

Role Of Muslim Political Parties A Case Study In India

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Abstract: - Political scientists are much sought after these days because of the changing landscape of politics across the world and since the society wants to understand how the political world works, they need someone to explain the nuances of the political economy. Any casual perusal of the newspapers and the television channels reveals that political scientists are at the forefront of debates and discussions for their knowledge and expertise. A political party is a group of voters organized to support certain public policies. The aim of a political party is to elect officials who will try to carry out the party's policies. A political party offers candidates for public office. It sets out positions on issues that may range from war and taxes to how children should be educated. When people in a democracy disagree about what the government should do, voters express their opinions by voting for the candidates that most closely reflect their views. Political parties provide a way for voters to easily identify a candidate's positions. Political parties may be large or small, national or local. Large political parties generally have millions of members and supporters. In democratic election campaigns, parties compete freely for votes. Such competition is one of the hallmarks of democracy. This article study on role of Political parties (1) select candidates, (2) mobilize voters, (3) facilitate governance, and (4) monitor the opposing party when it's in power.

Key words: *Political science, Political parties and Muslim religion*

I. INTRODUCTION

Islam (Muslim) is the second largest religion in India, with 14.2% of the country's population or roughly 172 million people identifying as adherents (2011 census). Islam first came to the western coast of India with Arab traders as early as the 7th century AD to coastal Malabar and the Konkan-Gujarat. Cheraman Juma Masjid in Kerala is thought to be the first mosque in India, built in 629 AD by Malik Ibn Dinar. Following an expedition from the governor of Bahrain to Bharuch in the 7th century AD, immigrant Arab and Persian trading communities from South Arabia and the Persian Gulf began settling in coastal Gujarat. Dawoodi Bohra Ismaili Shia was established in Gujarat in the second half of the 11th century with act of Fatimid Imam Mustansir sending missionaries to Gujarat in 467 AH/1073 AD. Islam arrived in North India in the 12th century with Turkic invasions and has since become a part of India's religious and cultural heritage. Over the centuries, there has been significant integration of Hindu and Muslim cultures across India and the Muslims have played a prominent role in India's economic rise and cultural influence.

The contribution of Muslim revolutionaries, poets and writers is documented in the struggle for independence. Titu Mir raised a revolt against British. Abul Kalam Azad, Hakim Ajmal Khan and Rafi Ahmed Kidwai are Muslims who engaged in this purpose. Muhammad Ashfaq Ullah Khan of Shahjehanpur conspired to loot the British treasury at Kakori (Lucknow). Khan Abdul Gaffar Khan (popularly known as Frontier Gandhi), was a noted nationalist who spent 45 of his 95 years of life in jail; Barakatullah of Bhopal was one of the founders of the *Ghadar party* which created a network of anti-British organisations; Syed Rahmat Shah of the Ghadar party worked as an underground revolutionary in France and was hanged for his part in the unsuccessful Ghadar (mutiny) uprising in 1915; Ali Ahmad Siddiqui of Faizabad (UP) planned the Indian Mutiny in Malaya and Burma along with Syed Mujtaba Hussain of Jaunpur and was hanged in 1917; Vakkom Abdul Khadir of Kerala participated in the "Quit India" struggle in 1942 and was hanged; Umar Subhani, an industrialist and millionaire of Bombay provided Gandhi with congress expenses and ultimately died for the cause of independence. Among Muslim women, Hazrat Mahal, Asghari Begum, Bi Amma contributed in the struggle for independence from the British. Maulana Azad was a prominent leader of the Indian independence movement and a strong advocate of Hindu-Muslim unity. Shown here is Azad (left) with Sardar Patel and Mahatma Gandhi in 1940. The first ever Indian rebellion against the British saw itself in the Vellore Mutiny of 10 July 1806 which left around 200 British Officers and troops dead or injured. But it was subdued by the British and the mutineers and the family of Tipu Sultan who were incarcerated in the Vellore Fort at that time had to pay a heavy price. It predates the Indian Rebellion of 1857. And as a result of the Sepoy Mutiny,

mostly the upper class Muslim rebels were targeted by the Britishers, as under their leadership the war was mostly fought in and around Delhi. Thousands of kith and kins were shot or hanged near the gate of Red Fort, Delhi, which is now known as 'Khooni Darwaza'(the bloody gate). The renowned Urdu poet Mirza Ghalib(1797–1869) has given a vivid description of such executions in his letters now published by the Oxford University Press 'Ghalib his life and letters'compiled and translated by Ralph Russel and Khurshidul Islam(1994).

As the Muslim power waned with the gradual demise of the Mughal Empire, the Muslims of India faced a new challenge – that of protecting their culture and interests, yet interacting with the alien, technologically advantaged power. In this period, the Ulama of Firangi Mahal, based first at Sehali in District Barabanki, and, since the 1690s, based in Lucknow, educated and guided the Muslims. The Firangi Mahal led and steered the Muslims of India.

Other famous Muslims who fought for independence against the British rule: Abul Kalam Azad, Mehmud Hasan of Darul Uloom Deoband who was implicated in the famous Silk Letter Conspiracy to overthrow the British through an armed struggle, Husain Ahmed Madani, former Shaikhul Hadith of Darul Uloom Deoband, Ubaidullah Sindhi, Hakeem Ajmal Khan, Hasrat Mohani, Syed Mahmud, Professor Maulavi Barkatullah, Zakir Husain, Saifuddin Kichlu, Vakkom Abdul Khadir, Manzoor Abdul Wahab, Bahadur Shah Zafar, Hakeem Nusrat Husain, Khan Abdul Gaffar Khan, Abdul Samad Khan Achakzai, Colonel Shahnawaz, M.A. Ansari, Rafi Ahmad Kidwai, Fakhruddin Ali Ahmad, Ansar Harwani, Tak Sherwani, Nawab Viqarul Mulk, Nawab Mohsinul Mulk, Mustsafa Husain, VM Ubaidullah, SR Rahim, Badaruddin Taiyabji, Abid Hasan and Moulvi Abdul Hamid.

Until 1920, Muhammad Ali Jinnah was a member of the Indian National Congress and was part of the independence struggle. Allama Muhammad Iqbal, poet and philosopher, was a strong proponent of Hindu–Muslim unity and an undivided India perhaps until 1930. Huseyn Shaheed Suhrawardy was also active in the Indian National Congress in Bengal during his early political career. Muhammad Ali Jauhar and Shaukat Ali struggled for the emancipation of the Muslims in the overall Indian context, and struggled for independence alongside Mahatma Gandhi and Abdul Bari of Firangi Mahal. Until the 1930s, the Muslims of India broadly conducted their politics alongside their countrymen, in the overall context of an undivided India.

Political party is a group of dedicated people who come together to win elections, operate the government, and determine public policy. So, you can see that this is anything but the fun type of 'party' that we usually think of when we hear the word.

Political parties also actively try to gather volunteers to help register voters as well as organize and run the election day voting. The hope is that the more people that are involved in helping with the election, the more interest there will be in the outcome, which should increase voter turnout. The ultimate goal is to get the person the party supports to win an election. While political parties do end up endorsing or supporting individual candidates, they do so because those people share very similar ideals and political positions of the entire party. Thus, another function of political parties is to present alternative policies to the electorate, called their political platform. A political platform is the ideals and positions a political party has. Thus, we often learn of the ideals a political party has from the members that support it.

When a member of a political party wins an elected position, they in essence take responsibility of running the government. This includes staffing positions with loyal party supporters and developing connections among other elected officials to gain support for policies and their implementation. For example, our current president, Barack Obama, who is a member of the Democratic Party, did this when he named his White House staff, Cabinet members, and other appointed officials.

The last function that a political party has is to put forth its own policies and oppose the winning party, when appropriate, if the party did not win an elected position. The purpose of this is to promote healthy debate so that the winning party remains fair in the policies that they promote. For example, if you were to apply for a promotion at a job and a co-worker ended up getting it over you, you would still hope that you would be listened to and valued in your current role even though you aren't the person in power.

II. MEANING

Political science is that branch of the social sciences that studies the state, politics, and government. Political Science deals extensively with the analysis of political systems, the theoretical and practical applications to politics, and the examination of political behavior. The Greek thinker, Aristotle, defined political science as the study of the state. Many political scientists view themselves as being engaged in fleshing out the connections between political events and conditions, and by this understanding they hope to construct a system of general principles that posit the way the world of politics works. Political science is not a standalone field and it intersects many other branches like sociology, economics, history, anthropology, public policy among others.

The term 'political party' isn't something where senators, representatives, and other political officials have fun all day. Instead, a political party is a group of dedicated people who come together to win elections, operate the government, and determine public policy. So, you can see that this is anything but the fun type of 'party' that we usually think of when we hear the word. Political parties also actively try to gather volunteers to help register voters as well as organize and run the election day voting. The hope is that the more people that are involved in helping with the election, the more interest there will be in the outcome, which should increase voter turnout. The ultimate goal is to get the person the party supports to win an election. While political parties do end up endorsing or supporting individual candidates, they do so because those people share very similar ideals and political positions of the entire party. Thus, another function of political parties is to present alternative policies to the electorate, called their political platform. A political platform is the ideals and positions a political party has. Thus, we often learn of the ideals a political party has from the members that support it.

III. DEFINATION

1678, a rumor spread through England that Roman Catholics were plotting to kill King Charles II and give the throne to Charles' brother, James, Duke of York (who was a Roman Catholic). There was no real Popish plot, but an alarmed Parliament barred all Roman Catholics from public office and tried to take away the Duke of York's right to inherit the throne. But to King Charles II, Parliament seemed to be challenging royal authority, and he struck back by dissolving Parliament. All over England people were either for or against the king's act. Those who urged the king to call a new Parliament were called Petitioners. Those who backed the king's deed were called Abhorers because they abhorred any attempt to control the king's actions. Before long the two factions took on other names. Petitioners were called Whigs. "Whig" was an old term for Scottish Presbyterians who opposed the government. The king's supporters were called Tories. "Tory" was originally a name given to Irish Roman Catholics who had suffered under Protestant rule. These old names took on new meanings. The basic difference between Whigs and Tories in the 1600s was their view of what government should do and how strong it should be. Tories wanted rule by a strong king. Whigs wanted ordinary people to have more rights and gain more control of their government. In time, as Parliament took greater control, the Whigs and Tories developed into organized parties.

The leaders of the American Revolution did not like the idea of parties and political battles between parties. Upon his retirement from public life in 1796, George Washington warned Americans against "Faction" (parties). James Madison thought parties were probably necessary, although he did not entirely approve of them. Alexander Hamilton thought that faction was a vice to be guarded against at all times. Thomas Jefferson declared in 1789, "If I could not go to heaven but with a party, I would not go there at all." Nevertheless, the men who held these views founded the first two great American political parties.

In some parts of South Asia, the Muslims are divided as Ashrafs and Ajlafs. Ashrafs claim a superior status derived from their foreign ancestry. The non-Ashrafs are assumed to be converts from Hinduism, and are therefore drawn from the indigenous population. They, in turn, are divided into a number of occupational castes. Sections of the ulema (scholars of Islamic jurisprudence) provide religious legitimacy to caste with the help of the concept of kafa'a. A classical example of scholarly declaration of the Muslim caste system is the *Fatawa-i Jahandari*, written by the fourteenth century Turkish scholar, Ziauddin Barani, a member of the court of Muhammad bin Tughlaq, of the Tughlaq dynasty of the Delhi Sultanate. Barani was known for his intensely casteist views, and regarded the Ashraf Muslims as racially superior to the Ajlaf Muslims. He divided the Muslims into grades and sub-grades. In his scheme, all high positions and privileges were to be a monopoly of the high-born Turks, not the Indian Muslims. Even in his interpretation of the Quranic verse "Indeed, the pious among you are most honored by Allah", he considered piety to be associated with noble birth. Barani was specific in his recommendation that the "sons of Mohamed" [i.e. Ashrafs] "be given a higher social status than the low-born [i.e. Ajlaf]. His most significant contribution in the fatwa was his analysis of the castes with respect to Islam. His assertion was that castes would be mandated through state laws or "Zawabi" and would carry precedence over Sharia law whenever they were in conflict. In the *Fatwa-i-Jahandari* (advice XXI), he wrote about the "qualities of the high-born" as being "virtuous" and the "low-born" being the "custodian of vices". Every act which is "contaminated with meanness and based on ignominy, comes elegantly [from the Ajlaf]". Barani had a clear disdain for the Ajlaf and strongly recommended that they be denied education, lest they usurp the Ashraf masters. He sought appropriate religious sanction to that effect. Barani also developed an elaborate system of promotion and demotion of imperial officers ("Wazirs") that was primarily on the basis of their caste. In addition to the ashraf/ajlaf divide, there is also the *arzal* caste among Muslims, who were regarded by anti-caste activists like Babasaheb Ambedkar as the equivalent of untouchables. The term "Arzal" stands for "degraded" and the Arzal castes are further subdivided into Bhanar, Halalkhor, Hijra, Kasbi, Lalbegi, Maugta, Mehtar etc. The Arzal group was recorded in the 1901 census of India and are also called Dalit Muslims "with whom no other Muhammadan would associate, and who are forbidden to enter the mosque or to use the public burial ground". They are relegated to "menial" professions such as scavenging and carrying night soil.

Some South Asian Muslims have been known to stratify their society according to *qaums*. These Muslims practise a ritual-based system of social stratification. The *qaums* that deal with human emissions are ranked the lowest. Studies of Bengali Muslims in India indicate that the concepts of purity and impurity exist among them and are applicable in inter-group relationships, as the notions of hygiene and cleanliness in a person are related to the person's social position and not to his/her economic status. Muslim Rajput is another caste distinction among Indian Muslims.

Some of the backward or lower-caste Muslim communities include Ansari, Kunjra, Churihara, Dhobi and Halalkhor. The upper and middle caste Muslim communities include Syed, Shaikh, Shaikhzada, Khanzada, Pathan, Mughal, and Malik. Genetic data has also supported this stratification. It should be noted that most of the claims for Arabic ancestry in India is flawed and points to Arabic preferences in local Sharia. Interestingly, in three genetic studies representing the whole of South Asian Muslims, it was found that the Muslim population was overwhelmingly similar to the local non-Muslims associated with minor but still detectable levels of gene flow from outside, primarily from Iran and Central Asia, rather than directly from the Arabian Peninsula.

The Sachar Committee's report commissioned by the government of India and released in 2006, documents the continued stratification in Muslim society.

The vast majority of the Muslims in India belong to Indian ethnic groups. However, some Indian Muslims were found with detectable, traceable, minor to some levels of gene flow from outside, primarily from the Middle East and Central Asia. However, they are found in very low levels. Sources indicate that the castes among Muslims developed as the result of the concept of *Kafa'a*. Those who are referred to as *Ashrafs* (see also Sharif) are presumed to have a superior status derived from their foreign Arab ancestry, while the *Ajlafs* are assumed to be converts from Hinduism, and have a lower status. Actual Muslim social practice, including in India, points to the existence of sharp social hierarchies that numerous Muslim scholars have sought to provide appropriate Islamic sanction through elaborate rules of *fiqh* associated with the notion of *kafa'a*. Most prominent Muslim scholars such as Maulana Ahmad Raza Khan Bareilvi and Maulana Ashraf Ali Thanvi have championed the notion of caste superiority based on birth. It is argued that Muslims of Arab origin (*Sayyeds* and *Shaikhs*) are superior to non-Arab or *Ajami* Muslims, and so while a man who claims Arab origin can marry an *Ajami* woman, the reverse is not possible. Likewise, they argue, a Pathan Muslim man can marry a *Julaha* (Ansari) *Mansuri* (Dhunia,) *Rayin* (Kunjra) or *Quraishi* (Qasai or butchers) woman, but an Ansari, Rayin, Mansuri and Quraishi man cannot marry a Pathan woman since they consider these castes to be inferior to Pathans.

Many of these *ulema* also believed that it is best to marry within one own caste. The practice of endogamous marriage in one's caste is strictly observed in India. In two of the three genetic studies referenced here, in which is described that samples were taken from several regions of India's Muslim communities, it was again found that the Muslim population was overwhelmingly similar to the local non-Muslims associated, with some having minor but still detectable levels of gene flow from outside, primarily from Iran and Central Asia, rather than directly from the Arabian peninsula.

IV. CRITICISM

Some Muslim scholars have termed the caste-like features in Indian Muslim society as a "flagrant violation of the Quranic worldview. However, most Muslim scholars tried to reconcile and resolve the "disjunction between Quranic egalitarianism and Indian Muslim social practice" through theorizing it in different ways and interpreting the Quran and Sharia to justify casteism.

While some scholars theorize that the Muslim castes are not as acute in their discrimination as that among Hindus, Dr. B.R. Ambedkar argued otherwise, writing that the social evils in Muslim society were "worse than those seen in Hindu society". Babasaheb Ambedkar was an illustrious figure in Indian politics and the chief architect of the Indian Constitution. He was extremely critical of the Muslim caste system and their practices, quoting "Within these groups there are castes with social precedence of exactly the same nature as one finds among the Hindus but worse in numerous ways". He was critical of how the *Ashrafs* regarded the *Ajlaf* and *Arzal* as "worthless" and the fact that Muslims tried to sugarcoat the sectarian divisions by using euphemisms like "brotherhood" to describe them. He was also critical of the precept of literalism of scripture among Indian Muslims that led them to keep the Muslim caste system rigid and discriminatory. He decried against the approval of Sharia to Muslim casteism. It was based on superiority of foreign elements in society which would ultimately lead to downfall of local Dalits. This tragedy would be much more harsher than Hindus who are ethnically related to and supportive of Dalits. This Arabian supremacy in Indian Muslims accounted for its equal disapproval by high and low caste Hindus during 1300 years of Islamic presence in India. He condemned the Indian Muslim community of being unable to reform like Muslims in other countries such as Turkey did during the early decades of the twentieth century.

V. PROMINENT MUSLIMS IN INDIA

India is home to many eminent Muslims who have made their mark in numerous fields and have played a constructive role in India's economic rise and cultural influence across the world. Out of the 12 Presidents of the Republic of India, three were Muslims – Zakir Hussain, Fakhruddin Ali Ahmed and A.P.J. Abdul Kalam. Additionally, Mohammad Hidayatullah, A. M. Ahmadi, Mirza Hameedullah Beg and Altamas Kabir held the office of the Chief Justice of India on various occasions since independence. Mohammad Hidayatullah also served as the acting President of India on two separate occasions; and holds the distinct honour of being the only person to have served in all three offices of the President of India, the Vice President of India and the Chief Justice of India. The current Vice President of India, Mohammad Hamid Ansari, Foreign Minister Salman Khurshid and Director (Head) of the Intelligence Bureau, Syed Asif Ibrahim are Muslims. Mr. Ibrahim is the first Muslim to hold this office. From 30 July 2010 to 10 June 2012, Dr. S. Y. Quraishi served as the Chief Election Commissioner of India. He was the first Muslim to serve in this position. Prominent Indian bureaucrats and diplomats include Abid Hussain, Ali Yavar Jung and Asaf Ali. Zafar Saifullah was Cabinet Secretary of the Government of India from 1993 to 1994. Salman Haidar was Indian Foreign Secretary from 1995 to 1997 and Deputy Permanent Representative of India to the United Nations. Influential Muslim politicians in India include Sheikh Abdullah, Farooq Abdullah and his son Omar Abdullah (the current Chief Minister of Jammu and Kashmir), Mufti Mohammad Sayeed, Sikander Bakht, A R Antulay, Ahmed Patel, C. H. Mohammed Koya, A.B.A. Ghani Khan Choudhury, Mukhtar Abbas Naqvi, Salman Khurshid, Saifuddin Soz, E. Ahamed, Ghulam Nabi Azad, Syed Shahnawaz Hussain and Asaduddin Owaisi. Numerous Muslims have achieved high rank in the Indian Police Service, with several attaining the rank of Director General of Police and serving as commanders of both state and Central Armed Police Forces. In 2013, IPS officer Syed Asif Ibrahim became the first Muslim Director of the Intelligence Bureau, the seniormost appointment in the service. Some of the most popular and influential actors and actresses of the Mumbai-based Bollywood film industry are Muslims. These include Yusuf Khan (stage name Dilip Kumar), Shahrukh Khan, Aamir Khan, Salman Khan, Saif Ali Khan, Madhubala, and Emraan Hashmi. India is also home to several critically acclaimed Muslim actors such as Naseeruddin Shah, Johnny Walker, Shabana Azmi, Waheeda Rehman, Amjad Khan, Parveen Babi, Feroz Khan, Meena Kumari, Prem Nazir, Mammooty, Nargis Dutt, Irfan Khan, Farida Jalal, Arshad Warsi, Mehmood, Zeenat Aman, Farooq Sheikh and Tabu. Some of the best known film directors of Indian cinema include Mehboob Khan, K. A. Abbas, Kamal Amrohi, K. Asif and the Abbas-Mustan duo. Indian Muslims also play pivotal roles in other forms of performing arts in India, particularly in music, modern art and theatre. M. F. Husain is one of India's best known contemporary artists. Academy Awardswinners Resul Pookutty and A. R. Rahman, Naushad Ali, Salim-Sulaiman and Nadeem Akhtar of the Nadeem-Shravan duo are some of India's celebrated musicians. Abrar Alvipenned many of the greatest classics of Indian cinema. Prominent poets and lyricists include Shakeel Badayuni, Sahir Ludhianvi and Majrooh Sultanpuri. Popular Indian singers of Muslim faith include Mohammed Rafi, Anu Malik, Lucky Ali, Talat Mahmood and Shamshad Begum. Another famous personality is the tabla maestro Zakir Hussain.

Sania Mirza, from Hyderabad, is the highest-ranked Indian woman tennis player. In cricket (the most popular sport of India), there are many Muslim players who have made strong and significant impacts. Iftikhar Ali Khan Pataudi, Mansoor Ali Khan Pataudi and Mohammad Azharuddin captained the Indian cricket team on various occasions. Other prominent Muslim cricketers in India are Mushtaq Ali, Syed Kirmani, Arshad Ayub, Mohammad Kaif, Munaf Patel, Zaheer Khan, Irfan Pathan, Yusuf Pathan and Wasim Jaffer.

Active Muslim political parties

- All India Majlis-e-Ittehadul Muslimeen (AIMIM), led by Asaduddin Owaisi active in states of Telangana, Maharashtra and Karnataka.
- Indian Union Muslim League (IUMN), led by E. Ahamed active in Kerala.
- All India United Democratic Front (AIUDF), led by Badruddin Ajmal active in Assam state.

Active Muslim-majority political parties

- National Conference (NC) main party of Jammu and Kashmir state.
- Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) main party of Jammu and Kashmir state.

Conversion controversy

Considerable controversy exists both in scholarly and public opinion about the conversions to Islam typically represented by the following schools of thought:

- The bulk of Muslims are descendants of migrants from the Iranian plateau or Arabs.
- Conversions occurred for non-religious reasons of pragmatism and patronage such as social mobility among the Muslim ruling elite or for relief from taxes
- Conversion was a result of the actions of Sunni Sufi saints and involved a genuine change of heart.

VI. DATA ANALYSIS

Table 1 Muslim populations: 2011 Census

State	Population	Muslims	% Muslims
India	1,210,854,977	172,245,158	14.2%
Karnataka	61,130,704	7,885,861	12.9%

(Sources: Annual Report of 2011 Census)

Note: Table 1 population in India is 121 cores out of which 1.72 cores is muslin communities .in Karnataka population is 6.11 cores out of which 78 lacks muslin communities .

Table 2 Muslim population growth in India

Year	Total population	Muslim population	Percentage
1951	361,088,090	35,856,047	9.93%
1961	439,234,771	46,998,120	10.70%
1971	548,159,652	61,448,696	11.21%
1981*	683,329,097	77,557,852	11.35%
1991**	846,427,039	102,586,957	12.12%
2001	1,028,737,436	138,159,437	13.43%
2011***	1,210,726,932	180,008,000*	14.88%

(Sources: Annual report on censuses 2011)Note:

- 1981 Census: * Parts of Assam were not included in the 1981 Census Data due to violence in some districts.
- 1991 Census: ** Jammu and Kashmir was not included in the 1991 Census Data due to militant activity in the state.
- 2011 Census: *** Estimated populations of Muslims in India as religious demographics have still not been released by government of India.

VII. MUSLIMS IN GOVERNMENT

India has seen three Muslim presidents and many chief ministers of State Governments have been Muslims. Apart from that, there are and have been many Muslim ministers, both at the centre and at the state level. Out of the 12 Presidents of the Republic of India, three were Muslims – Zakir Hussain, Fakhruddin Ali Ahmed and A.P.J. Abdul Kalam. Additionally, Mohammad Hidayatullah, A. M. Ahmadi, Mirza Hameedullah Beg and Altamas Kabir held the office of the Chief Justice of India on various occasions since independence. Mohammad Hidayatullah also served as the acting President of India on two separate occasions; and holds the distinct honour of being the only person to have served in all three offices of the President of India, the Vice President of India and the Chief Justice of India.

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Majlis-e-Islah-o-Tanzeem, an NGO which represents a majority of Muslims in the Bhatkal assembly constituency, has not yet decided whom to support in the general elections. With their population numbering in excess of 48,000 in the constituency and in excess of 2.5 lakh in Uttara Kannada, they represent a substantial chunk and can make or mar the prospects of a candidate. The Tanzeem was expected to support Shivanand Naik, JD(S) candidate for the Uttara Kannada Lok Sabha constituency. But the former minister did a volte face at the last minute and withdrew his nomination and announced his support for BJP candidate Anant Kumar Hegde. KM Muzammil, president of Tanzeem, told TOI, "We have not taken a decision yet. We have been consulting all jamaths in and outside Bhatkal. We should be able to take a decision in a couple of days." When we want to publicly announce our support for a political party we take opinion across board," he added. When asked if they have a choice with Naik withdrawing his nomination, Muzammil said, "Choice is always there. Of course, we don't generally support BJP because of their ideology. There are independents and others. We have a lot of choice."

VIII. ROLE OF POLITICAL PARTIES

Political parties (1) select candidates, (2) mobilize voters, (3) facilitate governance, and (4) monitor the opposing party when it's in power

1. **Select Candidates:** Political parties nominate candidates for political office. They narrow the field from a multitude of wannabes to a manageable few credible candidates. This simplifies the voters' role and brings a certain order to what could be a chaotic electoral process.
2. **Mobilize Voters:** Political parties inform and energize their members. They send out brochures, run media campaigns, knock on doors, and call voters on the phone. Individual candidates can do the same thing, but parties maintain elaborate networks of state and local offices that can be immediately pressed into the service of a candidate once the party nomination is secured. In addition, parties have fundraising apparatuses in place that simplify their candidates' ability to finance their campaigns.
3. **Facilitate Governance:** Parties also bring order to the process of policymaking. As party members, individual politicians have a ready-made group of allies that will usually cooperate with their efforts to pass and implement legislation. At the national level, this means that a rookie Congressperson arrives with a network of allies that will support his efforts and that he must support in turn. In addition, party alliances close the gap between the legislative and executive branches. While separated by the Constitution, the existence of political parties narrows the distance between the branches and helps them work together.
4. **Monitor the Opposing Party in Power:** Parties also serve as critical watchdogs for the public. The adversarial relationship between the major parties ensures that the party out of power (not in possession of the presidency) will keep a close eye on its opponent and notify the public of any wrongdoing or policy misstep.

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