CHAPTER – III

IDEOLOGY AND THE ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE OF THE BAHUJAN SAMAJ PARTY

Organization is a pre-requisite of any kind of collective human effort. A political party is inconceivable without an organization. It needs organization to articulate and aggregate various interests in society and to achieve the objectives which it sets before itself. Even formal participation in the democratic process needs organization. Being an important means for the creation of a collective will among its members and followers, organization is the only means through which a political party can hope to acquire political power. The chances of its success will depend upon how effectively it is organized.94

The unique features of a political party are reflected in its organization and ideology. The party maintains its separate identity through its organizational activities and ideological commitments. Thus, both organization and ideology are the most significant aspects of a political party.

Each political party develops its own organizational network to achieve party goals and promote its ideology. The scholars working on party politics advocate various factors such as the circumstances under which a party is formed, the division
of labour and coordination between the activities of different
groups in the society supporting the party, the struggle for power
and the desire for survival, etc. to determine the organizational
structure of political parties.95

The organization of a political party includes structures
both at the base as well as the top in the form of a pyramid.
More organized a political party is more are its chances of
mobilizing support and obtaining political power. If the
leadership provides guidance to the political party, the base
provides support and strength to it.96

The votes of individuals are translated into choice of
politicians and programmes by the mechanism of party
organization. It is the organization rather than the electorate
that selects candidates and prepares manifestoes pledging what
these candidates would do if elected.

Moreover, it is also suggested that for the understanding of
the behavior of a political party not only the ideology and class
character of the party are relevant, its organizational structure is
also equally very important.

In this chapter the ideology and the organizational
structure of the Bahujan Samaj Party at national level as well as
at the state level in Punjab has been discussed. As per the
constitution of the BSP, the ideology of the Bahujan Samaj
Party is “Social transformation and economic emancipation of the Bahujan Samaj which comprises of the Scheduled Castes (SCs), the Scheduled Tribes (STs), the other Backward Classes (OBCs) and Religious Minorities such as Sikhs, Muslims, Christians, and Buddhists. This Bahujan Samaj is said to account for over 85 percent of the country’s population. Thus the basic emphasis is on bringing about a social and economic change in the condition of the marginalized and exploited sections of the Indian society.

However of late, the BSP has started espousing the cause of the people of higher castes also. The national president of the BSP, Mayawati said “I would like to make the people of the country aware that my party, the BSP, is committed to not only improving the socio economic condition of the people belonging to the “Bahujan Samaj” but also of the poor among the upper caste Hindus, small and medium farmers, traders and people engaged in other professions.97

Aims and Objectives of BSP:

The constitution of the party states that the chief aim and objective of the party is to work as a revolutionary social economic movement of change with a view to realize, in practical terms, the supreme principles of universal justice, liberty, equality and fraternity as enunciated in the Constitution of
India. In fact to make this commitment as the declared policy of the Party the Party Constitution incorporates the wording of the Preamble of Indian Constitution. Based on the declared objectives in the Preamble, the party Constitution declares to make them as the basis of state governance.

The party declares itself to lead movement for ending exploitation of the weaker sections and suppression of the deprived communities through social and economic change in keeping with the above stated chief aim, and its political activity and participation in governance as an instrument of furthering such as a movement and bringing in such a change.

The constitution of the BSP declares that the strategy of the party in public affairs is to be governed by the following general principles:

“That all citizens of India being equal before law are entitled to be treated as equal in true sense and in all matters and all walks of life, and where equality does not exist it has to be fostered and where equality is denied it has to be upheld and fought for”98. This means that the Bahujan Samaj Party recognizes the deep rooted existing inequalities in the Indian society and pledges to work for the upliftment of those sections of the society who are consistently denied of all equalities. Hence the party must strive to fight for those people who are not treated equally.
Further Party Constitution states that the full, free, uninhibited and unimpeded development of each individual is a basic human right and state is an instrument for promoting and realizing such development. Hence the Bahujan Samaj Party must win elections to form government at the state and national level to implement the policies ensuing equality to each individual.

The Party Constitution takes note of the rights of all citizens of India as enshrined in the Constitution of India and as well as of the restrictions that are set out in the Constitution. These rights have to be upheld at all costs and under all circumstances. If the party constitution is read carefully then it becomes clear that it not only emphasis the need to uphold equality for all and enjoyment of rights by every citizen but it also reiterates the need to make special efforts for the upliftment of the weaker sections of the society. The Party Constitution states:

That the provisions of the Constitution requiring the state at centre and in states to promote with special care and protect the socio economic interests of the weaker sections of the society, denied to them for centuries, have to be upheld and given practical shape in public affairs as a matter of prime most priority. Thus the Constitution of Bahujan Samaj Party very
clearly wants that the Union and State governments must make policies for the development and welfare the exploited sections of Indian society.

In a democracy the votes of the people are very valuable as it is through their votes that the governments are elected. Hence each and every vote is important. But because of the wide spread economic inequalities, it is a general tendency that in all political decisions the rich people may enjoy more say and the poor may be compelled to support the rich. This may lead to a situation where poor man is either not allowed to vote or is compelled to vote in favour of a particular party or person. The BSP Constitution appears to be pointing to this malady and wants that economic disparities and the wide gaps between the ‘haves’ and the ‘have nots’ must not be allowed to override the political principle of “one man, one vote, one value” adopted by our Republic.

In particular and without prejudice to the generality of the aims stated above, the party works especially towards the following objectives:

The Scheduled Castes, the Scheduled Tribes, the Other Backward Castes, and the minorities, are the most oppressed and exploited people in India. Keeping in mind their large numbers, such a set of people in India is recognized as the
Bahujan Samaj by the Party Constitution. The Constitution states that the party shall organize these masses.

“The party shall work for these down trodden masses to-
to remove their backwardness;
to fight against their oppression and exploitation;
to improve their status in society and public life and
to improve their living conditions in day to day life”.

The Constitution of the party emphasizes that social structure of India is based on inequalities created by caste system and declares that the movement of the party shall be geared towards changing the social system and rebuild it on the basis of equality and human values. All those who join the party with the commitment to co-operate in this movement of social change shall be integrated into the fold of the party.

With a view to fulfil the objectives underlined in the party Constitution the organizational units of party are empowered to Purchase, take on lease or otherwise acquire, and maintain moveable or immovable property for the party and invest and deal with money of the party in such a manner as may from time to time be determined. It further declares that the party can raise money with or without security for carrying out any of the aims and objectives of the party as also can do all other lawful things and acts as are incidental or conducive to the attainment
of any of the aims and objectives as mentioned in the Party Constitution.

Provided that none of these activities will be undertaken without the express approval of the National President.\textsuperscript{102}

**Membership and Organizational Structure:**

**Membership:**

The Constitution of the BSP calls upon the people to join the party with a commitment to uproot the age old disparities and co-operate in the social movement to be launched by the Bahujan Samaj Party, to work for the upliftment of the SCs, STs and other socially and economically backward sections of the society. The Party uses the term Bahujan Samaj for all such sections.

The constitution of the BSP has a detailed description of how the membership of the party can be acquired. According to it any person who is a citizen of India, has attained the age of 18, accepts the constitution and ideology of the party, and is not a member of any other political or social organization whose aims and objects are not approved by the Central Executive Committee of the Party, can become a member of the Bahujan Samaj Party by paying an annual subscription of rupees forty. Central Executive Committee of the party has the power to review the subscription amount at any time. The year of
membership is from 1\textsuperscript{st} January to 31\textsuperscript{st} December. A person has
the option to become a member at a place of which he is
‘ordinarily resident’ or at a place where he ordinarily works.
Further the constitution of the party says that every member has
the right to vote in election to any office of the party, unless
disqualified by any rule made under this constitution.\textsuperscript{103}

\textbf{Organization of the BSP:}
The party is hierarchically organized from top to bottom. At the
highest level there is a National President and a Central
Executive Committee. Similarly at the state level there is a State
Executive Committee. Then in every state there are District level
organizations. A description of the organizational structure of the
BSP is given below:

\textbf{National Level Organization:}

\textbf{National President:} The highest office is the office of the
National President. He/she is elected for three years by vote or
by consensus by delegates in the national session. In the
national session there are national level representatives, State
Presidents of all the states, Executive Committee members of the
states, MPs and MLAs of the party. The President plays an
important role in the party hierarchy.\textsuperscript{104}

He/she nominates office bearers of the Central Executive
Committee. The National President has the prerogative to
intervene at any time and to remove any office bearer of a State/UT or District Executive Committee and direct re-election or nomination to the office thus vacated.

The National President presides over the general meetings of the party and the meetings of Central Executive Committee. Meetings of Central Executive Committee are convened by the National President as and when required and agenda for these meetings is approved by the National President. When the Central Executive Committee is not in session National President of the party has the right to exercise all powers of the committee.¹⁰⁵

The National President is all powerful office but the Constitution of the party has provision for his/her removal. If the National President does not work according to the constitution then he/she may be removed by the Central Executive Committee.¹⁰⁶

**National Vice President:** National Vice President is elected or removed by the same procedure as for the President. In the absence of National President all functions of the National President can be performed by the National Vice President, provided that all decisions taken by the National Vice President in such a situation shall be put up before the National President for *ex post facto* approval.
In the event of unfortunate demise of the National President the National Vice President immediately and automatically assumes charge as National President and continues to function as such until the end of the current term of the National President.\textsuperscript{107}

**General Secretary and Secretaries:** There are 30-35 General Secretaries at the National level. These are elected by the National President of the party from every State and UT for three years. These General Secretaries play an important role in the party affairs. They are responsible for the official work of the party assigned to them by the President of the party.

The strength of the Secretaries is double then that of the General Secretaries. They are also elected or removed by the National President. It is the duty of the Secretaries to maintain official records of the party and to record the proceedings of the meetings.\textsuperscript{108}

**Central Executive Committee:** The central executive committee consists of the National President, Vice President, such number of General Secretaries and secretaries as may be determined by party laws and a treasurer. The period of Central Executive Committee is three years.

The Central Executive Committee is the highest authority of the party. It has the final say in all matters relating to the
interpretation and application of the provisions of the Party Constitution. The committee has also the powers, in special cases, to remove difficulties to relax the application of provisions of the Party Constitution without violating the provisions of the Indian constitution.

The Central Executive Committee makes rules for administration and execution of any provisions of the party constitution and for any other administrative matter not specifically provided in the constitution but not inconsistent with it.

It makes rules for maintaining discipline in the party. According to the Party Constitution the committee has the power of superintendence, direction and control of the functioning of all State/UT and District Executive Committees. This committee may take such disciplinary action against any committee or office bearer of any committee. This committee has the powers to take such action, in the interest of the party as it may deem appropriate, provided that the action which is taken is not beyond the powers of the committee as defined in the constitution.

The Central Executive Committee prepares accounts of the party. With the approval of the National President it may appoint one or more auditors or inspectors or other officers to examine
the records, papers and account books of all or any constituent bodies of the party.  

**Treasurer:**

The National President is also the Treasurer Incharge of the funds and keeps proper accounts of all investments, incomes and expenditures with the assistance of the secretariat.

All money received for the party and the central organization of the party is deposited in an account in a nationalized bank in the name of the party and such account is operated by either the National President or the National Vice President or by an office bearer of the Central Executive Committee duly authorized by the National President in this behalf.

However certain sum of money required for day to day and emergent expenditures is kept at the disposal of the National President and the National Vice President or in the office of the party.  

**State Level Organization:**

As stated earlier, the party has its organizational structure at the state level in the same manner as it has at the national level:

**State President:**

In every state there is a President of the party who is nominated by the National President for three years. State
President presides over the general meetings of the party and the meetings of the State Executive Committee. State President may be changed by the National President at any time if he/she feels that the State President is not working according to the Constitution of the party. The state president of the BSP in Punjab at present is Avtar Singh Karimpuri.\textsuperscript{111}

**State Incharge:**

In addition to the State President of the party, the National President nominates state Incharges for its State units. The State Incharges are the National General Secretaries and in a way act as a link between the Party Unit in the State and the National Central Executive. The State Incharge keeps the National President informed about the activities of the party at state level. He/She reports to the Party High Command and conveys the message from top to the State Party President.\textsuperscript{112}

**State Vice President:**

State Vice President is nominated by the State President with the approval of State Incharge for three years. State President and State Incharge also have the right to remove the State Vice President if he/she does not follow the instructions of the party. In the absence of the State President, Vice President of the state performs all functions of the state president of the party. In Punjab Ajit Singh Bhaini is presently the State Vice President of the BSP.\textsuperscript{113}
**General Secretaries and Secretaries:**

General Secretaries and Secretaries are also appointed at the State level. In every state the strength of the general secretaries is equal to the Lok Sabha seats in the state. Punjab has 13 General Secretaries of the party. Every General Secretaries is made Incharge of the Lok Sabha constituency in the state. To assist the General Secretaries two secretaries are appointed in every Lok Sabha constituency. Thus at the state level also the number of the secretaries is double the number of general secretaries. These secretaries also function as the secretaries of the state unit of the party. The General Secretaries and Secretaries are appointed by the State President of the party for three years. The State President also has the right to remove them if they do not perform their duties properly. The main function of the General Secretaries is to work for the advancement of party agenda in their respective Lok Sabha Constituencies. The Secretaries assist them and maintain official records of the party and also keep record of the proceedings of the meetings.\textsuperscript{114}

**State Executive Committee:**

State Executive Committee consists of the State President, a Vice President, such number of General Secretaries and Secretaries as may be determined by the party laws. The State
President nominates other office bearers of the Committee. The office bearers of the State/UT Executive Committee may be removed by the President of the State after obtaining the approval of the National President of the party, in case of any wrong doing by any of the office bearer.

Each State/UT executive committee is responsible for the affairs of the party within its respective jurisdiction. It prepares an annual report on the activities of the party including an annual statement of accounts, and submits it to the National President to be laid before the Central Executive Committee.\(^{115}\)

The State/UT Executive Committees are authorized to frame rules which are not be inconsistent with the provisions of the main Party Constitution and the rules framed by the Central Executive Committee for proper functioning of the State/UT and District units of the party. No such rule shall be valid unless approved by the Central Executive Committee and the National President.\(^{116}\)

On failure of any State/UT Executive Committee to function in accordance with the Constitution of the Party or any rules framed or directions issued by the Central Executive Committee, the latter with the approval of the National President, or the National President, may, suspend the said Committee and form an ad hoc Committee to carry on the work of the party in the respective jurisdiction.\(^{117}\)
The constitution of the party notes that all such vacancies in the State/UT and District Executive Committees as occur due to resignation, death or removal, shall unless otherwise directed by the Central Executive Committee or the National President, be filled in the same manner in which the vacant incumbent thus elected/nominated shall hold office for the residual term of the office.\textsuperscript{118}

In Punjab there are 21 members in the State Executive Committee including the State President and Vice President. Among them there are Secretaries, General Secretaries, Cashier and Office Secretary. Harjit Singh Longia is the cashier of the State Executive Committee and Kuldeep Singh is Office Secretary.\textsuperscript{119} This shows that though the Party Constitution has a provision for appointing General Secretaries equal to the Lok Sabha Constituencies and the Secretaries double their number but in Punjab the appointed General Secretaries and Secretaries are much less in number.

**State Zones:** Every State is divided into zones. Incharge of the zone is nominated by the State President with the approval of the State Incharge for three years. The head of the zone is called the Zonal Incharge. Two or more persons may be appointed on the post of Zonal Incharge. Zonal Incharges remain in touch with the head of the BSP’s state unit. They supervise the work of Lok
Sabha Committees. If the State President is not satisfied with the work of any of the Zonal Incharges then he can remove him/her with the consent of the State Incharge. In Punjab there are five Zones viz. Patiala, Ludhiana, Bathinda, Hoshiarpur, Amritsar. Joga Singh Panodia is the incharge of the Patiala Zone. Sant Ram Malian, Harmesh Singh Bhagh Singhpuri and Hargopal Singh are the incharges of the Bathinda, Hoshiarpur and the Amritsar Zones respectively, while Ludhiana Zone has three incharges namely Prakash Singh Jandali, Harbhajan Singh Bijarherhi and Dr Nachattar Pal.  

**District Level Organization:**

The constitution of the party provides for a district level organization in every state. The structure of the district level organization is given below:

**District President:** Every district has a District Party President who is nominated by the Zonal Incharge for one year (1\textsuperscript{st} January to 31 December). District President presides over the general meetings of the party and constitutes District Executive Committees of the party with the approval of Zonal Incharge and State President. If District President does not function properly then he may be removed from the post of president by the zonal incharge before the complete of its term.
**District Vice President:** There is a vice president below the President. He/She is nominated by the District President for one year with the approval of the zonal incharge. Vice president performs all the functions of the President in the absence of District President. He may be removed by the Zonal Incharge after the recommendations of the District President.\(^{122}\)

**General Secretary and secretaries:** In every district there is a General Secretary. Who is nominated by the District President with the approval of the incharge of the Lok Sabha Constituency for one year. In addition to the General Secretary there are some Secretaries at the district level. The strength of the Secretaries is equal to the constituencies of the Vidhan Sabha which fall in the district because every Vidhan Sabha Constituency incharge is the secretary of the district unit. These secretaries are nominated and removed by the Incharge of the Lok Sabha Constituency. These secretaries are responsible to maintain official records of party at the district level.\(^{123}\)

**District Executive Committee:** The District Executive Committee is the primary unit of the party at the district level. The District Executive Committee consists of a District President, a Vice President, a General Secretary and Secretaries as may be determined by the party laws. The District President nominates other office bearers of the committee. The number of
office bearers of District Executive Committee is decided according to the rules framed by the Central Executive Committee under the Party Constitution. District Executive Committee prepares an annual report on the activities of the party in the district including an annual statement of accounts and submits it to the State president to be laid before the Central Executive Committee.

The office bearers of the District Executive Committee are removable by the President of the committee after obtaining the approval of the president of the State Executive Committee of the state concerned. The National President has the prerogative to intervene at any time and to remove any office bearer of a District Executive Committee and direct re-election or nomination (as the case may be) to the office thus vacated.¹²⁴

**Treasurer/Cashier:**

As per the constitution of the party there is a cashier at the district level. The term of the cashier is one year. The cashier is also appointed by the District President. If he does not follow the rules and regulations of the party then District President can change him. He is responsible for the business concerned with the money matters. He controls the treasure of the party at the district level.¹²⁵
**Other Organizations:** in addition to the above mentioned party organizations at national, state and district level there are a number of Committees and Wings at lower level of the BSP which are supposed to carry out the party work.

**Booth Committee:** in every village/city there is a booth committee for every booth. The term of booth committee is one year. In this committee there are six members. Among them there is an in charge of the booth committee, a secretary and a general secretary. Office bearers of the committee are nominated from the different sections of the society by the Incharge or General Secretary of the Vidhan Sabha Committee. Incharge of the Vidhan Sabha Committee has the right to remove the incharge and other office bearers of the booth committee if they do not work properly. Main function of the Booth Committee is to increase the membership of the party at the grassroots level.126

**Sector Unit:** Ten Booth committees form a sector unit and every sector has a sector committee. The term of this unit is one year. Every booth committee has a nominee in this committee. Among them there is a president, a general secretary, a convener of the Bahujan Volunteer Force, and a woman member who is also the convener of the BVF. President of the sector and other office bearers are nominated by the related District President and has
the right to remove them if they do not function according to the constitution of the party. This sector committee gives the guidelines to the booth committees which fall in its jurisdiction.\textsuperscript{127}

**Vidhan Sabha Constituency Committee:** All the heads of the sector units are members of the Vidhan Sabha Constituency Committee. The term of this committee is one year. The Incharge and the President of the Vidhan Sabha committee are nominated by the President of the related Lok Sabha Constituency. After the President and incharge of the committee there is a General Secretary, a secretary and a Cashier in this committee. If the committee members do not follow the rules and regulations of the party then the President of the Lok Sabha constituency has the right to dismiss the committee. This committee looks into the functions of the Sector Units and works for the party at the Vidhan Sabha constituency level.\textsuperscript{128}

**Lok Sabha Constituency Committee:** The heads of the Vidhan Sabha Committees form the Lok Sabha Committee. President and incharge of the Lok Sabha Committee are other persons who are nominated by the Zonal Incharge. Other office bearers of the committee like Secretary and General Secretary are nominated by the President of Lok Sabha constituency with the approval of Zonal Incharge. The term of this Committee is one year. This
committee works for the party at the Lok Sabha constituency level and it gives guidelines to the Vidhan Sabha Constituency committees for the better performance of the party. State President and State Incharge can dismiss the committee at any time if he finds that the Committee does not work according to the norms of the party.  

**Wings:** In every state there are different wings in the organization of the BSP like Youth Wing, Women’s Wing, Advocates Wing, Students’ Wing, Farmers’ Wing, Labourers’ Wing etc. In every wing there are three conveners one of whom must person is belong to the SC category and the others two can be from General and BC category. These three conveners have the same powers. These conveners are appointed by the State President with the approval of the State Incharge for one year. If these Conveners of the party wings do not work properly then they can be removed by the State President of the BSP with the approval of State Incharge. Conveners of these wings have the responsibility to build the grassroot level organizations of the wings with the consent of the State President of the BSP and the State Executive Committee. These wings’ first job is to spread the ideology of the BSP and make the strong hold of the party among the different sections of the society.
There are some other organizations of BSP which are active in different areas of society. They are in a way the pressure groups and actively help the party. Two of these organizations deserve a mention these are BAMCEF and BVF. A brief note about these two is given below:

**BAMCEF:** Backward and Minority Communities Employees Federation is a non political organization which was floated by Kanshi Ram on Dec 6.1978. BAMCEF was an organization of educated employees of oppressed and exploited communities. BAMCEF infact was the first organization established by Kanshi Ram (a detailed discussion of BAMCEF is given in chapter II of the present thesis) today this organization is a part of the organizational structure of the BSP as a shadow up to the district level. It is reorganized every year. The district convener of the BAMCEF is nominated by the District President with the approval of zonal Incharge of the BSP. In this organization most of the people are educated and employees. The main purpose of BAMCEF is twofold in character. The first purpose is the uplift of the oppressed sections (the bahujans) by means of education, setting up business, trade and inculcation of moral values, and providing ‘direction centre’ in the fight against the oppressors in society. Second the BAMCEF serves as a training ground for ‘genuine and committed’ leaders and workers for the party.\(^{131}\)
In the political field, the main function of the BAMCEF is mobilizing funds and a dedicated cadre of workers for the BSP. Many of its members attribute the electoral success of the BSP to their hard work. However its members, being government employees, cannot campaign for the BSP, but they perform important jobs, such as running the election office and maintaining accounts of expenditure etc.\textsuperscript{132}

**Bahujan Volunteer Force:** In every state the BSP has Bahujan Volunteer Force. To join this force the age limit is 20-35 years. Term of this force is three years. BVF State President is nominated by the State President of the BSP. State president of the BVF has the power to build the organizational structure of the BVF in the state. After the state unit, this Force has district level organization. Office bearers of the district are nominated by the state president of the BVF and they work under the supervision of the State President of the Force. There is a convener and an assistant convener of the force in every Lok Sabha and Vidhan Sabha constituency. These conveners have the power to appoint other office bearers of the BVF at the constituency level. The BVF maintains peace and security in its jurisdiction especially during the time of elections.\textsuperscript{133}

**Brotherhood Committees:** In every State there are Brotherhood Committees established by the BSP. Punjab has 12 Brotherhood Committees like Brahmin Bhaichara Committee, Saini
Bhaichara Committee, Khatri Bhaichara Committee etc. Every Bhaichara Committee has a Convener from the related community and an Assistant Convener from the SC or BC category. These conveners and assistant conveners are nominated by the State President of the party with the approval of the State Incharge for one year. Main function of these committees is to make a strong hold among the different sections of the society. Conveners of these Committees may be removed by the State President with the consent of State Incharge if they do not follow the rules and regulations of the party. Presidents of these committees build the grassroot level organization of the Brotherhood committees with the consent of the state unit of the party.¹³⁴

Thus the Bahujan Samaj Party has a wide network of various party organizations and other supporting organizations. All of them are supposed to work in co-ordination with each other and under the overall guidance of the Party High Command. However in practice many of these organizations do not exist and even when they exist, they hardly enjoy any powers.

**Rules of Discipline:** The Party Constitution declares that every member/office bearer of all party organizations must follow the
norms and rules of the party, must work with full dedication according to the ideology of the party.

According to the Constitution of the BSP the indiscipline in the party is not to be tolerated. The constitution underlines the following acts of indiscipline:

(i) to act contrary to the declared policies of the party.

(ii) to indulge in open and public criticism of the policies of the party.

(iii) to form a group within the party or to give support to any member with the object to challenge the authority of a constitutionally appointed office bearer of the party.

(iv) to spread ill feelings among members or to carry out a campaign of vilification;

(v) to obstruct the working of the party in any way;

(vi) to misappropriate the funds of the party;

(vii) to join a party or a group or an association not recognized by the party or whose principles are not approved by the Central Executive Committee;

(viii) to misuse authority vested by virtue of being an office bearer of the party, or to fail to use such authority and thereby to bring about a failure of the function of a constituent of the party;
(ix) to oppose an official candidate set up by the party in any election.\textsuperscript{135}

The constitution also gives in detail the punishment which may be given for any act of indiscipline it states very clearly that any member guilty of any act of indiscipline shall be liable to punishment which may include one or more of the following:

(i) Expulsion from the party which may be permanent;

(ii) Suspension from the membership of the party for a specific period;

(iii) Removal from office;

(iv) Imposition of disability to hold office which may be for a specified period permanent.

The party Constitution elaborates the procedure for acting against any member against whom charges of alleged indiscipline are made.

Any member against whom charges of indiscipline are levied shall be tried by the State/UT Executive Committee or the Central Executive Committee as the case may be; although the National President can directly take cognizance of any case of indiscipline.

According to the Party Constitution a member aggrieved by an order of punishment may appeal before the National
President, who may, if he/she considers appropriate, refer the appeal to the Central Executive Committee for hearing or proceed to hear the appeal himself/herself.

The Central Executive Committee is authorized to issue orders in cases of appeal on the approval of the National President. The order/approval of the National President is to be final.\footnote{136}

**Amendment of the Constitution:** the Party Constitution has tried to make comprehensive provisions for all party organizations and their respective powers as well as the mode of removal of various office bearers/members. However the Party Constitution can be amended keeping in view the changes as and when found demanding. As the highest executive authority of the party is its Central Executive Committee, it has been given the right to pass a resolution to make any amendment in the party Constitution.

Provided that an amendment of this constitution can also be carried out by a resolution of the Central Executive Committee, being the highest executive authority of the party, provided the amendment provisions do not militate against the aims, objectives and basic party structure, and are aimed at more effective functioning in a given situation.\footnote{137} Thus it is very clear that party constitution allows only such amendments as fall
within the over all broad ideology, policies of the party. No change can be made in the basic structure of the Party Constitution.

The above description makes it abundantly clear that the BSP is theoretically a well organized party in which there is systemic party machinery starting from the grassroots level to state and national level. At every level a party Executive, with Party Presidents/Secretaries/Gen Sectaries and other office bearers have been provided for. But one thing which becomes very obvious is that at all levels the office bearers including the presidents are nominated/appointed. No where the party Constitution makes a provision for election except for the election of National Party President i.e. no office bearers appears to be elected by the party members. The Party High Command is the party president who enjoys the supreme powers, though the Central Executive Committee is declared as the highest executive authority. At the state level in practice all the office bearers including State President/State Incharge and Vidhan Sabha and Lok Sabha Committee Incharges are appointed/nominated by the Party President. This was empirically found to be the case in Punjab. The organizational structure of the BSP in Punjab is found to be not well organized. All the office bearers at the state level are nominated by the party supremo. At the district level
also the party State President with approval from the party high command appoints various office bearers. Thus contrary to the claims of the constitution there is no inner democracy and no regular meetings of any organization are held. In fact neither at the district level nor at the party headquarters at the state level any written record is available. The party organization is inherently weak. Further there is no regularity as far as the number of office bearers is concerned. It is also found that there is a lack of coordination among the various organizational bodies of the party.
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