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# THIRD CONCEPT

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Editor

**BABUDDIN KHAN**

**THIRD CONCEPT** aims at providing a platform where a meaningful exchange of ideas can take place among the people of the Third World. The attempt will be to communicate, debate and disseminate information, ideas and alternatives for the resolution of the common problems facing humankind. We welcome contributions from academics, journalists and even from those who may never have published anything before. The only requirement is a concern for and desire to understand and take the issue of our time. Contributions may be descriptive, analytical or theoretical. They may be in the form of original articles, reactions to previous contributions, or even a comment on a prevailing situation. All contributions, neatly typed in double space, may be addressed to:

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Designed by: Pt. Tejpal

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## AAP Phenomenon

The spectacular emergence of Aam Adami Party (AAP) as victorious in the recently held elections to the Delhi State Assembly marks the rise of a new phenomenon in party politics in contemporary Indian polity. It is a by-product of the social movement built on the anti-corruption plank. Political groupings or parties emerging from social movements have to tread a cautious path for sustenance by adhering to the very ideals cherished during the course of the movement.

Evidently, the AAP vote has transcended the barriers of caste, class and community, which has been the traditional trade mark of political system. The victorious candidates of the AAP have uniformly won from middle class colonies as well as from poor segments of Delhi society. As a beneficiary of the prevailing mood in urban India, the AAP's emergence could spell the beginning of the end of politics segmented along caste and community lines in the past two decades. The AAP victory can be construed as an articulation of symbolic reaction to the traditional politician and therefore could unfold new political norms and standards in other parts of the country. Skeptics may dismiss the AAP's role outside Delhi, though it has already established units in over 300 districts of India. The Delhi election could catalyze the rise of a new force nationally, which could potentially stop the Modi juggernaut in its tracks. The ground level shifts spearheaded by the youth in the country may not reduce it into a mere wishful thinking.

The emergence of the AAP might have been an unexpected phenomenon for the mainstream parties and the media. The dominance of elections by the money and the muscle power of the professionals has been put aside by the concord of 'common man.' The AAP has reaped electoral dividends on the basis of tall promises made in its manifesto and owing to regular grassroots linkages with the masses. The realities of living the real political life are coming in due course for the AAP leaders once they assume power. The common man's 'connect' with the AAP has been based on many promises made by the party because those promises have been exploiting the common man in the name of fulfilment which never was in the past and the courage of AAP to focus on them elicited it whole-hearted support from the common man. The AAP can be a harbinger of 'Indian Spring' in a better form as compared to the Arab Spring, provided it retains the interests of the common man by effectively fulfilling the promises made to the electorate in Delhi and keeps its dynamism in other parts of the country on similar lines.

Thus, AAP's Delhi revolution can well impact the political dynamics nationally by giving the courage to voters, especially the youth, in other states to think the unthinkable. Conventional parties may see AAP as an urban phenomenon, but the media today has connected the rural India to the national discourse just as much. Viewed in a broad spectrum, the emergence of the AAP is not a unique phenomenon in Indian politics. The emergence of Janata Party in post-Emergency period, Telegu Desam in Andhra Pradesh and Asom Gana Parishad (AGP) in Assam has been the past precedents and these political groupings also emerged from the movements. The fall of Janata Party could be attributed to inner groupism, infighting, witch-hunting and half-hearted approach to fulfil tall promises it made to the people. NT Rama Rao's Telegu Desam had a far more impressive debut winning a massive majority in its first attempt; however, it remained confined to Andhra Pradesh in spite of its short-lived ambition to transform Telegu Desam into Bharat Desam. Similar had been the case with AGP in Assam.

The stunning debut of the AAP has set a challenge for the national and regional parties if they are faced with an AAP alternative, they would have to be more careful about the kinds of candidates they would field in the electoral fray. Besides, a credible alternative with the use of social media and transparency can be instrumental in cutting across the barriers of caste, class and community to force a rethink regarding traditional politics. By the time we go to press, the AAP government would have assumed office in New Delhi.

—BK