The Staccato Of Aam Aadmi Party (Aap) In 2020: An Analytical Study Of Its Hat-Trick

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ABSTRACT

The landslide victory, for the third time, of a just born Aam Aadmi party (AAP) in the capital of India (Delhi Assembly Elections - 2020) opened the door for a new era of politics. Rejecting the divisive and hate politics, the people of Delhi gave their mandate in favor of Aam Aadmi Party. Staking the claim of historical win in assembly elections, Kejriwal not only assured his hat-trick but also raised the question on tripartite electoral contest in Delhi. Indian National Congress which ruled Delhi for fifteen years in a row could not open an account in this election. Despite the strong foothold of Modi in the Centre, BJP failed in making the most of Delhi battle with its communal politics. Having succeeded in putting a halt to hate politics, the amazing victory of AAP in Delhi Assembly made it clear about the presence of politics of development and good governance. Despite exhorting the people for accepting development model of parties, Delhi poll results made a shift in electoral politics which can give impetus to other parties across the country. What has gone wrong with saffron power in Delhi Assembly elections will be the point of focus in this paper along with the strategic opportunity AAP has created that was nowhere to be seen even at the far distance.

Key Words: Mandate, Hat-trick, Good Governance, Strategic

1. INTRODUCTION

After failing in Punjab Assembly elections in 2017 and in General elections in 2019, the AAP focused on gaining ground in its hometown, Delhi, from where it began its political journey rather than testing waters in another states. Passing through the roaked time, Aam Aadmi Party (AAP)succeeded in saving its drowning ship in Delhi. AAP won 62 seats, just five short it had bagged in 2015 and secured 53.6% vote share with a nominal fall of less than one percent (www.thehindu.com). Being an honest officer Kejriwal proved himself a wise politician. Kejriwal played a crucial role in the fulfillment of local needs of the people of Delhi. AAP was instrumental in doing its share of job what they had promised in its election manifesto. Lot of steps were taken to implement the "70 promise formula" in Delhi. AAP worked on the key areas of basic amenities like Health, Education, Women safety and security, Electricity, Subsidies and so on.

Leadership and the Modus Operandi

Leadership of the AAP has played a very vital role in its triumph. The poor show of AAP in 2017 in Punjab Assembly elections and in 2019 General elections was mainly due to its unplanned strategy under Kejriwal's leadership (www.news18.com). A herculean task of resisting against the corrupt system seemed to become real in the upcoming era. Instead of crying down on opposition's naked assertions, Kejriwal kept on doing his work in Delhi. He was labelled as "Anarchist", "Naxal", "Bhagoda" and "Terrorist" but Kejriwal turned deaf ear (www.thehindu.com).What Kejriwal delivered in his speeches was surgical and up to the mark. After the defeat in the General election of 2019, it was quite an uphill task for AAP to conquer the Delhi battle and that too in so easymanner as it had done in the past. It was Kejriwal and his team who looked beyond the politics of vote bank and come together for the betterment of the state. As a consequence, Kejriwal won Delhi for the third time owing to the progress and development in Delhi. The poll strategy adopted by Kejriwal's government also backed the party. AAP conducted a door to door campaign at a hugelevel. Aiming at approaching to 3.5 million voters, the party decided to entertain seven town hall meetings and 10 mohalla meetings(www.thehindu.com).

ThePerformer among the Orators

The grand show of AAP in Delhi was backed by its work done for the welfare of the commoners. Answering about the performance of Kejriwal government, a voter replied, "I did not have to pay any electricity bill for consecutive months. I am forced to admit that Kejriwal has kept his promise. What has the BJP got to show as far as work is concerned in Delhi? Nothing" (www.thewire.in).

Sensing the security of public, 1.40 lakh CCTVs have been installed in Delhi. The people of Delhi have been provided with free and continuous supply of power. They are getting free power upto 200 units. Houses having consumption between 201-400 units are getting their power bills subsidised. Access to water has also been increased from 50 percent to 93 percent. 20,000 litres of water per month is supplied free to the city people. 1,130 new colonies have been connected with sewer lines. Assuring the health facilities to the people, Kejriwal government has established more than 400 mohalla clinics for the citizens of Delhi. Delhi metro corridor has also been extended from 173 km to 290 km in size. People are getting better transportation facilities. Many lives have been saved under the scheme "Farishte Dilli Ke" in which victims are taken to the hospital by Samaritans (www.thewire.in).Up to 5000 *jhuggi* dwellers have been facilitated with permanent houses. In the field of education, budget has been increased from 6,600 to 15,600 rupees. Government schools have been improved as far as their infrastructure is concerned, now they can boast of high-quality buildings. Preventing the exploitation of parents, private schools have been instructed to adhere to the parents' interest in fee hike issue. Moreover, government has worked for the regulation of 1700 unauthorized colonies. 8000 crore rupees have been spent on roads, sewer line and water supply in these areas. Sensing the need of security of women in society, facility of free traveling in buses has been assured. Marshall in buses have provided for their safety. Nothing to shout about, the rivals have only provided with lip service to the needs, desires and hope of the people.

The Fall of the Titans

AAP's political journey began in Delhi in 2013, whereby, the party formed the government with the outside support of Indian National Congress. Being the winner for successive three

times, the grand old party could not win a single seat in the recent Delhi elections. While putting forth a flop show, 63 out of the 66 candidates of Congress party failed in securing their deposit(Singh, M. & Kaur H. 2019).Party contested in alliance with Rashtriya Janta Dal with 66-4 seat sharing but it lost all of them. Vote share of Congress party has declined to 4.27%, which is almost half of 9.6% in 2015.

Despite the glorious win in General elections, Modi's undefeated chariot has not been able to roll in State Assembly elections. After losing in Haryana, Jharkhand and Maharashtra, the disrespectful defeat of Delhi came as a last nail in the coffin. Regardless of parting ways with its allied party BJP in Haryana assembly elections, Shiromani Akali Dal (SAD) gave unconditional support to BJP in Delhi, but later on, Shiromani Akali Dal (SAD) denied to contest on 4 seats which comprised of Sikh population(www.frontline.thehindu.com). Instead of 60,000 of Sikh population in Rajouri Garden, BJP's candidate failed to get re-elected. AAP snatched away this seat from the hold of Manjinder Singh Sirsa, where he was able to impress the voters in 2015. Sikh voters rejected the SAD completely and even turned against the BJP-SAD alliance to the benefit of AAP which ruled the rooster in attracting the Sikh voters in this election.

Delhi Legislative Assembly						
	2013		2015		2020	
Party	Seats won/total seats	Vote share%	Seats won/total saats	Vote share%	Seats won/total seats	Vote share %
AAP	28/70	29.49%	67/70	54.34%	62/70	53.67%
BJP	31/70	33.07%	03/70	32.19%	08/70	38.5%
INC	08/70	24.55%	00/70	9.65%	00/70	4.26%
Other	03/70	-	-	-	-	-

Source: Election Commission of India

Surmounting of the Challenges for BJP

Another factor that cost the BJP was non-declaration of CM canditure face. BJP had no alternative against the performance of AAP in Delhi on which they could rely (www.epaper.tribuneindia.com).BJP had nothing that it could offer or demand to get the votes of people. The party blamed Kejriwal on his promise to the Delhiites to get full statehood status for Delhi, but it failed in making an impact in the desired direction. Kejriwal has fielded his ground so well that the opposition is devoid of the issues which could be presented against him.

Lack of local face of party leadership in Delhi, has limited BJP to a single digit. The poll strategy of BJP's master mind (Amit Shah) of consolidating the campaign has appeared to be depleted in states (www.epaper.ajitjalandhar.com).

The Curious Case of Assertion v/s Aggression

The arena of electoral politics is a dynamic one when it comes to the voting behaviour of the voters. Eyeing on the political interests of the commoners is a significant strategy to work on for any political party while contesting elections. Politics is not about winning hearts; it is all about winning votes and AAP has fared well in this case.AAP colored the prevalent political issues with its own strategic brush, it took the issues on their surface value and made them strictly political in the sense that they are merely issues to take sides with, they will in turn not effect the practical lives of the people.

AAP's Win from a Critical Vantage Point

Workers of the AAP will always boast of the stunning victory it enjoyed in the recent Delhi elections and detractors will never miss a chance to find fault with the success by labelling it as a chance win. Though freebies brought smile on the faces of the Delhiites, critically speaking it was a move to lure the voters that has nothing to do with the concept of good governance Kejriwal can boast of. Timely tactics to gain political ground before the elections is a game which ties Kejriwal to the same thread of the traditional politics which is the order of the day. The fresh air of progressive politics is nowhere to be felt in AAP as we see it in this context. Students of electoral politics can not nourish the roots of blind faith, rather they should remain cautious, as to avoid such beliefs will be in the general good for the future strategy designers.

2. CONCLUSION

Democracy is in favour of the opposition as far its role in shadowing the progress made by the party which is in power. But the elections to Delhi Assembly did not go down well with the role the opposition. Politics of political issues,vote bank politics and politics of unkept promises had become the integrated part of Delhi politics. Though a significant new shift is on the move in the arena of electoral politics in Delhi as well as in the whole country, it would be beneficial to scrutinise the political issues as to uncover the political parties of their hideous agendas that can be pushed in the guise of goodness. Basic needs of people such as health, housing, education, will no doubt, should be on the priority of the political parties. But the politics of freebies should be curtailed as it is only a short term strategy to gain political ground. Parties need to understand that they cannot survive on the basis of religious and communal issues and divisive politics only lead to weak democracy. Massive victory to Delhi Assembly elections is expected to have swayed on the political arena of the country for the years to come.

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