Journal of Advances and Scholarly Researches in Allied Education
Vol. 16, Issue No. 1, January-2019, ISSN 2230-7540

Critically Analyses the Main Features of Anti – Defection Law

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Abstract – The Anti-Defection Law was gone in 1985 through the 52nd Amendment to the Constitution, which added the Tenth Schedule to the Indian Constitution. The principle purpose of the law was to battle "the fiendishness of political defections". There are a few issues in connection to the working of this law which should be examined. he aim of this law is to guarantee political solidness and keep administrators from being paid off to abscond and enjoy floor crossing. While the law was presented when defections were widespread and required stringent measures to avert it, it has forced an irrational limitation on dissent, debate and opportunity to vote. As the law gets more seasoned and more seasoned, we find that with the corruption pervasive among politicians and given their untrustworthy tactics, they have had the option to exploit escape clauses in the law to suit their own needs. This is the motivation behind why the law has not had the option to accomplish as well as can be expected. The present article attempts to dig into the escape clauses, which render the 52nd Amendment Act fairly unacceptable and ineffective.

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I. INTRODUCTION

The first Constitution of India had no notice of political parties. In any case, as far back as the multiparty framework developed, the Indian parliamentary framework has seen defections in huge numbers starting with one political party then onto the next, coming about nearly in the breakdown of open trust in a democratic form of government. Defection is characterized as "renunciation by one individual from the party of his dedication towards his political party, his obligation towards his party or to his pioneer". The practice of changing political sides to get office was famously known as Horse-Trading. There was uncontrolled pony exchanging and corruption common among the political pioneers and political parties. One such occurrence that left a blemish on India's political history happened after the 1967 elections when around 142 MPs and 1900 MLAs exchanged their political parties. So as to control such a practice and the subsequent results, the Rajiv Gandhi Government in 1985 presented anti-defection laws in the Indian Constitution.

India is surrounding about three many years of having an anti-defection law in power. Embedded in the Constitution of India by method for the 52nd Amendment in 1985, the concerned law is cherished in the Tenth ('Schedule X'). India was impelled to present this law in the wake of seeing the same number of defections in a single year as it had in the four Lok Sabhas going before it. The amendment was proposed to convey security to the structure of political parties and fortify parliamentary practice by prohibiting floor-crossing. The earlier inability to manage this issue had lead to widespread pony exchanging and corruption in every day parliamentary working. Schedule X was subsequently observed as an instrument to fix this discomfort. The import of this constitutional measure implied that once a part was chosen under the symbol of a political party to Parliament, the part couldn't later select to leave that party or change to another party. Independent members of Parliament then again would be subject after moving to the folds of a political party ensuing to the election.

Despite the fact that in a welfare-state like India, the means taken by the Indian Legislature so as to execute the Anti-defection Law are without a doubt reflected as the instruments ensuring and protracting the fundamental structure of the Indian Constitution; with taking a break the topic of viability of the said law becomes more intense and more intense in the event that we put the focus on the contemporary political domain. Notwithstanding being more grounded, Anti-defection Law is continually producing an enormous disarray coming about to the formation of numerous issues. Along these lines, regardless of whether the said law is acting as a demise ring of Parliamentary disharmony or whether there is a need of more grounded Anti-defection Law is still past any defense.

II. HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT

The political show of 'defection' has been prominent since the fourth and fifth Lok Sabha Elections i.e., amid the time of 1967 to 1972 where India confronted roughly 2000 defection cases among the

4000 members of the Lower House and the State Legislative Assemblies too. The circumstance went outside the ability to control of the Parliament when, half of the members of Lok Sabha rearranged between parties more than once. Among the members, one of them was recognized to submit the act of defection just to be a Minister for a constrained time of five days in March, 1971. It was gathered from the insights that typically in every day more than one part was slipping away and in every month in any event a couple of State Governments pulverizing on account of the disease spread by defection. Indeed, even 50.5% of the officials of the State Assemblies itself moved their political parties so as to member with another party. It tends to be seen that the level of defection would increment bit by bit if the States were likewise partaken in the show where the Political Scenario just as Governments would be more grounded than others and the defection cases would cause seldom. The fact that 116 out of the all out number of 210 surrendered lawmakers of the States were delegated in the Councils of Ministers gives the enough proof that the draw of the Government contributed a fundamental job in the political floor-crossing. This noxious condition progressed toward becoming as an issue of worry for the Lok Sabha on account of which on December 8, 1967 a non-official proposition in regards to the formation of an abnormal state board of trustees was endorsed. Thusly, in March, 1968 under the authority of Y.B. Chavan, the then Home Minister, a High Committee of the political parties' delegates and the specialists was set up so as to settle the contest of regular political pony exchanging by making a few suggestions. On 21st March, 1968, while informing about the consolidation of Chavan Committee to the Lok Sabha, Y.B. Chavan referenced defection as a 'national ailment' jeopardizing vote based system of Indian Citizen4 . In spite of the fact that the idea to set up such a board of trustees on defection involved gratefulness, yet in domain a few approachs received by this advisory group for avoidance of this bad habit of defection neglected to demonstrate its viability. Subsequent to considering the majority of the endeavors being useless, on sixteenth May, 1973, a Constitution Amendment Bill alluding a Joint Committee for both the Lower and Upper houses was presented by the Government of India in the Lok Sabha itself. In any case, the humorous fact is that before beginning the arrangements and dialogs of the Joint Committee, the Lok Sabha got disbanded and subsequently the bill was slipped by. The show headed towards a diverting state when another bill was presented on the ground of defection. In the wake of leading consultations, the movement for the Bill was held by the decision and resistance groups just as different members of the Lower House. Be that as it may, the dramatization achieved a peak after Rajiv Gandhi getting the situation of Prime Minister with a pounding dominant part vote in the general election directed in the long stretch of December, 1984, where the Congress possessed 401 seats in the Lower House. Worried about this political issue, the then Government imagined to present a Bill for changing over the nation into sans defection and as needs be on seventeenth January, 1985 before both the Parliament Houses and President of India the 52nd Amendment to the Constitution including the said Anti-Defection Bill was passed. Notwithstanding having the anti-defection law, as the time went on, the defection ended up more grounded because of which the interest of erasing the Schedule X has developed step by step and subsequently the 91st Amendment occurred in 2003.

III. PROVISIONS UNDER THE CONSTITUTION

The Tenth Schedule to the Constitution, prominently known as the Anti-Defection Law, presented by the Constitution (Fifty-second Amendment) Act, 1985 as changed by the Constitution (Ninety-First Amendment) Act, 2003 sets out the conditions with respect to preclusion, on ground of defection. The primary arrangements of the Tenth Schedule are abridged underneath:

i. A chosen individual from Parliament or a State Legislature, who has been chosen as a hopeful set up by a political party and an assigned individual from Parliament or a State Legislature who is an individual from political party at the time he sits down would be excluded on the ground of defection in the event that he intentionally surrenders his membership of such political party or votes or keeps away from casting a ballot in the House in opposition to any course of such party.

ii. An independent individual from Parliament or a State Legislature will likewise be excluded on the off chance that he joins any political party after his election.

iii. An assigned individual from Parliament or a State Legislature who isn't an individual from a political party at the season of his selection and who has not turned into an individual from any political party before the expiry of a half year from the date on which he sits down will be excluded on the off chance that he joins any political party after the expiry of the said time of a half

iv. Provisions have been made regarding mergers of political parties. No exclusion would be caused when a legislature party chooses to converge with another party and such choice is upheld by at least 66% of its members.

v. Special arrangement has been made to empower an individual who has been chosen to the workplace of the Speaker or the Deputy Speaker of the House of People

or of the Legislative Assembly of a State or to the workplace of the Deputy Chairman of the Council of States or the Chairman or the Deputy Chairman of Legislative Council of a State, to separate his associations with his political party without bringing about preclusions.

vi. The inquiry about whether an individual from a House of Parliament or State Legislature has turned out to be liable to the preclusion will be controlled by the managing officer of the House; where the inquiry is with reference to the directing officer himself it will be chosen by an individual from the House chosen by the House for that benefit.

vii. The Chairman or the Speaker of a House has been enabled to make rules for offering impact to the arrangements of the Tenth Schedule. The guidelines will be laid before the House and will be liable to changes/dissatisfaction by the House.

viii. Without preference to the ments of Article 105 or all things considered, Article 194 or some other power they may have under the Constitution, the Chairmen or the Speaker of a House has been engaged to coordinate that any unyielding repudiation by any individual of the standards made under passage 8 of the Tenth Schedule might be managed in a similar way as a rupture of benefit of the House.

IV. MERITS AND DEMERITS OF THE LAW

Merits

Like each other law, anti-defection laws also accompany their very own benefits and negative marks. Taking a gander at the positive side, the law goes for giving steadiness to the Government by rebuffing members if there should arise an occurrence of any party moves on their parts. Additionally, anti-defection laws endeavor to realize a feeling of faithfulness of the members towards their own party. This it attempts to accomplish by guaranteeing that the members chose for the sake of the party and its help just as the party pronouncement stay faithful to the political party of which he is a part and its arrangements. Some particular benefits are:-

i. As a shield acting for the benefit of the constitutional instrument in our nation the law acts a scratch on the individuals who intend to make an alliance government, only for their very own desire for power.

ii. It likewise causes democratic parties to converge with one another for more note worthy's benefit of the general population whom they speak to toward the day's end. It additionally advances political morals by excluding degenerate applicants who move parties only for their very own increase. Anti-defection law ensures political morals by excluding such degenerate politicians.

Demerits

Going to the drawbacks, anti-defection laws will in general limit the right to speak freely and articulation of the members by keeping them from communicating any dissenting feeling in connection to party approaches. Notwithstanding, it has been held in different decisions that the right to speak freely given under Article 105 and 194 isn't supreme. It is liable to the arrangements of the Constitution, the Tenth Schedule being one of them. Another negative mark of the law is that it decreases the responsibility of the government to the Parliament and to the general population by averting the members of the political parties to change their parties.

Regardless of being treated as a political eraser, it has a few provisos and in this manner it isn't idiot proof.

i. It neglects to recognize the idea of dissent and defection by constraining the extent of the Parliamentarians' benefit to dissent, which makes a severe request in the party comparable to tyranny in the party to keep the herd together as opposed to keeping up party morals. It adds up to the break of Parliamentary benefit if a part inside the House can't opine against the party whip.

ii. It additionally permits certain qualification and inclination between an independent and designated part, in light of being the former one, he is precluded on joining a party while the last isn't.

iii. Also not to overlook this law stays quiet when an administrator gets engaged with corruption outside the domain of legislature.

iv. This issue in regards to the inconvenience of basic leadership control on the managing officer can likewise be condemned on the ground that he may abuse this power on the directing officer can likewise be censured on the ground that he may abuse his capacity because of the constrained lawful information and contribution in corruption.

V. LOOPHOLES IN THE LAW

- **Wide power to the Speaker**

As is clear from Rule 6 of the Tenth Schedule, the Chairman or the Speaker of the House is given wide and supreme power in choosing the cases pertaining to preclusion of members on the ground of defection. However, it must be noticed that the Speaker still remains the member of the party which designated him/her for the post of Speaker. In such a scenario, it is hard to expect that the Speaker will act impartially in cases pertaining to his/her political party. Mr. K.P. Unnikrishnan, a member of Congress party in the Lok Sabha, said that "by making the Speaker the sole repository of all judgment, you are enabling him to play destruction". An answer for the problem could be that the power to choose such cases be given to High Court, Supreme Court or the Election Commission. Be that as it may, taking a gander at the current overabundance of cases pending in the courts and the controversies surrounding the Commission, the arrangement is by all accounts indefensible.

Another criticism against the Speaker is that he may come up short on the lawful information and expertise to mediate upon these sorts of matters. In fact, two Speakers of the Lok Sabha, one being Mr. Rabi Ray in 1991 and another being Mr. Shivraj Patil in 1993 have themselves expressed questions on their reasonableness to mediate upon the cases related to defections.

- **Scope of judicial review**

Rule 7 bars the jurisdiction of the courts in respect of any matter associated with exclusion of a member of a House, which implies that it is outside the jurisdiction of all courts including the Supreme Court under Article 136 and High Courts under Article 226 and 227 of the Constitution to review the choices made by the Speaker in this regard. This can have terrible outcomes in the light of troubles enumerated previously. The legislature in a manner tried to restrict the power of judiciary provided under the Constitution, which isn't viable. In Keshavananda Bharati and Others v. State of Kerala and Another, judicial review was held to be an essential feature of the Constitution and the Constitution can't be changed in order to disregard its fundamental structure. However, it has been held in Ravi S Naik v. Association of India, 17 that the rules relating to anti defection laws are merely procedural in nature and any violation of these, being a procedural irregularity, was insusceptible from judicial scrutiny.

However, it is pertinent to take note of that despite the fact that there have been several judicial pronouncements favoring the power of judicial review by the Courts; no amendment has been made in the Tenth Schedule in this regard.

- **No individual remain on part of members**

On a careful investigation of various provisions of the law, and particularly Rule 2, it very well may be seen that the anti-defection law puts the party members into a bracket of dutifulness to the party whip and strategies, curbing the legislator's freedom to contradict the wrong acts of the party, terrible approaches, leaders and bills. The political party in this sense acts as dictator for its members who are not permitted to dissent. This, as it were, damages the principle of representative democracy wherein the members are forced to comply with the central leadership. In a well-settled representative democratic environment, the desires of the general population of the electorate are dealt with rather than working on the instructions and wishes of the party leaders and as per its approaches. With the increased power being given to party whip, the members are not permitted to vote on any issue independently whether they are a part of party declaration or not. The law will in general blur the fine qualification between disobedience on part of members and defection of the members prompting their preclusion. With this absence of uniqueness with respect to party members, the anti-defection laws have neglected to accomplish the desired results.

- **What adds up to 'voluntarily surrendering'**

Rule 2(1)(a) of the Tenth Schedule specifies that the member of the House is excluded from the party on the off chance that he voluntarily surrenders his membership of the political party however the Schedule does not clarify what "voluntarily surrendering" signifies. Does it just cover resignation of the member from the party or does it have a wider importance than that? This inquiry arose before the Supreme Court in Ravi Naik v. Association of India23 and the Court while interpreting the phrase held that it has a wider meaning and can likewise be inferred from the lead of the members. The words 'voluntarily surrenders his membership' were not held synonymous with 'resignation'. It was held that a person may voluntarily surrender his membership of a political party even without tendering his resignation from the membership of that party.

- **Problem with merger provision**

While Rule 4 of the Tenth Schedule appears to provide some special case from preclusion of members in the cases relating to mergers, there is by all accounts some proviso in the law. The provision will in general safeguard the members of a political party where the original political party merges with another party subject to the condition that at least two-third of the members of the legislature party concerned has agreed to such merger. The flaw is by all accounts that the special case depends on the number of members rather

than the reason behind the defection. The basic reasons for defection of individual members are by all accounts accessibility of lucrative office or ministerial posts with the other party. It can very well be normal that the very same reason may be accessible with those two-third members who have agreed to the merger. In the event that defection by an individual member isn't satisfactory, it is very much hard to assert that the equivalent would be legitimate if there should be an occurrence of mergers simply because a large number of individuals are included. This will in general undermine the democracy of the country and accordingly the provision is by all accounts flawed. The provision could have been more valuable on the off chance that it had contemplated the real reason for merger rather than the number of members included.

VI. CONCLUSION

Ever since the death of the Anti-defection law in 1985, it has been the rationale of the legislature to curb the number of defections occurring, by putting the party members under the strict supervision of rules and regulations. Be that as it may, the inquiry arose regarding the accomplishment of party faithfulness is a veracity which was originated from the demerits found by the experts, which endangers the Indian Polity rather than setting it. On one hand it ensures political morals and then again it the principles of the parliamentary privileges and democracy gets infringed because of the usage of the said law. In any case, the current scenario assumes a major role to increase the rampant instances of defection, which creates a haphazard political order in the present scenario. Therefore, the unsettled issue of the debate progresses toward becoming, whether it is the dissent or the defection, which is more satisfactory? Or following the voters' will against the directions of the party whip, which ought to be given more esteem?

There exist other drawbacks and flaws in the current anti-defection law yet the scope of the article has been restricted to dissent and freedom of casting a ballot and expression. One of the genuinely necessary reforms is to revise the Tenth Schedule to incorporate the progressions made to anti-defection law by the Supreme Court in decisions like Kihoto Hollohan. Paragraph 2 must be revised to restrict the power of the party to issue directions just regarding money related bills and certainty movements. There should be a Parliamentary Committee set up which oversees dissents with the goal that legislators who mean to dissent from the party's view pull out well ahead of time regarding aim to dissent and reasons for it to the Committee.

An end must be put to the emergence and flourishing of leadership of political parties as extra constitutional authorities who manage terms and choose how a legislator should vote and express himself. Amendment to the Tenth Schedule is required for the previously mentioned reasons as well as removes peculiarities which exist regarding interpretation of certain terms, impact of ejection of a legislator by a political party, and so on. With these reforms, the Parliament and legislatures will to a large degree reflect certain basic components of democracy which incorporate sound debate and dissent.

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7. Committee of Defections as cited in Kihoto Hollohan, supra note 1, 6: “Compared to roughly 542 cases in the entire period between the First and Fourth General Election, at least 438 defections occurred in these 12 months alone.”

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