Chapter Three
Area Of study -
The Context
Chapter-3:

Area of Study - The Context:

The study has been conducted in the State of Uttar Pradesh (UP). UP is politically a very sensitive and important state, more pronounced in providing leadership. The State of UP, which is, socially more backward than many of other states, has sent more women into the Center and State legislature than any other. It has the largest Legislative Assembly, sends largest number of MPs in the Parliament and always dominated on the National Scene. The state has always been a deciding factor for the leadership at the Center by virtue of its large representation of 85 in the parliament (15.70 percent of the total strength). It also has the largest Legislative Assembly in the country by having 425 assembly seats. This factor is important for the election of the head of the country also. The State has given many men and women leaders of national and international repute to the country. In fact, the first man and the first woman Prime Ministers in India belonged to this state. The State had first woman Chief Minister, first woman Governor, first woman Secretary General to UN and many more firsts. It has given maximum number of Prime Ministers to the country. Out of all thirteen Prime Ministers of India, Uttar Pradesh gave eight Prime Ministers. Both
formal and informal leadership can be observed in this State. That is why UP has been selected as the area of the present study.

The state provides a specific situation, by its location, general reputation, large size of population, large women voters, social composition, socio-cultural history and an important center of political activities. The demographic and other important salient features of UP, position of women in state, their political activities, organizations and political parties are described in subsequent paragraphs.

Uttar Pradesh with 19 divisions, 83 districts, 348 tehsils, 904 development blocks, 112803 villages and an area of 294411 sq. Km. is the fourth largest State of the country after Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and Maharashtra, (UP State Annual Plan, 2000-2001:42). The State covers 8.96 percent of the total geographical area of the country while the percentage of share of the state in the total population of the country is 16.4. As a result, the availability of geographical area in the State is 2.12 sq km for every one thousand of population, which is 46.2 per cent less than the corresponding figure of 3.88 sq km for the country.
Demography:

3.1 Pressure on Population: It has the highest share of 16.44 per cent in the country’s total population. According to 1991 census, the total population of the State was 1391 lakh in which 740 lakh were males and 651 lakh were females. As per the National Health Survey (NHS) 1999-2000, the population of UP has gone up to 1715 lakh and thus, there is an increase of 23.3 per cent over the 1991-2000 period. The scheduled caste population is 21.05 per cent, which is much higher than 16.48 per cent at the National level and is the highest among all major states except Punjab (28.31 per cent) and West Bengal (23.62 per cent).

The percentage of rural and urban population in total population was 80.2 per cent (1115 lakhs) and 19.8 per cent (276 lakhs) respectively. In the decade 1981-91, the urban population increased by 38.7 per cent while it was 36.5 per cent at the National level. The share of urban population in the total population of the State has increased from 17.95 per cent in 1981 to 19.80 per cent in 1991 against the corresponding percentages of 25.31 and 25.70 respectively at the National level.

The sex ratio in Uttar Pradesh has declined from 910 in 1951 to 885 in 1981 and further to 879 in 1991. The corresponding figures at all
India level were 946 in 1951, 934 in 1981 and 927 in the year 1991. Among the States, sex ratio is the highest in Kerala (1936).

### 3.2 Working Force: The percentage increase in workers in the State was 31.56 during 1981-91 against an increase of 25.48 per cent in its total population during this period. The total number of workers increased from 340.52 lakh in 1981 to 448.00 lakh in 1991 and the proportion of workers to total state’s population moved up from 30.7 to 32.2 per cent. The share of workers in State’s population (32.2 per cent) is considerably lower than the corresponding figure 37.1 per cent at National level. With 32.7 percent workers in total population, the State ranked 9th among major States except Andhra Pradesh (45.0 per cent), Tamil Nadu (43.3 per cent), Maharashtra (43.0 per cent), Madhya Pradesh (42.8 per cent), Karnataka (42.0 per cent), Gujarat (40.2 per cent), Rajasthan (38.9 per cent) and Orissa (37.5 per cent). All these seven States (except Orissa) are ahead of UP in per capita income also. Punjab, Haryana and Kerala though have lower work participation ratio of 30.9 per cent, 31.0 per cent and 31.9 per cent per cent respectively but have a higher per capita State income. (UP Annual Plan, 2000-01:42-46).

The percentage share of total workers in rural population also increased from 31.5 to 33.5 during the decade 1981-91. Likewise, the
share of female workers in female population moved up from 9.0 per cent to 14.2 per cent during the aforesaid decade while the share of male workers in total male population declined by 51.5 percent to 50.5 per cent in 1981-91. The share of urban female workers in urban female population also moved up from 3.5 per cent to 4.8 per cent during the decade 1981-91, but the share of workers in urban population slipped down from 27.3 per cent to 27.1 per cent. In the same way, the share of male workers in total male population also declined from 47.5 per cent in 1981 to 46.4 percent in 1991, (ibid; 42-46).

According to 1991 census, villages having population below 500 were 40.1 per cent of the total inhabited villages, which are characterized as small villages. The percentage of such villages in the State is higher than that of other developed States like Punjab (30.9 per cent), Maharashtra (29.0 per cent), Gujarat (21.6 per cent), Haryana (16.0 per cent) and Tamil Nadu (13.1 per cent). These villages in the State have a considerably higher share as 9.9 per cent of its total population greater than the percentage in Punjab (7.1 per cent), Maharashtra (6.8 per cent), Gujarat (4.2 per cent), Haryana (2.4 per cent) and Tamil Nadu (1.6 per cent). (ibid; 42-46).
3.3 Economy of State of UP: In 1980-81, the total State income at current prices was Rs. 14012 crore which increased to Rs. 21514 crore in 1984-85, Rs. 41664 crore in 1989-90, Rs. 57206 crore in 1991-92, Rs. 88511 crore in 1995-96 and further to Rs. 113105 crore in 1997-98 registering an increase of 53.5 per cent during 1981-85, 93.7 per cent in 1985-90, 37.3 per cent during 1990-92, 54.7 per cent during 1992-96 and 27.8 per cent during 1996-98, (ibid: 42-46). In spite of these increases, the State’s contribution in total National Income declined from 12.7 per cent to 11.6 per cent in 1980-81 and 1984-85 respectively. It slightly increased to 11.7 per cent in 1989-90 and 11.9 per cent in 1991-92 but again slipped down to 10.2 per cent in 1996-97.

The per capita income of the State has been lower than the per capita income of the country. The per capita State income, at current prices, increased from Rs. 1278 in 1980-81 to Rs 1784 in 1984-85, Rs. 3087 in 1989-90, Rs. 4069 in 1991-92, Rs. 5872 in 1995-96 and further to 7265 in 1997-98. But the gap between the per capita State Income and the per capita National Income also widened, (ibid: 42-46).

In order to improve the well being of women and children in society the Government has made a significant shift in the approach from ‘welfare during fifties’ to ‘development during seventies’ and to
"empowerment during the nineties". During the nineties major thrust in respect of women was to ensure them economic independence and self-reliance, while in respect of children efforts were made to ensure their "survival protection and development" with special focus on the girl child and adolescent girl, (ibid: 42-46).

Constitution of India also gives support and strength to them as its Article 14 confers equal rights and opportunities for men and women in the political, economic and social spheres; Article 15 prohibits discrimination against any citizen on the ground of sex, religion, race and caste, etc.; Article 16 provides for equality of opportunities in the matter of public appointments for all citizens; article 39 mentions that the State shall direct its policy towards providing to men and women equally the right to means of livelihood, human conditions of work and maternity relief whereas Article 51 (A) (c) imposes a fundamental duty on every citizen to renounce the practices derogatory to the dignity of women.

3.4 Literacy: Female literacy rose from 0.69 per cent in 1901 to 18.4 in 1971 in India, but because of the tremendous increase in population, this improvement has not been able to offset the overall increase in the number of illiterate women.
Census data indicate that during the past 20 years (1971-91) male and female literacy in UP has increased by 24.23 and 14.76 percentage points. As compared to census data, the results of 53rd round of National Sample Survey indicate that during the past 6 years (1991-97) the State has achieved a remarkable progress. During this period, the increase in male and female literacy rate is 8.87 and 10.81 percentage points at all India level whereas the corresponding figures are 13.27 and 15.69 percentage points at the UP State level.

Census, 1991 data also reveals the highest discrimination in male-female literacy is in BIMARU (Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh) States. This discrimination is nearly 34 percentage points in Rajasthan as compared to 30 percentage points each in UP, Madhya Pradesh and Bihar. The States having low female literacy than all India average (59.19%) are Madhya Pradesh (28.83%), UP (25.31%), Bihar (22.89%) and Rajasthan (20.44%).

3.5 Political History of UP in General: In ancient times, UP was known as Madhya Desh. The entire region extending up to Prayag in the east bore the name of Madhya Desh. It was considered sacred in Hindu mythology as gods and heroes mentioned in the two epics – Ramayana and Mahabharata lived here. Its subsequent history got mingled with the
puranas and other Hindu scriptures. From sixth century BC, the history of this region can be properly recovered. During Hindu period the State has seen rise and fall of several dynasties such as, the Kurus, and Panchalas, Kosala and Kashi, Kushans and the Gupta dynasty. After the fall of the Gupta dynasty in the 6th century AD, this region was ruled by regional dynasties – the Mukharis of Kairana and Harshwardhan of Thaneswar. The Gujjar Pratiharas and Gaharwaras held their sway over the Gangetic plains during 9th and 10th centuries. The history of Madhya Desh in 13th and 14th centuries is a saga of brave resistance and barbaric repression.

The Sultans, the Mughals and the Nawabs of Awadh ruled over this area. By the middle of the eighteenth century, the Nawabs of Awadh had come in contact with the East India Company (EICo). In 1784 AD, Mir Kasim was forced to cede the districts of Kara and Allahabad to the Company. The territories obtained from the Nawab from 1775-1801 were initially attached to the Bengal Presidency and were known as Conquered and Ceded Provinces. The EICo under the treaty of Sангuli took the Kumaon and Garhwal regions in 1816, (Rana, 2000:354).

As a result of expansion of the territories of the East India Company (EICo) beyond Oudh, a new administrative unit under the
Lieutenant Governor called the North-Western Province (NWP) was created in 1836 AD. Agra was placed under a Chief Commissioner. In 1858, the Delhi Division was taken out from the NWP and its capital shifted from Agra to Allahabad. In November of the same year the political power was transferred from the IlC’s to the British Crown. (ibid: 354).

Later in 1877, Oudh territories were combined with it and it was renamed as the North-Western Provinces of Agra & Oudh. Its name was again changed in 1902 AD to United Provinces of Agra and Oudh. It was made a Governor’s Province in 1921 and its capital shifted to Lucknow. In 1937, the words Agra and Oudh were dropped and it was named as United Provinces. After Independence the native States of Tehri Garhwal, Rampur and Banaras were merged with it and in 1950 it was renamed Uttar Pradesh. (ibid: 354).

The State has a bicameral legislature. The State Assembly consists of 425 members. The Legislative Council has 108 Members, ninety-two seats are reserved for the SCs and one for the STs in the Assembly. It sends 24 members to the Rajya Sabha. (ibid: 355).

3.6 Elections in UP – Some Aspects: Politics of the State of UP since its formation in 1950 has been, until the 1967 elections, the politics
of the Congress party. In fact ever since the achievement of independence in 1947, the state was placed under the government of the Congress party. The Congress leadership in the state, very appropriately, built up a strong base for itself among the rural masses of the state by introducing some fundamental land reforms giving the peasantry proprietary rights over the land they tilled or complete security of tenure. A number of schemes were launched for the uplift of the countryside. They were also given a feeling of participation in the management of some local matters through the Panchayati Raj system. All these measures carried the Congress in power through the years. There was only a weak opposition in the State Legislature.

But during the second half of the twenty-year period since independence, the opposition began to grow more significantly. The ruling party steadily lost its popularity on account of a number of factors. In the elections of 1952, the opposition and independent candidates together secured a little over 52 per cent of the total votes polled. In ten years' time in the elections of 1962, this percentage rose to 63%. (Varna & Narain, 1968: 371).

Of the opposition parties, before the fourth general elections, the Jana Sangh had a steady growth. It had emerged as the largest
opposition group in the State Assembly after the elections of 1962. It had nearly fifty members in a house of 430. The socialist parties also had a good position in the assembly but they failed to combine and constitute a single group or party in the legislature, which could have been larger than the Jana Sangh group. It must also be mentioned that up to 1966, there has been no Muslim communal group of any importance in the politics of the State, (Varma & Narain, 1968: 372).

Except for a brief period, when Bhartiya Kranti Dal (BKD) formed the government under the Chief Ministership of Chaudhry Charan Singh, the Congress Party was comfortably placed in the Assembly till 1977. In 1977, the Janata Party replaced the Congress as the majority party. Ram Narasim Yadav of the Janata became the Chief Minister. The Janata Government did not complete its full term and the Congress Party came into power in the middle of the year 1980. Later, in the Assembly elections to Uttar Pradesh, the Congress Party was badly defeated and Mulayam Singh Yadav - a non-Congressman became the Chief Minister whose term lasted between December 1989 to June 1991. In the Assembly elections of 1991, the BJP formed the Government headed by Kalyan Singh. He resigned in the wake of demolition of Babri Masjid disputed structure on December 6, 1992, after having a term of just less
than two years. In 1993, Assembly elections were held in UP, thereafter. Mulayam Singh Yadav of the Samajwadi Party, supported by the BSP, which also became a partner in the Government, again became the Chief Minister. (Aggarwal and Chowdhry, 1996: 171).

In the Assembly polls of 1993, all non-BJP parties united to defeat the BJP, but despite this "unity" BJP remained the single largest party by winning 176 seats with 33.36 per cent votes. The SP-BSP alliance had won only 168 seats but it formed a government, which was, headed by Mulayam Singh Yadav, which lasted for one and a half years. Then due to differences with the SP, the BSP Secretary General Ms. Mayawati formed a new government that remained in power for 135 days. (Ibid: 173).

The UP Assembly was dissolved on October 27, 1995. The 1996 elections demonstrated the sliding influence of the JD and the Left Parties in UP. The JD already weakened by successive splits, was given a severe blow by Mulayam Singh Yadav, whose Government the JD had supported unconditionally.

The last few elections in UP had demonstrated that the Congress, the JD and Left parties are becoming politically irrelevant in the largest populated State of the country. Only the SP and BSP fighting each other
issuing rank casteist appeal and inducing Muslims would face the BJP. The BSP, however, vastly improved upon its earlier performance in 1991. The gain of 69 Assembly seats in the 1993 elections in alliance with the Samajwadi Party was an exception. After parting of ways with the SP, the BSP has not lost its clout and demonstrated that it is emerging as a force to reckon with and the Dalit votes are solidly behind it, plus a chunk of lower caste Muslims and OBCs.

The most significant aspect is the substantial increase in the poll percentage of the BSP, which touched about 18 per cent against nearly 19 of the SP. It is true that the SP contested only 64 seats against 85 by the BSP in UP, however, the accretion of the BSP vote compared to that of the SP is significant. The BJP vote percentage, which had showed an increase up to 34 per cent in the 1993 Assembly elections, came down to 31 per cent. (Aggarwal & Chowdhry, 1996:173).

In 1995 elections the Samajwadi Party and the Bahujan Samaj Party joined hands, and the BJP was handed a crushing defeat. The tactical understanding ended within two years and the SP leader Mr. Mulayam Singh Yadav, and the BSP leader Ms. Mayawati, fell apart since then. In successive elections since 1993, Mr. Mulayam Singh had been adopting a pro-Left stance. He even helped members of the
Communist parties got elected to the Assembly. During this phase, the Congress had a direct understanding with the BSP. The SP has developed a strong dislike for both the BSP and the Congress. Mr. Mulayam Singh’s refusal to extend support to Ms. Sonia Gandhi after the fall of the Vajpayee Government only worsened the situation. The two Left parties, which were to be electoral allies of Mr. Yadav, have also drifted away. (Rana, 2000: 355).

3.7 Electoral Scene 1999: The last Lok Sabha election was held in 1999. It would be worth looking at a glance through the electoral scene of 1999. The non-BJP parties in the State had all claimed that they were fighting the LS polls to strengthen secularism, but they were as divided as possible. They failed to arrive at a tactical understanding to extend indirect help to each other vis-à-vis their sworn enemy – the BJP. In their mutual acrimony, they did not mind that the nature of contest became favourable to the BJP, which was opposed by all of them.

3.7.1 The Muslims: The Muslims hold a key to power in the State. They comprise about 17 per cent of the votes and as such are one of the major vote blocks in the State. They can tilt the scale in at least 20 of the 85 Lok Sabha constituencies and can influence voting pattern in other
constituencies as well. The INC looked to them for its revival and the BSP for its survival, (Rana, 2000:355).

Despite their numerical strength in as many as 20 constituencies, only eight Muslims managed to get elected to LS this time. Of the lucky eight, three were from the BSP, two each from the INC and SP and one from RLD. The BSP had fielded the highest number of 17 Muslim debutantes, SP 15, INC 11, RLD two and the BJP one, (ibid: 356).

3.7.2 Dalit-Muslim votes: If keeping the BJP out of power was the sole consideration of Muslims in Uttar Pradesh then they had every reason to vote en bloc for the BSP. It was the BSP that sealed the fate of the BJP-led Government at the crucial vote of confidence in 1999, (ibid: 356).

Dalits and Muslims together roughly constitute 39 per cent of the electorate in the State (Dalits 21.6 per cent Muslims 17 per cent). This is 4 per cent higher than the BJP’s 36.49 per cent vote share in the 1998 polls. The DM formula can work wonders in the State and unsettle the existing political scenario. There are 71 Lok Sabha constituencies in the State where Muslims and Dalits together constitute more than 30 per cent of the electorate. In 37 constituencies, they constitute 35 per cent and above. In fact, there are 37 such seats where the Dalit-Muslim
combination constitute 40 per cent and above of the total electorate, (Ibid: 357). Thus it may be concluded that Dalits and Muslims combination in the UP elections may play very important role in deciding political structure in the state and to some extent in the Center as well.