition from a semi-authoritarian political system to a fully democratic one. The outcome may be consolidated or it may face frequent reversals as has been the case in Pakistan.<sup>38</sup> Democratization occurs in various ways. For example in bottom up process the non-governing elites make incessant demand for an extension of rights and voting power that chip away at ruling authority. In top down process the democratization may be carried out by the governing elites themselves. Democracy may also be introduced by foreign powers. The allies after their victory in the Second World War had imposed democracy on the vanquished (Japan, Italy and Germany). Similarly colonization had provided an incubation period for democracy in a number of countries, as in South Asia, which after independence became full fledged democracies.<sup>39</sup>

Political parties often played a crucial role in the process of democratisation. In the last century due to cross national influences, parties appeared in different polities of the world. More



or less in every country two or more than two influential parties appeared on the scene to participate in political activities. In both cases whether they were under their colonial masters or autocratic rulers they started their struggle for democratisation. These parties played a very important role initially in democratic transitions and then in consolidation of democracy.<sup>40</sup>

In countries where democracy faces frequent reversals the political parties form alliances against the authoritarian regimes and start political struggle for the restoration of democracy. These alliances, observed by Jay Ulfelder and Mike Lustik, work as factor in transitions to democracy.<sup>41</sup> Since the formation of democratisation alliances has been an exception (restricted to those countries where transitions to and from democracy are frequent), therefore, attracted the attention of limited number of scholars. Myron Weiner, Robert Pinkney, Donald Share, S. Mainwaring, Samuel P. Huntington, Jay Ulfelder and Mike Lustik belong to the group of scholars who observed that democratisation coalitions play important role in democratic transitions.<sup>42</sup> The main focus of these scholars has never been the democratisation coalitions. They referred to these alliances only in passing while discussing democratic transitions. This shows that democratisation coalitions, a rare phenomenon which is restricted only to developing countries, have virtually been ignored. However, the studies of aforementioned scholars have proved helpful in providing some understanding on the subject.

Democratisation alliances are coalitions of political parties which are formed to launch effective political campaigns for democratising the authoritarian political systems. They mainly work for the attainment or restoration of democracy. Authoritarianism compels political parties of all shades to get together, form coalitions and then start their struggle for democracy. But they have to be very conscious because authoritarian rulers are always tactful in promoting opposition's disunity. These alliances may be formed in two situations: one, where the country



has no earlier democratic experience and two, where democracy existed earlier but has been reversed.<sup>43</sup>

Democratisation alliances have been observed mostly in those countries where military captures power by overthrowing the democratically elected governments. Often, developing countries of the world fall victims to military coups. After capturing power the military rulers ban political parties and their activities. When possible these political parties, irrespective of their ideological and personal differences, come together and form alliances to restore democracy in the country.<sup>44</sup> Before starting campaign against the military junta the allied parties sign agreements and evolve effective strategy to attain their objective. After acquiring the required internal unity they start their democratic struggle. They launch a propaganda campaign against the authoritarian regime by issuing statements to media, questioning legitimacy of the regime, holding public meetings to further their agenda, and when possible announcing strikes to bring the system to a standstill and contacting Western media and governments, thus, building pressure on the ruling elite to submit to this pressure and introduce democratic reforms.<sup>45</sup> The National Democratic Front, Pakistan Democratic Movement, Democratic Action Committee, Movement for the Restoration of Democracy and Alliance for the Restoration of Democracy were coalitions that struggled against military dictatorships in Pakistan.

The activities of democratisation coalitions produce legitimacy crisis for the authoritarian regimes and reduce their duration. These regimes may respond to the democratic movements in different ways. First, they may take the initiative of introducing democratic reforms in their own hands and gradually transform the systems into democratic polities. Second, the rulers may resist the demand of democratization by imposing restrictions on political activities and harassing the leadership and workers of political opposition through imprisonments and lengthy litigation. If





the opposition gains enough strength and support then it overthrows the regime and takes the initiative of democratisation in its own hands. Third, governments and oppositions hold dialogues to reach a compromise. Thus, after some give and take transition to democracy takes place.<sup>46</sup> The third pattern was followed by stakeholders for the last democratic transition in Pakistan.

More or less every military dictatorship gives way to democracy when irresistible pressure is built by the democratic forces in the country and the junta is left with no other choice but accepting the demand for democratization. The same is the case of one party dictatorship. But personal dictatorships resist surrender to the demand of democratic forces, thus, paving way for replacement. Those dictators who resist the change are removed through force. They are either murdered like Ceausescu of Romania or exiled like Marcos of Philippines.<sup>47</sup>

Most of the scholars agree that democratic transition becomes difficult if a radical party leads a movement against an authoritarian regime. However, transition becomes comparatively easy in situations where moderate section of the opposition leads democratic movement. This is because the attitude of moderate element towards the sitting rulers often remains conciliatory. It is expected from the moderates that they would grant necessary safeguards to ruling junta in response to its acceptance of transition to democracy.

The extreme elements in the opposition frighten the rulers by adopting hawkish attitude towards the regime and its agents. They always talk of trials and punishments which compels the ruling elite to resist the change at all costs. In case hawks lead the democratic movement, then, the transition to democracy becomes impossible. They may be effective in organizing propaganda campaign against the regime but so far as transition to democracy is concerned they



are of little use. They fail to win supporters in the regime which is necessary for the democratic transition. The government forcefully resists their demands and ultimately crushes the movement.<sup>48</sup>

Myron Weiner, the writer who focuses exclusively on transitions involving military and military supported regimes, is of the view that ruling junta never trusts the leftist parties. Where democratic movement is led by the left parties the chances of change are minimal or very bleak. The pressure of the centre and of the right wing parties to democratise politics has generally proven to be a more potent force than pressure from left wing parties, which often brings an increased repression.<sup>49</sup> Pressure for political participation by the centre and the right tends to reassure the military that it would prevent the rise to power of radical forces. Transition to democratic rule is made possible by the presence of a centrist or conservative party in the alliance to which power could be transferred.<sup>50</sup>

Huntington observes that the reconciliatory policy of the moderate section of the opposition lures the regime to accept the demand for change. Peaceful transition takes place where both the government and the opposition behave sensibly by looking towards future forgetting the occurrences of the past.<sup>51</sup> The military gets assurance that if civilian rule is restored the military will not be prosecuted for crimes it committed during its stay in power. It also wants assurance that its budget will not be decimated by the civilian regime and she continues to have a decisive voice in determining the magnitude of military expenditures, the disposition of forces, control over internal promotions and the kind of military technology to be acquired from the country of its choice.<sup>52</sup>



Transition from military dictatorships is easier than transition from one party or personal dictatorships. Transition from one party or personal dictatorships may be permanent because once ousted from power they may never manage restoration to their former position. But transition from military dictatorships may be short-lived because military remains as strong as ever even after going out of power. Whenever the military smells any danger to its institutional or corporate interests, it, intervenes in politics by recapturing power through a coup d'état and taking reigns of government in its own hands.<sup>53</sup> The military rulers pretend that they have captured power for temporary period, but once out of barracks they are seldom in a hurry to return. Including Pakistan this has been a common practice in third world's developing countries. These countries have frequently gone through the experiences of reversals. Whenever there is backslide to authoritarianism the political parties form democratization coalitions and start their struggle for the restoration of democracy. The struggle for democratization, either short or lengthy, is always very tough and painful depending on situation and nature of authoritarianism.

The role of external actors and effectiveness of the strategy and unity of political alliances play a key role in the success. In the countries with previous democratic experience, the struggle for democratic transition may bear fruit sooner than the countries with no previous democratic experience. Bad economic performance and withdrawal of external support also weaken the authoritarian regimes and pave the way for success of the democratic movement launched by the alliance of political parties struggling for the restoration of democracy. In such circumstances the more the coalition united and compact the more the prospects of democratic transition.<sup>54</sup>

Weiner concludes that “the democratic forces that form coalitions and struggle for democratisation should mobilize large scale non-violent opposition to the regime, seek support



from the centre and, if necessary from the conservative right, restrain the left and keep them from dominating the agenda of the movement, woo section of the military, seek sympathetic coverage from the western media and press the US for support.” To him this has been the most successful winning strategy of political opposition working for democratisation.<sup>55</sup>

## **Conclusion**

Coalitions among political parties differ greatly in form and degree. Some are short-lived and unorganized while others are strongly organized and lasting. Organized and lasting coalitions may stay intact for quite long time preserving their unity in all circumstances. The unorganized coalitions disintegrate soon as a result of confusion and clash of interests between the allied parties. The homogenous alliance portrays itself as a durable and stable body while the heterogeneous one presents itself as a fragile and ephemeral entity.

Multiparty system, electoral regimes, authoritarianism and historical circumstances are major factors in coalition formation. The ruling and democratisation coalitions (in order to attain their objectives) are dominated by moderate parties while the pre-electoral and parliamentary coalitions of the opposition are dominated by the extreme parties. For smooth functioning of coalitions, party leaders set coordination mechanism. This mechanism plays a significant role in coalition management.

The politics of coalitions is generally a source of stability in some cases and a source of instability in others. It can be safely said that without alliances multi-party and multi-ethnic democratic states cannot manage. Thus, coalitions provide opportunities to all those, irrespective of their respective strengths, who cannot make it individually, to share power with others and play a constructive role in national politics of the country.

## End Notes

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20. Golder, *The Logic of Pre-Electoral Coalition Formation*, 7.
21. Kaare Strom, Ian Budge and Michael J. Laver, "Constraints on Cabinet Formation in Parliamentary Democracies," *Journal of Political Science*, Vol.38. (1994): 316.
22. Golder, *The Logic of Pre-Electoral Coalition Formation*, 6.
23. Kaare Strom and Wolfgang C. Muller, "Coalition Governance Institutions in Parliamentary Democracies," (Prepared for presentation in Workshop 13 "Designing Institutions" at the joint session of Workshops of the European Consortium for Political Research, Mannheim, March 26-31, 1999); available from <http://www.essex.ac.uk/ecpr/events/jointsessions/paperarchive/mannheim/w13/strom.pdf>; accessed 12 June 2016.
24. Duverger, *Political Parties*, 333.
25. Ibid.
26. Jean-Louis Thiebault, "France: Forming and Maintaining Coalitions in the Fifth Republic," in *Coalition Governments in Western Europe* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003), 501.
27. Wolfgang C. Muller and Kaare Strom eds., *Coalition Governments in Western Europe* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003), 561.
28. Lanny W. Martin and Randolph T. Stevenson, "Government Formation in Parliamentary Democracies," *American Journal of Political Science*, Vol. 45, No. 1 (Jan., 2001): 35.
29. Duverger, *Political Parties*, 342.



30. Strom and Muller, "Coalition Governance."

31. Karume, "Conceptual understanding of Political Coalitions."

32. Duverger, *Political Parties*, 346-47.

33. Maurice Duverger, *Party Politics and Pressure Groups*, Trans. Robert Wagoner (Islamabad: National Book Foundation, 2000), 87.

34. Arthur Lupia and Kaare Strom, "Coalition Governance Theory: Bargaining, Electoral Connection and the Shadow of the Future."

35. Duverger, *Political Parties*, 346-47.

36. Duverger, *Party Politics*, 85. Coalition theories based on size and ideology emerged in the 1960s and 1970s. They are also called office driven and policy oriented theories. The former are based on the assumption that the main goal of political parties is to access power while the latter are based on the assumption that party coalitions are justified by policy goals. William Gamson (1961), William Riker (1962) and Michael Leiserson (1968) developed office seeking theories and Robert Axelrod (1970) and Abram De Swaan (1973) developed the policy oriented theories. Denis Kadima ed., *The Politics of Party Coalitions in Africa* (Auckland Park: EISA, 2006)

37. Muller and Strom, *Coalition Governments*, 562.

38. Tatu Nananen, *Prospects of Democracy* (London and New York: Routledge, 1997), 11.

39. R.J. Rummel, "Democratization" (Online article); available from <<https://www.hawaii.edu/powerkills/DEMOC.HTM>>; accessed 05 July 2016. India and Pakistan remained a British colony for almost two hundred years. Gradually democratic reforms were introduced by the British Government. With the grant of independence they became full fledged democracies in 1947.

40. In almost every colony the nationalist parties struggled for independence that in other words was a quest for democratization. The better path leading to independence was going through democratic and peaceful struggle. In British India the nationalist democratic forces continued their struggle for democratization that ultimately led to independence. After independence when dictatorships were imposed in the country on one pretext or the other the political parties following the pattern they had adopted during their struggle against their colonial masters forged alliances against authoritarian regimes for restoration of democracy. (Huntington, "How Countries Democratize," 590 and 602-03)

41. Jay Ulfelder and Mike Lustik, "Modeling Transition to and from Democracy" (Prepared for delivery at the 2005 Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association, September 1-4, 2005); available from <<http://globalpolicy.gmu.edu/documents/PITF/PITFmodeltrans.pdf>>; accessed 20 June 2016.



42. Some well known works are: Samuel P. Huntington, "How Countries Democratize," *Political Science Quarterly*, Vol. 106, No. 4 (Winter, 1991-92); Donald Share, "Transition to Democracy and Transition through Transaction," *Comparative Political Studies*, Vol. 19, No. 4 (January, 1987); Mayron Weiner, "Empirical Democratic Theory and the Transition from Authoritarianism to Democracy," *PS*, Vol. 20, No. 4 (Autumn, 1987); Jay Ulfelder and Mike Lustik, "Modeling Transition to and from Democracy," (Prepared for delivery at the Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association, September 1-4, 2005).

43. Huntington, "How Countries Democratize," *Political Science Quarterly*, Vol. 106, No. 4. (Winter, 1991-92): 608.

44. Robert Pinkney, *Democracy in the Third World*, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition (New Delhi: Viva Books Private Limited, 2004), 156-58.

45. *Ibid.*, 159.

46. Huntington, "How Countries Democratize," 590.

47. *Ibid.*, 602-04. See also Donald Share, "Transition to Democracy and Transition through Transaction," *Comparative Political Studies*, Vol. 19, No. 4. (January, 1987): 530. Huntington uses the term transformation for the process initiated by ruling elites from above and transplacement for the process that is the outcome of mutual agreement between the rulers and the opposition while Donald Share uses the term transition through transaction for democratization through dialogue and transition through rupture for transition attained through replacement of the authoritarian regime. Huntington, "How Countries Democratize," 588-90.

48. *Ibid.*, 615-16.

49. Mayron Weiner, "Empirical Democratic Theory and the Transition from Authoritarianism to Democracy," *PS*, Vol. 20, No. 4. (Autumn, 1987): 864.

50. *Ibid.*, 865.

51. Huntington, "How Countries Democratize," 615.

52. Weiner, "Empirical Democratic Theory," 865.

53. *Ibid.* p. 864. Acemoglu, Ticchi and Vindigni in the theory of military dictatorship say that if democracy inherits a large military from the previous non-democratic or colonial regime, then it will be confronted with a choice between making concessions to military and facing a coup threat. The democratic forces always wish to prevent coups but this may not be possible. The soldiers realize that when opportunity arises democracy will reform the military reducing their rents. This fear compels soldiers not to allow democracy to consolidate. At an opportune time they replace it with military dictatorship. This theory perfectly fits the Pakistani case. (Daron Acemoglu, Davide Ticchi and Andrea Vindigni, "A Theory of Military Dictatorships," *American Economic Journal: Macroeconomics*, Vol. 2, No. 1 (2010): 1-42.





54. Jay Ulfelder and Mike Lustik, “Modeling Transition to and from Democracy.”
55. Weiner, “Empirical Democratic Theory,” 866.