

Chapter IV

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Samajwadi Party:
Visible Trends*

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4.1. Introduction

This chapter talks about the electoral history of Uttar Pradesh in general and of the Samajwadi Party in particular. It would give us a fair idea about the Party's performance in all the regions of U.P. and also the Party's standings in various elections. Further, it would be suggesting about SP's coalition trends and its resultant premise.

The electoral history of U.P. since 1980s is characterized by the rise of the backwards. The presence of the backwards in U.P. politics increased sharply in the 1989 Assembly ii, the Janta Dal (JD) won 208 seats with 30% votes and formed a government. The Samajwadi party has been formed largely on the social support base derived from the Janta Dal. It had emerged as a new political platform giving space to the newly energized marginalized sections of society-largely the Dalits and backwards-in the wake of "Second Democratic Upsurge" in 1989. But the sudden disintegration of the JD in 1990 banned the backward movement in U.P. in several ways-

1) It not only put the brakes on the backward movement in U.P. but also did irreparable damage to the same. Until date, the SP has not been able to scale those heights despite its continuously improving performance both in the Assembly and Lok Sabha elections except in 2007 assembly elections where its graph dipped immensely owing to Social Engineering of BSP. Though SP has attained absolute majority with 224 seats in 2012 assembly election, it has not been able to pick a place in the hearts and minds of electorates of U.P. due to worsening of law and order situation and its communalization strategy in the U.P.

2) It exposed those marginalized groups to at least three players-the BJP, the BSP, and the SP. In the following decade, political mobilization in U.P. saw intense social polarization but, unlike Bihar, this did not result in an alternative social coalition that succeeded in capturing political power.

One of the beneficiaries and carriers of the Mandal upsurge in North India has been the Samajwadi party. A major player in the politics of the largest state of the Indian union, the SP is a classic case of the rise and fall of Other Backward Caste (OBC) politics.' The Samajwadi Party has been at the centre of controversy ever since it formed a coalition ministry in U.P. During the last 25 years the SP and its earlier incarnations(the LD in 1980 and the JD in 1989) has on the one hand, led the mobilization of OBCs which helped the party in forming the government several times in U.P.(1989,1993,2002) with steadily improving performance in the assembly elections.(except 2007). But on the Other, the party has failed in defining, sharpening and consolidating the backward caste cleavages. Despite their claims of representing the socialist ideology of Dr. Lohiya, the policies and programmes pursued by the JD and the SP-both inside and outside the Government-do not substantiate their words. Madhu Limaye in this context has argued that- " the backward caste politics followed Lohiya's policy of anti-Congressism, which destroyed the Congress monopoly in power, but it has also bred opportunities and a lust for power." He is of the view that this has led to the contamination of the ideal of self-sacrifice and idealism on which the edifice of the socialist movement had been raised.

Further, the electoral history of U.P. in 1990s is marked by hung assemblies, horse-trading, short-lived Coalitions and endemic instability. The reasons may be attributed to poor governance and the disillusionment of the electorates. With the absence of flow of information within parties and close relationship between the leadership and the cadres, parties have lost their ability to absorb new social groups and proved of representation of voter's interests. Having polarized the electorate along caste and community lines they are now unable to overcome their narrow sectarian bases and become parties of principle and put forward any ideology or programme of development, creating widespread apathy and dissatisfaction among the public. It is only in 2007 that BSP's Social Engineering could prove fruitful and put a stop to what had been the endemic instability and breakdown of the governance.

The performance of the SP throughout the 1990s both in the Lok Sabha, and the Assembly elections in Uttar Pradesh has been quite impressive. The party showed a steady increase in the number of Lok Sabha seats won during the period (1991-4, 1996-16, 1998-20, 1999-26, 2004-35) and 2009, 2014-5 doubled its support base. Only 2009 has been an exception when it has lost 13 seats since what it has had five

years back. Similarly in Assembly elections, the SP showed a steady increase in the no. of seats (1989-34, 1993-109, 1996-109, 2002-143,) and the no. of votes polled. In assembly elections held in 2007 the party suffered a serious setback as its tally drastically came down to 97 seats and it lost 46 previously held seats. Yet we can not take the credit away from the SP as when all other parties were fighting for their survival in U.P.(except of course BSP), it seems quite credible for a regional party to climb to the number one spot in the state politics.

As has been suggested in the earlier chapter, the Samajwadi Party since 1998 is facing the dilemma of carrying forward its anti-BJP politics and at the same time avoiding joining a coalition led by the Congress party, though it supported UPA government from outside. The SP failed to capitalize on the historic opportunity presented for consolidating the backward classes in U.P. However, it did make an effort to form a social coalition by entering into a pre-poll alliance with the BSP during the 1993 assembly elections, but the experiment proved short-lived. The SP was attempting a difficult task because the peasant OBCs had exploited the Dalits. Besides, the SP-BSP alliance was hobbled by an inner contradiction in that both the parties were trying to woo the same set of voters- the backwards, the Dalits and the Muslims (Wright 1995: 22).

The electoral politics of U.P. were in a volatile situation throughout the 1980s; it was the time when Mulayam Singh was building his constituency in the state. Janta Dal was able to project itself as a party that cared for minorities, a legacy that Mulayam Singh later exploited to his advantage. Once the Samajwadi party came into being Mulayam Singh was able to get the support of the sections of OBCs and the Muslim community. This has produced a more or less stable voter base for the SP voting between 20-25% in each election. However, there was no uniformity in the success of the party in different regions of the state. The party graph was declining particularly in western U.P. which clearly showed that the SP had not been successful in making inroads to "Jatland", despite its effort to evolve a Yadav-Gujar-Muslim combine. Even when the SP entered into an electoral alliance with the BSP in 1993 assembly elections, the performance of the party did not improve. That explains the success of Rashtriya Lok Dal (RLD) in western U.P. where Ajit Singh continues to enjoy the legacy of his father Ch. Charan Singh and dominates the scene.

4.2. Region-wise breakup of Geo-political Situation in U.P.

To assess the SP's gains and losses both in terms of seats as well as the geographical spread of its performance in electoral politics, a region-wise break-up of U.P. is essential to be acquainted off.

Uttarakhand Region:

In the North-West, are the hill districts of Garhwal and Kumaon, which account for four Lok Sabha constituencies - Pauri Garhwal, Tehri Garhwal, Nainital and Almora. Although these districts are not in U.P. now and are a part of the state of Uttarakhand, we need to see SP's performance in this region prior to 2001. Here, it is a direct contest between the BJP and the Congress because it is an upper caste dominated region. Neither the BSP or SP have much of a stake here except in the plain areas which have a sizeable population of OBCs, Dalits and Muslims.

Ruhelkhand Region:

The hills give way to Ruhelkhand which starts in Bareilly at the foothills of the Kumaon range and stretches to Lakhimpur Kheri, formerly part of Avadh Kingdom. It covers the areas of Bareilly, Rampur, Aonla, Amroha, Sambhal, Muradabad, Pilibhit, Badaun, Shahjahanpur and Kheri. Ruhelkhand consists of 10 Lok Sabha and 50 Assembly seats. The SP's gains here have been uneven.

Western Uttar Pradesh:

Western U.P. is considered to be the Jatland in common parlance. It can be further divided into three areas, dominated by three important communities- the Jats, the Lodhi- Rajputs and the Yadavs. If the areas comprising of Ghaziabad, Meerut, Baghpat, Muzzaffarnagar, Kairana and Saharanpur are dominated by the intermediate peasant caste of Jats, the region containing Hathras, Aligarh, Khurja, Bulandshahr is the fiefdom of upwardly mobile Lodhi-Rajputs. And there is Brijbhoomi. It is also known as "Mulayam Singh's Country" which stretches from Mathura, Agra, Firozabad and right from Etah, Maipuri, Etawah up to Farrukhabad. This is totally Yadav belt. But in recent times Mathura is developing into a stronghold of Rashtriya Lok Dal where Jayant Chaudhary, son of Ajit Singh contest elections and is involved with local population. The region of Western U.P. has 13 Lok Sabha and 65 Assembly seats.

Avadh or Central U.P.:

From the borders of Farrukhabad and Kheri begins the erstwhile kingdom of Avadh, which covers the prestigious constituencies of Kanpur, Lucknow, Raebareilly, Pratapgarh, Sultanpur, Amethi and Faizabad. In current political classification this region is known as Avadh or Central U.P. It holds 21 Loksabha and 105 Assembly seats.

Eastern U.P. (Purvanchal /Bundelkhand):

Finally, the Eastern U.P. which accounts for 19 Lok Sabha and 95 Assembly seats along with 4 Lok Sabha and 20 Assembly seats from Bundelkhand, is politically very crucial. Bundelkhand is a further sub-division of eastern U.P. comprising of Jhansi, Banda and Hamirpur. While Purvanchal ranges from Gorakhpur, Deoria, Salempur, Ballia, Ghosi, Azamgarh, Jaunpur, Ghazipur, Varanasi, Robertsganj, Mirzapur and Allahabad.

The party has to worry about Bundelkhand where its seatwise performance in assembly elections had been constantly poor (1989-4, 1991-1, 1993-1, 1996-3, 2002-4). The BJP and BSP have been doing better. These parties got an almost identical share of votes in the 1999 Lok Sabha elections (BJP-24.76%, BSP-28.89%) but in the previous assembly elections the SP, with 23.1% of votes was not far behind the BJP (24%) and the BSP (28%). So we cannot write off the SP from Bundelkhand. The SP has improved its position there, rising from a poor 3.68% vote share in the 1993 assembly elections to 24.13% votes in 1999 Lok Sabha elections and 23.1% votes in the 2002 assembly elections (Verma 2002:1977). Though, the SP has been able to evolve a base among the OBCs of Bundelkhand. The results of the 2004 Lok Sabha elections are a testimony to this; the SP made almost a clean sweep by winning three of the four seats and capturing 32.2% votes. In other regions, i.e. Ruhelkhand, Doab, Avadh and Purvanchal, the SP continues to perform well. In the erstwhile, Uttarakhand region, the SP was an insignificant force. It never went beyond 6% votes there.

This has a major implication as far as the relationship between demographic composition of the electorate and the mobilization strategy adopted by the party is concerned. Even limited and partial backward caste mobilization could not be an all-U.P. phenomenon owing to differences in social stratification, production relations

and power structures in different parts of the state (Hasan 1989: 133). Western and Eastern U.P., the Bundelkhand, and Uttarakhand (now a separate state) are especially different. That is why the party could not even attempt limited caste homogenization in the entire state, and hence, could not strengthen itself in all areas especially in Bundelkhand and Uttarakhand.

However, 2007 assembly elections proved to be an eye-opener for the SP. It is due to the fact that out of 393 candidates having been fielded by the party, only 97 came out winning. In this way the party suffered huge loss of 46 seats, owing to the spectacular and astonishing success of BSP which captured 206 seats out of contesting at all seats. This is due to the reason that most of the Brahmins are not keen on joining the SP as they regard it as a party dominated by the aggressive Yadavs and Thakurs in which their position would be weak. Rather, they feel they would be in a better situation within the BSP to safeguard their position and attain posts of importance. The Brahmin-Dalit Combination, they also believe, can meet the challenge posed by the Yadav-Muslim bloc. Thus, Mayawati's tactics have added a new dimension to caste politics in U.P. as Brahmins are "feeling wanted" after a long time (Pai 2007:235).

As far as the tally of SP's seats are concerned in the 15th Lok Sabha elections held in 2009, the party held on to 23 seats out of 80 constituencies. The Samajwadi Party contested the election by forming "Fourth Front" including the SP, the RJD of Laloo Prasad Yadav and LJP of Ramvilas Paswan. The Fourth Front scrapped 27 seats together out of which 23 were scalped by the SP and rest of the 4 seats by RLD while the LJP did not trouble the scorers and came out for a duck.

As we have already discussed in the previous chapter, the Samajwadi party could not have been able to work for the consolidation of the entire backward community. It claimed to represent rural peasantry and the backwards but the fact remains that the party could not get even the votes of MRBCs and MBCs. In the 2009 Lok Sabha elections, even Muslims/Dalits voted in the favour of Congress, thanks to the energy supplied to the Congress Organization by its Gen. Secy. Rahul Gandhi. Congress raised its tally to 21 and superseded BSP to grab the second spot in the state just after the SP (see table). The most striking fact here is that SP lost its ground in U.P. as it came down to 23 seats in comparison to previously held 36 seats. Moreover, its voting % decreased from 26.07 in 2007 assembly election to 23.26 in 2009 Lok

Sabha Elections. This makes it crystal clear that SP's support base is rapidly declining. The factors which may be accounted for this decline are Party's- elusive Samajwad, non-ideological protests, secularism with minorityism, non-performance as a strong opposition, futility in national politics and moreover party's image associated with 3Cs- Crime, Capitalism and Corruption.

Table 4.1

Region-wise performance of the Samajwadi Party in the Lok Sabha and Assembly elections (1989- 2004)

| Year/ Region | Lok Sabha/ Assembly seats | 1989 JD | 1991 JNP | 1993 SP | 1996 SP | 1998 SP | 1999 SP | 2002 SP | 2004 SP |
|-----------------|---------------------------------|------------|-------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|
| WESTERN U.P. | L.S(13) | 12(54.5) | 0(9.72) | - | 1(18.40) | 0(22.73) | 1(13.96) | - | 2(10.8) |
| | ASSEM(65) | 47(42.28) | 2(5.97) | 5(8.67) | 10(14.14) | - | - | 7(20.8) | - |
| RUHEL KHAND | L.S.(IO) | 6(35.19) | 0(2.58) | - | 4(25.46) | 4(32.62) | 3(23.73) | - | 4(23.8) |
| | ASSEM(SO) | 21(27.6) | 3(11.80) | 16(22.62) | 15(23.83) | - | - | 22(25.6) | - |
| DOAB | L.S(14) | 11(43.7) | 1(12.08) | - | 3(20.89) | 5(33.69) | 8(30.44) | - | 9(35.0) |
| | ASSEM(70) | 47(36.2) | 12(20.2) | 25(25.3) | 22(28.19) | - | - | 27(23.1) | - |
| BUNDEL HAND | L.S(4) | 2(18.78) | 2(18.0) | - | 0(17.27) | 0(27.72) | 0(24.13) | - | 3(32.2) |
| | ASSEM(20) | 5(13.18) | 0(8.94) | 1(3.68) | 3(16.71) | - | - | 4(23.1) | - |
| AVADH | L.S(21) | 10(28.9) | 0(7.83) | - | 3(22.15) | 7(30.77) | 8(24.9) | - | 4(26.1) |
| | ASSEM(105) | 34(22.98) | 10(15.8) | 41(27.20) | 35(25.52) | - | - | 29(18.17) | - |
| PURV ANCHAL | L.S.(19) | 11(30.99) | 1(9.74) | - | 5(21.38) | 4(29.03) | 6(25.59) | - | 13(28) |
| | ASSEM.(95) | 52(27.71) | 7(11.56) | 20(12.89) | 25(22.03) | - | - | 57(26.7) | - |

Source: Verma 2007:176.

While assessing the electoral performance of the SP, we must also keep in mind the fragmented nature of the U.P. electorate⁵ and the multi-polar competition in the state. This puts certain limitations on the electoral performance of all parties. For instance, this has meant that the SP has very few constituencies that it can call "safe" as there is a tendency of constituencies changing hands frequently. Thus, there are only four constituencies that the SP has won continuously from 1996: Badaun, Kaisarganj, Phulpur and Mainpuri. Among the seats it won in 1998 and 1999, six seats were common and in five other constituencies, it won in 1996, lost in 1998 and won in 1999 again. If we add the two seats, it had won in both 1996 and 1998 but lost

in 1999 i.e Bijnor and Muradabad, then we may claim that these 17 constituencies are the stronghold of the SP. In the 1999 Lok Sabha elections, the SP lost its vote share by almost five percent from the last election, yet it gained six seats. It has been conjectured that this may have happened, not only because of the first-past -the-post system but also due to a conscious tactical voting against the BJP to ensure the defeat of its candidates (Frontline, Nov. 19, 1999:41).

A similar consideration seems to have prevailed over the electorate in the assembly election of 2002 as well. In that election, both SP and BSP improved their respective positions in the legislature. However, as we shall see later, the performance of the SP in 2002 had much to do with its appeal to different sections of the society, including the upper castes. What is noteworthy, however, is that the SP has been able to retain its vote share and in fact improve upon it, in comparison to its vote share in the 1999 elections from 24% to 25%.

This data clearly denotes that BJP is the biggest loser in U.P. since 2002 assembly elections. Its graph came down from 31.25% of votes to 17.50% of votes. The Bahujan Samaj Party has shown drastic development from 23.19 in 2002 to 30.43% of votes in 2007, though it has declined upto 3% in two years of BSP governance. Although, the Samajwadi party has held on to its solid Yadav Vote bank round about 26% of votes from 2002 to 2007, we see a steep decline in its no. of seats. Lok Sabha elections 2009 also suggest the deviation of Muslim vote base in favour of Congress as its vote% came down by 3%. However, INC-is increasing its support base in U.P. gradually and steadily from 9.0% of votes polled in 2002 to 12.0% in 2004 and 18.25% in 2009 Lok Sabha Elections alongwith 21 (+1) seats.

4.3. The Samajwadi Party's Political Alliance making Strategy

Electoral politics has become so complex in the 1990s that no consistency can be predicted in the alliance making pattern adopted by various parties. State based parties have shown a tendency to be flexible in opting for choices that would maximize electoral gains and chances of sharing power. The Samajwadi Party, however, underwent a long period during which its alliance making strategy was apparently guided more by ideological considerations than as much as electoral calculations. The anti-BJPism of the party emanates from its ideological commitment

to secularism, while Mulayam Singh's own history of political growth and evolution inhibits his party from entering into an alliance with the Congress.

The party was in the forefront of anti-BJP political combinations all through the 1990s and particularly after 1996. Mulayam Singh was, in fact, seen as the main leader of 'secular' forces in the country. This had two difficulties though. One was the political history from which Mulayam Singh has evolved and the politics of anti-Congressism. For someone like Yadav, it has been very difficult to cooperate with the Congress party and this issue came to the forefront in 1999 after the fall of the BJP-led NDA government. The position of the SP at that time was desperate to form non-BJP government. Later, SP has been very cautious in accepting the support of the Congress Party in running its ministry in U.P. So, this anti-Congress position, which is a remnant of the previous era of Indian politics, restricts the alliance making choices of the SP. Thus, we see that the SP's political alliance making strategy at the national level has been influenced by its non-CONGRESSism and anti-BJPism.

The second was even at the state level, the social relations between the OBCs and the Dalits, and among the OBCs have influenced the alliance making priorities of the SP. The possibility of an alliance with the BSP is restricted because of the structure of social relations in which the influential among the OBCs have in no way been less exploitative of the Dalits than the upper castes. These factors mean that the SP cannot have a longstanding alliance with the BSP and simultaneously, cannot have durable alliances with parties of smaller castes.

Even the social relations among the OBCs have been such that the dominant Yadavs and Ahirs have been seen as monopolizing the entire share allocated for the OBCs, hence causing consternation among the more backwards and the most backwards. This has forced SP to proceed on its own or to enter into alliances with only pretty parties in Uttar Pradesh, viz. the Rashtriya Kranti Party (RKP), the Communist Party of India-Marxist (CPM), the Samajwadi Janta Party (SJP), the National Loktantrik Party (NLP). The alliance of the SP with the left and secular parties also seems to be influenced by the desire of Mulayam Singh to become the Prime Minister. However, the Congress seemed to have settled scores with him on that issue when, despite the splendid performance of the SP in U.P. in the 2004 Lok Sabha elections, his party was totally marginalized in national politics.^{vi}

In this background during the last decade, it is being noticed that at least three shifts have occurred in the alliance making strategy of SP. These are:

- 1) In the earlier stages, the party worked for a non-Congress, non-BJP- THIRD FRONT coalition which included the Janta Dal and other left and secular parties. The coalition succeeded in forming a government in U.P. with Mulayam Singh Yadav as Chief Minister in 1989. It also succeeded in forming a national government in 1996 with H.D. Devegowda as Prime Minister, in which the Congress was not included but was allowed to support the coalition from the outside.
- 2) The SP diluted its anti-Congressism and was prepared to enter into a coalition of left and secular parties, which included the Congress in 1998-1999 but was very rigid about not accepting the leadership of Soniya Gandhi, on the ground that she was a foreigner (as she hails from Italy).
- 3) Of late, the SP has dropped its opposition to Soniya Gandhi becoming Prime Minister and has been prepared to go in for an alliance with all left and secular parties including the Congress under her leadership. This has become evident when SP supported UPA's Nuclear Deal with U.S.A. on the floor of the house (Lok Sabha).

This record shows the Consistent dilution in the coalition making strategies of the Samajwadi party (Verma 2004b: 1511). But the SP has been hesitant to go in for any pre-poll alliance with the Congress owing to certain considerations. First, owing to the desertion of the Lower OBCs or the MBCs, the SP is now pursuing inclusionary politics and also cultivating the support of the upper castes. An alliance with the Congress at the national level would mean that both the Muslims and the upper caste votes would probably go to Congress rather than to SP. This makes the alliance untenable, at least as a pre-election strategy. Second, an alliance with the Congress does not ensure the pre-eminence of the SP in the post-election scenario and nor does it further the national ambition of the party to make its president the prime-minister. All these factors force the SP to have limited and unreal choices even at the all-India level.

At the state level, the SP entered into an alliance with the BSP, a party with a solid dalit base, as far back as 1993 in the U.P. assembly elections. The SP-BSP

alliance did form a government but their relations were not harmonious and the experiment was short-lived (1993-1995). The SP was emerging as a dominant partner in the SP-BSP coalition. By June 1995, the SP had cornered the BSP by taking credit for reservations in schools, appointment of Urdu teachers, inducting the backwards especially Yadavs in the state police force and in the PAC(see table) and swept the panchayat polls.

Table- 4.2

Recruitment in the PAC and the U.P. Police during SP's Rule(June-July 1994):

| District | Selected candidates | SCs | STs | OBCs (Yadavs) | OBCs (Non-Yadavs) | Muslim | General | Others |
|-------------|---------------------|-----|-----|---------------|-------------------|--------|---------|--------|
| Mainpuri | 300 | 68 | 4 | 161 | 1 | 21 | 39 | 6 |
| Ghazipur | 351 | 87 | 8 | 168 | 8 | 15 | 53 | 12 |
| Azamgarh | 477 | 113 | 6 | 210 | 5 | 38 | 101 | 4 |
| Saharan pur | 345 | 83 | 6 | 142 | 8 | 27 | 66 | 13 |
| Fateh garh | 189 | 42 | 3 | 50 | 6 | 18 | 65 | 5 |
| Badaun | 190 | 44 | 3 | 78 | 3 | 16 | 41 | 5 |
| Rampur | 168 | 46 | 1 | 63 | 5 | 11 | 41 | 1 |
| Sitapur | 345 | 84 | 12 | 122 | 10 | 13 | 104 | - |
| Nainital | 66 | 15 | - | 12 | 7 | - | 29 | 3 |
| Dehradun | 65 | 14 | - | 24 | - | 1 | 26 | - |
| Jalaun | 150 | 41 | 2 | 58 | 4 | 14 | 31 | - |
| Fatehpur | 200 | 50 | 2 | 80 | 5 | 14 | 49 | - |
| Gonda | 305 | 61 | 65 | 130 | 2 | 21 | 81 | 4 |
| Total | 3181 | 778 | 53 | 1298 | 64 | 209 | 726 | 53 |

Source: Shafiuzzaman 2003:52.

The deteriorating relations between them culminated in the form of an ugly and infamous "Circuit House Incident". In this incident, Mayawati alleged that the goons of tried to kill her. Soon, the SP-BSP alliance came to an end. It was like an end of the possibility of developing a social cleavage on the basis of the backward classes and consequently, the consolidation of the same as a political constituency in U.P.

The above table clearly denotes the Yadavization procedure adopted by Mulayam Singh Yadav during postings of police personnel. It was considered as Yadavization campaign of Mulayam Singh Yadav. Besides, the government was accused of attempting to "Yadavize" the state police and Provincial Armed Constabulary. About 70% of the 3500 odd constables inducted into PAC were Yadavs. For the first time, DIG's and SSP's, most of them known to be close to Mulayam, were made Chairman of the recruitment boards. In fact, nowhere was Mulayam's strategy to divide and rule along caste lines more evident than the state Police. Yadavization also continued in administration in transfers to lucrative spots. This Shows SP's corrupt and opportunistic face.

In the 2002 Assembly elections in the state, the SP tried to form a post-poll alliance of like-minded parties but did not succeed. However, when Mayawati Government fell, Mulayam Singh formed the government in August 2003 by putting together a coalition comprising of the Congress, SP, RLD, Rashtriya Kranti Party(RKP), CPM, NLP. The RLD was originally in the BJP-led coalition and it was only when it decided to withdraw from it in May2003 that the RLD joined SP-led coalition. This was the first time that the Congress, SP and the RLD had come together.

For the Lok Sabha election of 2004, the SP has been quick to enter into an electoral alliance with the RLD in Western U.P., though its declared stand was not to enter into any pre-poll alliance but to seek and extend support to other parties or issues after the polls. Hence, the pre-poll alliance with RLD is a reversal of its earlier stand and appeared to be influenced by the need to avoid any division of votes in rural peasantry. It cannot be denied that the RLD and the SP are the two most natural allies so far as professed ideological position is concerned; both represent the rural peasantry, though belonging to different classes and hence, can be quite complimentary to each other.

4.4. The Samajwadi Party's political Approach to Muslims

Mulayam Singh had established his credentials as a friend of the Muslims when as U.P. Chief Minister he had forestalled the nefarious plan of the Fascist forces to demolish the historic Babri Mosque on 30th October and 2nd November 1990. The demolition of the Mosque on 6th December 1992, when a BJP government with

Kalyan Singh as Chief Minister was in power, made the Muslim Community more appreciative of Mulayam's steadfastness and loyalty to the Indian Constitution. Moreover, the Central government's failure to protect the mosque alienated the Muslims from the Congress Party as well. Once he was in power, Mulayam left no stone unturned to establish his support base among the minority community. He created greater employment opportunities by instituting over 6000 posts of Urdu teachers in the state's schools. He further announced that Urdu would be the second language of the state and would be used on all sign-boards and name-plates in every government office of the state. Further, as against 17% Muslim population in the state, their representation in the assembly from 1952 to 2002 remained only 8.5%. During the first assembly polls in 1952, the Indian National Congress (INC) nominated 41 Muslims, of whom 40 were elected; this figure came down to four in 2002. The post-Ayodhya scenario brought Muslims much closer to other socially excluded communities such as the yadavs and the dalits to strengthen the base of political parties like the SP and the BSP. The 1996 poll witnessed the emergence of many Muslim leaders from the SP platform. Of the total of 33 Muslim members elected, 19 were from SP, followed by eight from the Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP). The BSP worked on the strategy of dalit-Muslim combination, particularly appealing to the lower sects (caste) amongst the Muslims. On its part, the Congress, sensing the disenchantment of the community, gradually reduced the number of Muslim contestants from 11% in 1980 to just 3% in 1996, though it made a U-turn in 2002 sharply increasing the number. At present The Samaj wadi Party has been able to send 21 Muslim legislators to Assembly out of its total 97 candidates.

Muslims as formidable electoral group have a contribution, for out of the 403 assembly segments. The Muslims constitute 25% of the electorate at least in 170 segments. A comparison of 1996 and 2002 assembly elections in the state vindicate the argument that the Congress witnessed a sharp decline in terms of percentage of Muslim votes polled by the party, though the number of Muslim legislators elected on the party ticket remained virtually unchanged. In contrast, the SP improved its share of Muslim votes from 48% in 1996 to 53% in 2002 while the BSP maintained a status quo in terms of votes, even though the number of Muslims elected on the BSP platform rose from eight in 1996 to 14 in 2002. As a matter of fact the Congress witnessed a steep drop in Muslim vote from 54% of the total votes it polled in 1980

(Lok Sabha) to 14% in 2004 (Lok Sabha) whereas the SP share of Muslim votes shot up from 49% in 1991 (Lok Sabha) to 61% in 2004 (Lok Sabha); the BSP improved its share from 4% in 1991 (Lok Sabha) to 10% in 2004 (Lok Sabha).

Table-4.3

Pattern of Muslim Voting and Muslims Elected to the UP Assembly

| Elections | Congress | | Samajwadi Party | | Bahujan party Samaj | |
|-------------------|----------|------|-----------------|-------|---------------------|-------|
| | 1996 | 2002 | 1996 | 2002 | 1996 | 2002 |
| Votes polled | 8.10 | 8.96 | 22.41 | 25.37 | 20.12 | 23.86 |
| % of Muslim votes | 12 | 10 | 48 | 53 | 12 | 10 |
| Muslims elected | 3 | 4 | 19 | 23 | 8 | 14 |
| Muslims contested | 13 | 61 | 46 | 47 | 46 | 82 |

Source: CSDS Data Unit.

In recently held Lok Sabha Elections, Muslims reverted back to Congress owing to the fact of Mulayam Singh tried to befriend Kalyan Singh and his party and the SP has paid the price off in the way of loss of 3% votes and 13 seats. To be associated with Kalyan Singh has brought a dilemma in the minds of Muslim Intelligentsia that Muslims are just being befooled by the party and it does not take into consideration the emotions of such a large electorate just for the greed of power.

In a very recent press statement, Mulayam Singh has tendered a public apology to the country in general and Muslims in particular for taking support of Kalyan Singh who is considered as responsible for the demolition of the Babri Mosque. This atonement for his mistake underscored his concern for rediscovering his muslim support base, which deserted SP in the 2009 Lok Sabha elections in the wake of his alliance with Kalyan Singh. The trend continued in subsequent bye-elections.

With assembly polls due in 2017, the support of Muslims is considered crucial for the Samajwadi Party's survival in U.P. Already the Minority community appears to have found an alternative in the Congress and BSP. U.P. Mayawati is also sparing no effort to woo Muslims through the "Brotherhood Committees." And New social engineering formula part-2 by combining Dalits and Muslims together.

4.5. Development and governances trump caste identities in U.P.

The 2014 Lok Sabha elections result in Uttar Pradesh (UP) surprised all, not because it went in favour of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), but because of the reach and sweep of the party, both in terms of geography and demography. On the eve of the poll, it was widely acknowledged that there was a Narendra Modi wave in UP. But even a generous assessment was that the BJP could at best replicate its 1998 performance - when it won 57 of the 82 seats, and secured 36.5% of the votes (Verma 2014). However, the voters thought otherwise. In the last seven years (2007-14), we see that UP voters have been regularly springing surprises. They surprised all in 2007 by giving an absolute majority to the Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) when many had thought that a fractured mandate was inevitable in the caste-ridden state. They surprised all in 2009 by electing 21 Congressmen as Members of Parliament (MPs) when many thought that the Congress was in terminal decline in UP (Beg and Kumar 2009). They again surprised all in 2012 by giving an absolute majority to the Samajwadi Party (SP) when political observers expected that the work done by Rahul Gandhi would enable the Congress to sustain its performance of the 2009 Lok Sabha elections (Verma 2012). The saffron sweep of 2014 appears to be yet another surprise.

For about a quarter of a century, political competition in UP centred around regionally dominant, caste-based parties, mainly the BSP and SP, while national parties, especially the Congress and BJP, were marginalised. Caste-based identity politics became the fulcrum of electoral politics in the state, with both the SP and BSP developing caste-centred support bases, which provided 20% or more of their votes: The SP was based on the support of the Other Backward Classes (OBCs), mainly Yadavs, and the BSP on dalit support. After the second democratic upsurge, from 1989 onwards (Yadav 1999), only the SP and BSP have formed governments in UP, except for intermittent BJP governments on four different occasions.¹ The BJP's share of seats had been declining in assembly elections, from 221 in 1991 to 47 in 2012. This was accompanied by a fall in its vote share, from 31.5% in 1991 to 15% in 2012. In the 2009 Lok Sabha elections, the party won only 10 seats and secured 17.5% of the vote. It was a risky proposition for scholars and commentators to predict that the BJP would sweep the poll this time, even though there were strong indications of voters' preference for the party and its prime ministerial candidate Modi.² Thus, the 2014 Lok Sabha elections signalled a paradigm shift in voters' behaviour in UP, with

good governance and development being preferred over the identity politics of caste and community.

4.5.1. Electoral backdrop

The Lok Sabha elections was preceded by at least three significant issues in UP. One, the Muzaffarnagar communal conflagration, which affected the social climate of the state, greatly dented the image of the Akhilesh Yadav government and the SP. The management of the riots and the post-riot relief camps angered both Hindus and Muslims. Hindus accused the government of blatantly siding with Muslims, and Muslims accused the government of not paying attention to riot victims. Various tracker polls conducted by the Centre for the Study of Developing Societies (CSDS) during 2013-14 showed that despite the government's attempt to blame the BJP, the people saw the government as being culpable, not the party.

Two, the impressive debut of the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) and its government in Delhi under the chief ministership of Arvind Kejriwal prompted people to see it as an alternative to both the Congress and BJP. When AAP came to power in Delhi in December 2013, the Modi campaign seemed to suddenly lose much of its sheen in UP, and many wondered if AAP would be the top performer in the state in the Lok Sabha poll. But, the resignation of the Kejriwal government was met with strong public disapproval, which was canalised in favour of Modi, who never let go the opportunity.

Finally, that opportunity was put to the best use when Modi decided to make Varanasi his parliamentary constituency, giving the people hope of development based on the Gujarat model. A combination of these issues created an electoral turf favourable to the BJP in UP, making the task of Amit Shah, its leader-in-charge of the state, a little easier.

4.5.2. Electoral outcome

In UP'S 80 Lok Sabha constituencies, 8.1 crore voters (out of 13.88 crore registered voters) voted, taking the turnout to 58.4%-8% less than the national average (66.5%), but still an increase of 10.6% over the 2009 turnout in the state. In all, 1,368 candidates belonging to more than 30 political parties and independents contested. The state had a six-phase poll schedule that lasted just over a month (10 April-12 May). The BJP swept the poll, winning 71 of the 78 seats it contested. Its ally, the Apna Dal (AD), won two seats (Mirzapur and Pratapgarh). Thus, the National

Democratic Alliance (NDA) won 73 seats. The remaining seven were shared by the Congress (Raebareli and Amethi) and the SP (Azamgarh, Mainpuri, Kannauj, Badaun, and Firozabad). Both parties were reduced to a family coterie - the Congress to a mother-son duo (Sonia Gandhi and Rahul Gandhi), and the SP to Mulayam Singh Yadav, his daughter-in-law Dimple, and nephews Dharmendra and Akshay.³ All others, including the BSP, drew a blank.

In terms of votes, all parties, except the BJP and AD, lost. Compared to 2009, the Congress lost 10.8% of its votes, the BSP 7.8%, the Rashtriya Lok Dal (RLD) 2.4%, the SP 1.1%, and other parties 3% (Table 1). Together, they lost 25%, and this chunk was transferred to the BJP, which got 43.3% of the votes, a huge increase over its 2009 figure of 17.5%. Significantly, the SP lost the least - just 1% of the vote (from 23.3% in 2009 to 22.2% in 2014). But, the BJP secured 42.3% of the vote, almost double the SP'S share. Thus, the electoral outcome was a massive BJP wave, a wave that swept away all other parties though the SP largely held its fort in terms of vote share.

Table 4.4

Performance of Political Parties in UP Lok Sabha Election (2014)

| Party | Seats Contested | Won | Change from 2009 | Vote(%) | Change from 2009 (%) |
|----------|-----------------|-----|------------------|---------|----------------------|
| Congress | 67 | 2 | -19 | 7.5 | -10.8 |
| BJP | 78 | 71 | +61 | 42.3 | +24.8 |
| BSP | 80 | 0 | -20 | 19.6 | -7.8 |
| SP | 78 | 5 | -18 | 22.2 | -1.1 |
| RLD | 8 | 0 | -S | 0.9 | -2.4 |
| AD | 2 | 2 | 2 | 1.0 | + 0.2 |

Source: CSDS Data Unit.

4.5.3. Features of the verdict

After about 25 years, the people of the state refused to go along with caste-based parties and preferred to vote for development and good governance, the twin planks on which the BJP'S prime ministerial candidate, Modi, sought a mandate. Most people had little idea about what the Gujarat model of development was; yet they were convinced that Modi, who had developed his state, should be given a chance.

Why did UP voters think so? The people of the state had seen two models of governance and development. One was the Manmohan Singh-Sonia Gandhi national model of governance and development for 10 years - full of scams, political corruption, rising prices, and misuse of power. The second was the Mulayam Singh Yadav-Akhilesh Yadav model of governance that smacked of incompetence, lack of vision, blatant casteism, freebee politics, Muslim appeasement, and a deteriorating security environment.⁴ The people were disenchanted with the United Progressive Alliance (UPA) government at the centre and the SP government in the state. When these two models were juxtaposed with the Gujarat model of development, voters thought betting on Modi was a good idea.

In addition, voters may have believed that caste parties such as the SP and BSP had become irrelevant in national governments. The two parties were not part of either UPA or UPA n, and looking at the scenario, many knew that there was no possibility of a UPA in. Hence, even without disconnecting themselves from their caste parties, many voters had made up their minds to vote for Modi in the Lok Sabha poll. They were actually voting for Modi, not the BJP. Two, they well understood the difference between national and state elections, and there was no commitment to vote for the BJP in the assembly election in 2017. Three, they have retained ties with their caste parties, and the possibility of shifting towards them when it comes to the state elections, exists - a warning to the BJP. That may give Shah a few headaches. The focus was on development, and voters saw Modi as an effective instrument of development and change.

A second feature of this election was the clinical organisation of all election-related activities, which were centred on branding Modi and marketing "brand Modi" to the UP electorate. Modi had already established himself as a prime ministerial brand through his development work in Gujarat, and through his "connect with the people" programmes in UP. People knew brand Modi well. Shah did his job efficiently and embarked on making the product - brand Modi - accessible in even the remotest rural parts of UP using hi-tech and innovative methods.

Among the prime ministerial brands in the political market (Modi, Rahul Gandhi, Mulayam Singh Yadav, Nitish Kumar Mamata Banerjee, and so on), Modi was the only legitimate one because his party had already declared him as its prime

ministerial candidate. Other brands lacked this legitimacy, and also the clarity on how they would get to the magic number of 272 seats required to form a government. That almost made Modi the only reliable prime ministerial brand, compelling people to vote for BJP candidates to make him the prime minister of India.

Though Shah was an outsider to UP, he earned a name for doing his job with surgical precision - from candidate selection to conducting hi-tech election campaigns, and arranging funds to election booth management. He gave importance to local BJP leaders who had been visible in party activities in their constituencies in the past couple of years. He gave detailed guidelines on how to conduct election campaigns; what the focus had to be; and how resources had to be pooled by adjacent constituencies. The 80 Lok Sabha seats were divided into 21 clusters of three to five seats. These clusters were grouped into eight zones, and all zones were under the state unit. A separate strategy for mobilisation was devised for each cluster, and that included drawing people from a radius of 175 kilometres for Modi meetings.⁵

Shah has to be given credit for the pre-poll alliance with the AD, which appeared to be an insignificant player but proved to be a potent political factor. The AD's former president Sone Lal Patel was in the BSP before he broke away to form his own party. So, the AD had links among both the most backward classes and dalits. By the pre-poll alliance, Shah ensured that about 2,00,000 Patel voters in Varanasi voted for Modi. This strong social group supported and voted for the BJP-AD combine in all constituencies, giving the impression that the BJP was an OBC-oriented party. While it was a great bargain for the AD, which won two seats as a BJP ally, the alliance gave the BJP a subaltern orientation that might have encouraged not only OBCs, but also dalits to vote for it.

In doing his job, Shah was assisted by the Citizens for Accountable Governance (CAG), a non-profit, non-governmental organisation (NGO).⁶ It employed about 200 to 400 full-time paid people, 800 paid interns, and 1,00,000 volunteers from Indian Institutes of Technology (IITS), Indian Institutes of Management (IIMS), Brown University, Columbia University, California Institute of Technology, and London School of Economics, and former employees of financial firms such as JP Morgan and Goldman Sachs, and some start-ups. The GAG worked as full-time consultant to the Modi campaign. It did an in-depth data analysis of the 4so-odd

constituencies contested by the BJP, and looked at winning seats as project management challenges.

Shah got the CAG to design special campaigns for UP such as *Modi Aane Wale Hain* (Modi's arrival is imminent), using about 400 video vans to take Modi to thousands of villages, and the Bharat Vijay rallies during which Modi spoke at three or four places but was projected as a 30 holographic image to 100 locations simultaneously (Sruthijith 2014). This projection had a magical effect and the effect was reflected in the outcome -for the first time, the BJP got more votes in rural UP (43.4%) than urban centres (40.6%), according to CSDS data. That draws the curtain on the theory that the BJP is an urban-centric party with no rural base. It also dented the social base of the BSP and SP, which mainly had a rural support base.

A third feature of this election was the all-out support and campaigning for the BJP by the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS), which claims to be a cultural and non-political organisation. But the RSS is the parent organisation of the BJP. It looked as if the RSS had taken upon itself the invisible part of the campaign, which included rural mobilisation by *swayam sevaks*, leaving the visible campaign to Modi. It was very surprising that no important BJP leader accompanied Modi at the 450-odd meetings addressed by him. It was a one-man show, and there was apprehension among BJP sympathisers about sabotage by local BJP leaders. But the strategy worked, and the BJP made deep inroads into rural areas.

Modi Wave?

One feature of the 2014 election is the controversy over whether there was a Modi wave. All the parties opposed to the BJP denied its existence, and ridiculed the idea, saying that it was only in the media, not on the ground. But, looking at the crowds pulled by Modi, one was inclined to believe that, the people who gathered in the scorching heat at his rallies were curious about him and his development model. However, the big question before the BJP and Modi was whether the crowds would be converted into votes for the BJP.

Two things helped with the conversion. One was voter awareness and mobilisation campaigns. Such campaigns were launched by the Election Commission of India, several NCOS, various media outfits, several educational institutions in collaboration with district administrations, and political parties. That resulted in

nearly a 10% higher voter turnout. These voters, many conjectured, were either development-minded first-timers, or upper- and middle-class voters who were generally BJP sympathisers, but looked out for themselves.

Two, Modi established an early rapport with the people through his rallies and oratorical skills. He was appointed the chief of the BJP campaign committee in early June and made the party's prime ministerial candidate on 13 September 2013. He began a dialogue with people all over, and, as the campaign progressed, his ability to reach out to them became more marked through the use of sophisticated communication technology. For the UP electorate, fed up with the national and state governments and experiencing double anti-incumbency, Modi became the obvious choice. Considering that his party (with the AD) won 73 of the 80 seats, an accretion of 63 seats over 2009, one feels convinced that there was a strong Modi wave in UP, which the other parties either failed to discern or ignored deliberately.

SP- BSP LOSS

Why did the SP lose all seats except the five fought by Mulayam Singh Yadav's family members, and why did the BSP not win a single seat? The SP supremo had nursed prime ministerial ambitions. During the election campaign, he repeatedly exhorted his cadre to fetch him 70 Lok Sabha seats as a gift to fulfil his ambition.⁷ Instead, the electorate gave him five seats. Given the Akhilesh Yadav government's growing unpopularity, and its loss of control over administration, people had been drifting away from the SP, though its core constituency of Yadavs and Muslims continued with it. But Mayawati of the BSP was set on torpedoing Mulayam Singh Yadav's ambition. She conducted a low-profile election campaign, and, perhaps surreptitiously, ensured the transfer of dalit votes to the BJP, especially in constituencies where it was in direct fight with the SP (Verma 2014). According to the National Election Studies (NES) data, the BSP lost 16% Jatav and 35% non-Jatav dalit votes compared to 2009; and the BJP virtually got them en bloc, registering a 14% rise in Jatav and 37% rise in non-Jatav dalit votes (Table 4.5).

Table 4.5.**BJP Gains across All Castes and Communities, 2009 and 2014 Lok Sabha Elections Compared**

| Caste/Community | Congress | | | BJP | | | BSP | | | SP | | |
|--------------------|----------|------|-----|------|------|-----|------|------|-----|------|------|-----|
| | 2009 | 2014 | +/- | 2009 | 2014 | +/- | 2009 | 2014 | +/- | 2009 | 2014 | +/- |
| Brahmin | 31 | 11 | -20 | 53 | 72 | +19 | 9 | 5 | -4 | 5 | 5 | 0 |
| Rajput | 6 | 7 | +1 | 53 | 77 | +24 | 7 | 5 | -2 | 12 | 8 | -4 |
| Vaish | 18 | 12 | -6 | 57 | 71 | +14 | 14 | 4 | -10 | 11 | 10 | -1 |
| Other upper castes | 31 | 3 | -28 | 54 | 79 | +25 | 10 | 1 | -9 | 6 | 4 | -2 |
| Jat | 13 | 13 | 0 | 31 | 77 | +46 | 41 | 6 | -35 | 10 | 8 | -2 |
| Yadav | 11 | 8 | -3 | 6 | 27 | +21 | 5 | 3 | -2 | 73 | 53 | -20 |
| Kurmi/Koeri | 28 | 16 | -12 | 20 | 53 | +33 | 18 | 4 | -14 | 18 | 17 | -1 |
| OtherOBC | 17 | 8 | -9 | 29 | 60 | +31 | 19 | 11 | -8 | 25 | 13 | -12 |
| Jatav | 4 | 2 | -2 | 5 | 18 | +13 | 84 | 68 | -16 | 5 | 4 | -1 |
| Other SCs | 16 | 4 | -12 | 8 | 45 | +37 | 64 | 29 | -35 | 10 | 10 | 0 |
| Muslims | 25 | 11 | -14 | 6 | 10 | +4 | 18 | 18 | 0 | 30 | 58 | +28 |
| Others | 17 | 8 | -9 | 24 | 51 | +27 | 27 | 20 | -7 | 23 | 17 | -6 |

Source: National Election Studies 2014, CSDS Data Unit.

BJP Gains All-round

The election saw a phenomenal rise in support for the BJP, from a meagre 15% of the vote in the 2012 assembly election to 42.3% in 2014, a rise of 27.3% in two years. Even if we take changes in its vote share between 2009 and 2014, we see an increase of 24.8%. That was very significant for two reasons. One, the increased vote share was reflected in every social denomination, and two, it was evenly spread across all the seven sub-regions of the state - west UP, Rohilkhand, Doab, Bundelkhand, Avadh, east UP, and north-east UP. The fundamental question is why UP's voters did not favour caste parties in 2014 and voted so overwhelmingly for the BJP.

As Table 4.5 shows, the upper castes went with the BJP (more than 70%) and that was understandable because they were traditionally the party's supporters. But OBC support, including Yadavs, for the BJP was a new phenomenon in UP: Among its voters were 27% Yadavs, 53% Kurmis/Koeris, and 60% OBCs (mainly more backward and most backward). Communal polarisation in west UP resulted in 77% Jats voting

for the BJP though they had been traditional supporters of Ajit Singh's RLD. Modi's most backward caste (Teli) identity was probably responsible for a huge OBC shift towards the BJP. Mulayam Singh Yadav's monopoly of OBC and Yadav votes was very effectively challenged by Modi. Though OBCS in general showed divided loyalties, they appeared to favour Modi for national politics, while retaining loyalty for Mulayam Singh Yadav in state politics.

Interestingly, Modi neither made his OBC status an issue during the campaign nor indulged in caste politics. His inclusive development model approach attracted all. But, one must admit that without being casteist, Modi very forcefully intervened in the OBC discourse and gave many OBCS cause for pride and elation. Similarly, 18% Jatavs and 45% ati-dalits voted for the BJP. While the Congress was trying to rope in dalits through the initiatives of Rahul Gandhi, the BJP turned out to be the real beneficiary. The OBCS and dalits had to choose between the identity politics pursued by the SP and BSP on one hand, and the development politics promised by Modi on the other. Most of the subaltern castes felt that their day-to-day life remained unchanged, and identity politics had not been able to deliver the fruits of development to them. They were ready to set aside caste politics and experiment with the promised development of their own clan leader, Modi of the BJP.

Muslim Vote

The 2014 election did not show any marked change in Muslim voting behaviour despite uncertainty till the end. They largely voted for SP and BSP. Also, about 10% of the Muslims voted for the BJP, indicating a rise in the community's support by 4% over 2009. That was really very significant given the Modi-bashing indulged in by all parties. Rahul Gandhi even gave a casualty figure at a rally in Solan (Himachal Pradesh) when he reportedly said that 22,000 people would be massacred if Modi became the prime minister.⁸ The BJP registered accretions in vote share among all social groups, including Muslims. However, we must remember that this happened in 2007 with the BSP and in 2009 with the Congress (Beg, Kumar and Verma 2014).

The Congress lost votes in all social groups in 2014, even its Muslim support was reduced to less than half (11%) that of 2009. The same trend was discernible in the case of the BSP and SP. The BSP lost votes in all social groups, including Jatavs (by 16 percentage points) and ati-dalits (by 35 percentage points), its core

constituency. It also lost heavily among brahmins and all upper castes, prompting many to wonder if Mayawati's *sarvjan samaj* was a thing of the past. As Mayawati had a game plan of "teaching Mulayam a lesson", even at the cost of substantial losses to her party, drawing such a conclusion would be wrong.

We see depletion in the SP's core support base of Yadavs. Their support (53%) declined by 20 percentage points from 2009. However, contrary to expectations, Muslim support for the SP increased by a massive 28 percentage points (to 58% since 2009) despite resentment against the government's handling of the Muzaffarnagar riots. Except among Muslims, the SP lost votes in all social groups. Mayawati's charge that Muslims did not vote for the BSP is not proved by NES 2014 data, which shows Muslim support for the BSP remained unchanged at 18%

An intriguing part of Muslim voting behaviour was that irrespective of the density of Muslim population in constituencies, the vote share of both the BJP and SP remained very close to their average aggregate. But the interesting part of the story was that the BJP's vote share increased in constituencies with more Muslims. The same was true of the SP, though its vote share declined in four constituencies with more than 40% Muslims (Table 3). Significantly, the BJP (10%) was almost equal to the Congress (11%) in attracting Muslim votes, though the SP still remained the first choice of Muslims (58%), way ahead of the BSP (18%) (Table 4.5).

Table 4.6

Performance of Various Parties in Constituencies with Different Muslim Population Percentages in 2014 Lok Sabha Elections

| Percentage of Muslims | Total Seats | Congress + | | BJP + | | BSP | | SP | |
|-----------------------|-------------|------------|------|-------|------|-----|------|-----|------|
| | | Won | Vote | Won | Vote | Won | Vote | Won | Vote |
| Less than 10 | 15 | 1 | 9.9 | 13 | 42.1 | 0 | 20.3 | 1 | 20.7 |
| 10-20 | 37 | 1 | 7.7 | 33 | 43.1 | 0- | 20.8 | 3 | 21.2 |
| 20-40 | 24 | 0 | 7.5 | 23 | 44.2 | 0 | 17.9 | 1 | 24.7 |
| 40 and above | 4 | 0 | 13.6 | 4 | 44.9 | 0 | 16.6 | 0 | 21.6 |
| Total | 80 | 2 | 8.4 | 73 | 43.3 | 0 | 19.6 | 5 | 22.2 |

Source: CSDS Data Unit.

The 2014 Lok Sabha elections in UP will be remembered for the BJP demolishing many myths about itself. As Tables 4, 5, and 6 suggest, the party received massive support not only from all social groups, but also from all classes. It equalled the BSP (32%) in getting the support of the poor (31%), while it overtook both the BSP and SP in getting the support of lower- (BJP 46%, SP 22%, BSP 19%) and middle-class voters (BJP 41%, SP 22%, BSP 19%) (Table 4). The same was seen in the support of illiterates and the uneducated. Right from non-literates to the highest educated, the BJP remained the first choice, though the support grew with rising educational levels (Table 5). There was no gender involved in choosing the BJP. It was the first choice of both men (44%) and women (42%) (Table 6). Thus, the BJP excelled in garnering support from all social groups cutting across caste and class lines.

Table 4.7

Party Preference by Class, UttarPradesh2014

| Class | Congress + RLD | BJP | BSP | SP | Others | NOTA |
|--------------|---------------------------|------------|------------|-----------|---------------|-------------|
| Poor | 6 | 31 | 32 | 24 | 5 | 2 |
| Lower | 8 | 46 | 19 | 22 | 4 | 1 |
| Middle | 10 | 41 | 19 | 22 | 7 | 1 |
| Upper | 9 | 51 | 12 | 20 | 7 | 1 |

Source: CSDS Data Unit.

Table 4.8

Party Preference by Education, Uttar Pradesh 2014

| Education | Congress + | BJP+ | BSP | SP | OTHER |
|-------------------|-----------------------|-------------|------------|-----------|--------------|
| Non-literate | 6 | 34 | 29 | 25 | 6 |
| Up to primary | 11 | 39 | 22 | 24 | 4 |
| Uptomatric | 9 | 45 | 18 | 22 | 6 |
| College and above | 8 | 51 | 13 | 19 | 7 |

Source: CSDS Data Unit.

Table 4.9**Party preference by Gender, Uttar Pradesh 2014**

| Gender | Congress+ RLD | BJP+ AD | BSP | SP | Others |
|---------------|--------------------------|----------------|------------|-----------|---------------|
| Male | 8 | 44 | 17 | 23 | 6.4 |
| Female | 8 | 42 | 23 | 21 | 5.1 |

Source: CSDS Data Unit.

During the election, two issues occupied attention. One, would the BJP benefit in west UP from a polarisation of Hindu-Muslim votes after the Muzaffarnagar riots? Two, would Modi contesting from Varanasi in eastern UP (purvanchal, which includes both east UP and north-east UP) help the BJP revive its fortunes in that region? The party won just four Lok Sabha seats in 2009 and three in 2004 of the 29 seats there. The BJP had also done poorly in Avadh (central UP) and Doab (between West UP and Avadh), winning just one of the 14 Lok Sabha seats each in 2004 and 2009. In Bundelkhand, the BJP drew a blank in 2009. So, there was curiosity about whether Modi's candidature would give the BJP an edge in all the sub regions.

Judging from the people's enthusiasm about Modi and their expectations of him, the only question was how much of an impact he would have in UP. Many tracker polls conducted by Lokniti-CSDS during January-March 2014 projected the BJP'S vote share at 38%, which was 1.5% higher than the party's highest ever of 36.5% in 1998 (Verma 2014).

Table 7 gives region-wise votes and seats obtained by political parties in 2014. It is interesting to note that the BJP secured its highest vote share in west UP (50.2%) confirming Hindu-Muslim polarisation there. Jats, who had been voting with Muslims for the RLD, voted for the BJP this time. Even dalits and many Congress supporters voted for the BJP in this region. The result was that the BJP swept all seven seats in west UP. The BSP with 18.5% and the SP with 17.8% of the votes in west UP were way behind the BJP. The same trend was discernible in other

Table 4.10
Regional Variation in Lok Sabha Election Result, Uttar Pradesh (2014)

| Region | Total Seats | Turnout | Congres | | BJ | | BS | | SP | |
|-------------|-------------|---------|---------|------|-----|------|-----|------|-----|------|
| | | | Won | Vote | Won | Vote | Won | Vote | Won | Vote |
| Rohilkhand | 10 | 61.7 | 0 | 4.1 | 9 | 42.6 | 0 | 17.7 | 1 | 31.4 |
| Avadh | 14 | 58.1 | 2 | 17.4 | 11 | 37.6 | 0 | 20.8 | 0 | 15.9 |
| East | 17 | 54.8 | 0 | 4.8 | 15 | 37.9 | 0 | 21.7 | 1 | 21.4 |
| West | 9 | 64.9 | 0 | 6.6 | 9 | 50.2 | 0 | 18.5 | 0 | 17.8 |
| Doab | 14 | 59.4 | 0 | 4.3 | 11 | 46.1 | 0 | 18.0 | 3 | 25.2 |
| Bundelkhand | 4 | 59.4 | 0 | 6.6 | 4 | 45.0 | 0 | 20.6 | 0 | 22.1 |
| North-east | 12 | 54.9 | 0 | 7.0 | 12 | 41.5 | 0 | 19.7 | 0 | 23.0 |
| Total | 80 | 58.4 | 2 | 7.5 | 71 | 42.3 | 0 | 19.6 | S | 22.2 |

Source: CSDS Data Unit.

Regions - In Bundelkhand, the BJP won all four seats with 45% of the vote; in Avadh, it won 11 out of 14 seats with 37.6% of the vote, and in Doab it won 11 out of 14 seats with 46.1%.

The Modi sweep was almost total in east UP. Of the 29 Lok Sabha seats in the region, the BJP won 27, and its vote share was very high (40%); almost double of what it got in 2009. East UP has a high concentration of OBCs, and Modi's OBC origin seemed to have worked in the region. Mulayam Singh Yadav and Akhilesh Yadav had neglected the more backward and the most backward sections while indulging in their myopic politics of favouring Yadavs, and these people saw Modi as an alternative OBC leader who could better their fortunes. When the BJP prospered in UP during the 1990s, it was under backward-class leaders such as Kalyan Singh, Vinay Katiyar, and Uma Bharati. Though the party's resurgence in UP is again being credited to OBC leaders, the BJP strangely had no real leaders with any grass-roots support in UP and had to import leaders from Gujarat. One can surely infer that Modi's candidature had a lot to do with the BJP's electoral fortunes, not only in west UP but in all the subregions.

Though the SP lost seats in all the subregions, its vote share tells a different story. Regional analysis of its vote share indicates that it lost support only in three subregions (Avadh, Bundelkhand, and east UP); that its vote share remained almost unchanged in Doab and west UP; and that it gained votes in north-east UP (23%, up

from 17.2% in 2009) and Rohilkhand (31.4%, up from 24.7% in 2009). The regional spread of SP votes indicates that the party did badly not because any serious erosion in its support base, but because the BJP's vote share expanded substantially. The BSP and Congress lost votes in every subregion of the state (Table 4.10). Another party that lost its social base in western UP (3.2% in 2014, down from 11.2% in 2009) and Rohilkhand (0.1% in 2014, down from 6.2% in 2009) was the RLD.

4.5.4. Pointers for the future

The 2014 election outcome offers some crucial pointers to politics in UP in the coming years. One, the BJP has aroused great optimism for the assembly election in 2017. But, much will depend on the performance of the Modi government. People may be inclined to believe that BJP governments at the centre and the state may speed up development. That would threaten the SP. However, it would be a mistake to take this for granted. One, because the people voted for Modi, not the BJP in the Lok Sabha election; and two, because there is hardly any state-level BJP leader who can inspire confidence in voters and can be seen as a "development man". So, notwithstanding Shah, the assembly election will not be a cakewalk for the BJP.

Two, the result points to the decline of caste politics. The only possibility of caste politics returning to UP depends on how the state government competes with the Modi government in development. If development becomes a common denominator for both, voters may look to caste as a deciding factor. Even then, the inclusive orientation of most parties is diluting exclusionary and casteist approaches. The way the BJP left all other parties behind by pursuing inclusive politics is a warning not only to the SP but also the Congress and BSP especially to Mayawati's social engineering (Verma 2007). Mayawati may hope to retrieve her dalit voters in the next assembly election, but much will depend on how soon the Modi government delivers its inclusive policies, and whether they give dalits a ray of hope.

Three, Muslim thinking about the BJP and the community's voting behaviour may also change. If Modi pursues an inclusive development model, more Muslims might vote for the BJP. That will not only make BJP more inclusive, but also have a positive effect on the secularism-communalism discourse in the country.

Finally, Modi may change the OBC discourse in UP and India. So far, hardly anybody had taken him to be an OBC leader, but he is now firmly entrenched in the OBC psyche. The Modi government's inclusive political orientation is likely to benefit OBCS and dalits, who together constitute 62% of the population in UP. So, the possibility of the BJP benefitting from the Modi factor in UP for a long time to come is definitely there.

4.6. Samajwadi Party becomes largest political family in U.P.

Interestingly, Samajwadi Party chief Mulayam Singh Yadav has been opposing nepotism and feudalism in politics. Mulayam Singh-led Samajwadi Party has become the largest political family in the Hindi heartland of Uttar Pradesh with three more members from the family entering the political realm. The latest political entrants from the Yadav family are Mulayam's nephew Abhishek Yadav alias Anshul, niece Sandhya Yadav and another relative Vandana Yadav, who have been elected in the recently concluded panchayat polls. While Abhishek has been elected as the Chairman of Etawah Zila Panchayat body, Yadav's niece Sandhya is the Chairman of Mainpuri Zila Panchayat. Vandana Yadav, on the other hand, has been elected as Chairman of Hamirpur Zila Panchayat. With this, the total number of elected representatives from the SP chiefs family has gone up to 11. Abhishek Yadav is the son of Mulayam's brother Abhay Ram Yadav while Sandhya is the party supremo's niece and sister of Badaun MP Dharmendra Yadav. Both were elected unopposed. The third member to enter politics is Vandana Yadav, the sister-in-law of Badaun MP Dharmendra Yadav. Interestingly, Mulayam has been opposing nepotism and feudalism in politics. Earlier Mridula Yadav, mother of Mulayam's nephew and Mainpuri MP Tej Pratap Yadav as well as Ajant Singh Yadav, brother-in-law of Mulayam, got elected as members of Block Development Council from Saifai and Chaubiya respectively. Mridula and Ajant Singh are further expected to be elected as Chairpersons of the Block Development Councils, which are yet to take place. While Mulayam himself is an MP from Azamgarh, his son Akhilesh Yadav is an MLC and the Chief Minister of UP. Akhilesh's wife Dimple is a two-time Lok Sabha MP from Kannauj. Mulayam's nephew Dharmendra Yadav is an MP from Badaun, while his cousin Ram Gopal Yadav is a Rajya Sabha MP. Ram Gopal Yadav's son Akshay Pratap is an MP from Firozabad. The SP supremo's younger brother Shivpal Yadav is an MLA and a senior minister in the UP government holding important portfolios like

PWD, Irrigation and Cooperatives. The youngest member of the family Tej Pratap Yadav is an MP from Mainpuri. Tej Pratap is married to Bihar RJD chief Lain Prasad Yadav's daughter Rajlaxmi.

A seven-phased election for 403 assembly seats in Uttar Pradesh was held on 8, 11, 15, 19, 23 and 28 of February 2012, and 3 March 2012. At 60%, the voters' turnout was the highest ever in the state, and 14 percentage points higher than the previous assembly election. The increase in voters compared to 2007 was 45%, indicating that the rise in turnout was not a mere statistical correction. The turnout of women was higher than that of men and went up by 18 percentage points compared to 2007. The number of contestants increased to 6,839, an increase of 12 percentage points over the last assembly election.

Most of the major parties in the state, namely, the incumbent Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP), Samajwadi Party (SP), and the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) went into the election on their own. The Indian National Congress (INC/Congress) however contested in an alliance with the Rashtriya Lok Dal (RLD). While the Congress fielded candidates in 355 seats, the RLD contested 46 seats.

The final outcome, a clear mandate for the SP and a substantial decline of the BSP, was widely seen to be a surprise. SP recorded its best-ever performance winning a total of 224 seats, 127 more than the 2007 assembly elections, and secured 29.15% of the vote, a gain of nearly 4 percentage points since 2007 (in terms of seats, this was the best performance by any party since the Congress' victory in 1985 when it won 269 of the 425 seats of undivided Uttar Pradesh). On the other hand, its main rival, the incumbent BSP performed poorly. From the 2007 high of 206 seats, the BSP crashed to just 80 seats, a massive drop of 126. The party secured almost 26% of the vote, down 4.5 percentage points since 2007. The gap' between the SP and the BSP in terms of vote share however was that of just 3 percentage points indicating a high seats-vote disproportionality in SP's favour. (Over the years, UP has seen multi-cornered contests where the leading party has benefited from the seat-vote disproportionality, as the BSP did in 2007. This time in the case of the SP it was even higher.) The BJP finished third with 47 seats and 15% of the vote, a decline of four seats and 2% votes respectively since 2007. The Congress managed to win 28 seats, a marginal increase of six seats since 2007 and garnered nearly 12% of the vote, up 3 percentage points. Its alliance partner the RLD won nine seats with 2% of the total vote, a drop of one

seat and 1% vote, respectively. Among the smaller parties, the Peace Party was the best performer winning four seats (all gains, since it was contesting for the first time) and securing 2% of the vote (Table 1B).

Table 4.11

Summary Results: Seats Contested, Won and Votes Secured by Major Parties in Alliances, Compared to the Assembly Election (2007)

| Seats Contested | | Seats Won | Gain/Loss of Seats since 2007 | Vote Share (%) | Vote% Per Seat Contested | Vote Swing Since 2007 (% Points) |
|---|-------|-----------|-------------------------------|----------------|--------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Indian National Congress+ (INC+) | 401 | 37 | +5 | 13.96 | 14.01 | +1.65 |
| Indian National Congress (INC) | 355 | 28 | +6 | 11.63 | 13.22 | +3.02 |
| Rashtriya Lok Dal(RLD) | 46 | 9 | -1 | 2.33 | 20.01 | -1.37 |
| Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) | 398 | 47 | -4 | 15 | 15.19 | -1.97 |
| Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) | 403 | 80 | -126 | 25.91 | 25.91 | -4.82 |
| Samajwadi Party (SP) | 401 | 224 | +127 | 29.15 | 29.27 | +3.72 |
| Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) | 127 | 1 | +1 | 0.33 | 1.05 | +0.23 |
| Peace Party (PP) | 208 | 4 | +4 | 2.35 | 4.53 | +2.35 |
| Quami Ekta Dal(QED) | 43 | 2 | +2 | 0.55 | 5.31 | +0.55 |
| Apna Dal (AD) | 76 | 1 | +1 | 0.90 | 4.86 | -0.16 |
| Communist Party of India (CPI) | 51 | 0 | 0 | 0.13 | 1.06 | +0.04 |
| Communist Party of India (Marxist) - CPI(M) | 17 | 0 | 0 | 0.09 | 2.13 | -0.21 |
| All India Trinamool Congress (AITC) | 145 | 0 | 0 | 0.36 | 0.99 | +0.36 |
| Janata Dal (United) (JD(U)) | 219 | 0 | -1 | 0.36 | 0.66 | -0.06 |
| Lok Janshakti Party | 212 | 0 | 0 | 0.23 | 0.43 | +0.07 |
| Others | 2,449 | 1 | -6 | 7.45 | - | +1.71 |
| Independents | 1,689 | 6 | -3 | 3.21 | - | -3.76 |
| Total | 6,839 | 403 | 0 | 100 | - | 0 |

If we analyse the result in terms of victory margins, we find that the number of seats that were won by a margin of over 10,000 votes went up from 139 in the previous election to 222 this time and two-thirds of such seats were won by the SP. Moreover, SP won a majority of its seats by huge margins. Sixty-five per cent of the seats won by the SP were won by margins of over 10,000 votes. In 2007, the BSP had won only 38% of its total 206 seats by such huge margins. Both the Congress-RLD

alliance and the BJP also won most of their seats this time by huge margins. Contrary to popular impression, the seats which were decided by very small margins (up to 1,000 votes) were shared in the same proportion as the rest. The SP did not benefit from smaller margins (Table 4.11).

Out of the seven regions of Uttar Pradesh as classified by Centre for the Study of Developing Societies (CSDS), the SP was ahead of its rivals in five (Rohilkhand, Awadh, east, Doab and north-east) both in terms of votes and seats. It was only in west and Bundelkhand that the BSP managed to gain an upper hand, but here too the party had to suffer losses compared to 2007 and this was largely due to some impressive gains made by SP. Of the five regions where SP was ahead, the party registered its best performance in the region of Awadh winning 55 to the 73 seats on offer and accumulating a total vote share of 33%. Within Awadh, the party did particularly well in Faizabad winning all the four seats in the district. In Lucknow district the party ended up with seven of the nine seats, whereas in Unnao it won five of the six seats. In Rae Bareilly and Sultanpur, pocket-boroughs of the Nehru-Gandhi family, the SP won 12 of the 15 seats and the Congress managed to win just two. In east, the SP won 52 out of the 81 seats in the region with a vote share of 32%. SP's performance in Ambedkar Nagar where it won all five seats and in Azamgarh where it won nine of the 10 seats was particularly impressive. In north-east (southern Terai region bordering Nepal), SP won 32 of the 61 seats with a vote share of 28%. In terms of seats, the BJP finished second in this region winning 10 seats, half of which came from Gorakhpur and Bahraich districts. In Doab, with 73 seats, the main contest was between the SP and the BSP with the former emerging ahead with 41 seats. Within this region, the SP swept the districts of Etawah, Kannauj, Etah, Mainpuri, Farrukhabad, Auraiya and Kanpur Dehat. The BSP performed best in Agra, and in Mathura district it was the RLD-Congress alliance which emerged on top. In Rohilkhand with 52 seats, the main contest was between the SP, BSP and the BJP. Here the SP won 29 seats giving its best performance in the districts of Moradabad, Budaun and Pilibhit. In west where the BSP finished ahead of the rest, the party won most of its seats in the districts of Saharanpur, Baghpat, Gautam Buddha Nagar and Ghaziabad. The BJP did well in the district of Meerut winning four of the seven seats, the rest going to SP. For the Congress-RLD alliance which was expected to do well in this region, the victories were few and far between. In fact the only region where the Congress seems to have

put up a good fight in Bundelkhand, where the party won four of the 19 seats on offer and finished third behind the BSP and the SP. Of all the 70 districts in the State, Lalitpur district in Bundelkhand recorded the highest voter turnout at 74%. If we compare the turnout across regions, it was the highest in Rohilkhand at 65% and lowest in north-east at 56%.

The electoral trend in favour of SP was quite strong and pushed the BSP to the margins in the reserved scheduled caste (sc) constituencies (which tend to only marginally have a higher proportion of SCS). SP won 58 of the 85 sc seats on offer, leaving the BSP, which is considered to have an advantage in such seats, with only 15. This is a significant turnaround considering that in 2007 (pre-delimitation), the BSP had won 61 of 89 reserved SC seats and the SP had managed to win just 13. If we analyse in terms of locality, then it was in the rural and semi-urban areas where the SP performed the best. The party won 183 of the 308 almost entirely rural seats (59%) and 32 of the 60 semi-urban seats (53%). However in almost entirely urban areas of Uttar Pradesh, it was the BJP that retained its dominance winning 20 of the total 35 seats. The Congress-RLD alliance too did reasonably well here in terms of votes.

Table 4.12

Region-wise and District-wise Analysis: Turnout and Performance of Major Alliances and Parties 2012

| Regions/Districts | Total Seats | Turnout (%) | Congress + RLD Won | | BJP | | SP | | BSP | | Independents | | Others | |
|---------------------|-------------|-------------|--------------------|----------|-----|----------|-------|------|-----|----------|--------------|----------|--------|----------|
| | | | Won | Vote (%) | Won | Vote (%) | I Won | Won | Won | Vote (%) | Won | Vote (%) | Won | Vote (%) |
| Rohilkhand | 52 | 65.0 | 2 | 12.8 | 8 | 18.9 | 29 | 28.9 | 11 | 22.7 | 0 | 1.9 | 2 | 14.7 |
| Bijnor | 8 | 65.1 | 0 | 14.5 | 2 | 20.4 | 2 | 20.8 | 4 | 30.0 | 0 | 1.3 | 0 | 13.0 |
| Moradabad | 9 | 65.5 | 0 | 10.8 | 1 | 24.1 | 7 | 29.9 | 0 | 19.2 | 0 | 1.7 | 1 | 14.3 |
| Rampur | 5 | 60.7 | 2 | 23.4 | 0 | 14.9 | 2 | 30.5 | 1 | 17.0 | 0 | 1.6 | 0 | 12.6 |
| Jyotiba Phule Nagar | 4 | 70.4 | 0 | 10.5 | 0 | 15.7 | 4 | 33.3 | 0 | 24.3 | 0 | 1.1 | 0 | 15.1 |
| Budaun | 7 | 61.4 | 0 | 16.2 | 0 | 8.2 | 5 | 35.8 | 2 | 24.6 | 0 | 1.7 | 0 | 13.4 |
| Bareilly | 9 | 65.5 | 0 | 4.5 | 3 | 23.2 | 3 | 26.1 | 2 | 20.2 | 0 | 2.9 | 1 | 23.2 |
| Pilibhit | 4 | 68.6 | 0 | 13.1 | 1 | 11.1 | 3 | 25.3 | 0 | 17.6 | 0 | 2.3 | 0 | 13.9 |
| Shahjahanpur | 6 | 65.7 | 0 | 14.9 | 1 | 14.2 | 3 | 31.7 | 2 | 27.5 | 0 | 2.4 | 0 | 9.3 |
| Awadh | 73 | 61.0 | 4 | 14.4 | 3 | 10.8 | 55 | 32.9 | 8 | 25.7 | 2 | 4.7 | 1 | 11.5 |
| Kheri | 8 | 65.0 | 0 | 13.3 | 1 | 13.0 | 4 | 32.1 | 3 | 25.7 | 0 | 4.5 | 0 | 11.5 |
| Sitapur | 9 | 65.6 | 0 | 17.3 | 0 | 6.4 | 7 | 34.3 | 2 | 32.0 | 0 | 2.1 | 0 | 7.9 |

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---------------------|----|------|---|------|---|------|----|------|----|------|---|------|---|------|
| Hardoi | 8 | 61.7 | 0 | 8.0 | 0 | 4.6 | 6 | 37.2 | 2 | 33.0 | 0 | 2.8 | 0 | 14.4 |
| Unnao | 6 | 60.3 | 0 | 10.9 | 0 | 17.4 | 5 | 33.2 | 1 | 27.3 | 0 | 4.0 | 0 | 7.1 |
| Lucknow | 9 | 57.9 | 1 | 16.5 | 1 | 16.7 | 7 | 29.7 | 0 | 21.4 | 0 | 1.6 | 0 | 14.1 |
| Rae Bareli | 7 | 60.7 | 1 | 24.2 | 0 | 5.4 | 5 | 32.2 | 0 | 17.8 | 0 | 3.0 | 1 | 17.4 |
| Sultanpur | 8 | 58.4 | 1 | 14.9 | 0 | 10.0 | 7 | 35.8 | 0 | 24.3 | 0 | 5.5 | 0 | 9.6 |
| Pratapgarh | 7 | 54.2 | 1 | 12.5 | 0 | 10.9 | 4 | 20.5 | 0 | 23.5 | 2 | 18.9 | 0 | 13.7 |
| Barabanki | 7 | 65.2 | 0 | 14.6 | 1 | 12.6 | 6 | 35.2 | 0 | 24.5 | 0 | 3.4 | 0 | 9.6 |
| Faizabad | 4 | 60.5 | 0 | 9.1 | 0 | 13.0 | 4 | 39.4 | 0 | 24.4 | 0 | 4.9 | 0 | 9.2 |
| East | 81 | 57.3 | 4 | 8.1 | 6 | 10.5 | 52 | 32.4 | 13 | 27.9 | 3 | 5.0 | 3 | 16.1 |
| Kaushambi | 3 | 58.8 | 0 | 8.9 | 1 | 11.5 | 0 | 29.8 | 2 | 33.5 | 0 | 6.4 | 0 | 9.9 |
| Allahabad | 12 | 56.0 | 1 | 9.1 | 0 | 8.8 | 8 | 28.7 | 3 | 28.6 | 0 | 7.4 | 0 | 17.4 |
| Ambedkar Nagar | 5 | 63.0 | 0 | 5.9 | 0 | 4.3 | 5 | 46.9 | 0 | 34.2 | 0 | 2.4 | 0 | 6.4 |
| Azamgarh | 10 | 55.0 | 0 | 6.9 | 0 | 10.2 | 9 | 39.0 | 1 | 30.0 | 0 | 2.0 | 0 | 11.9 |
| Mau | 4 | 56.6 | 0 | 7.5 | 0 | 4.8 | 2 | 28.9 | 1 | 28.0 | 0 | 1.8 | 1 | 29.1 |
| Ballia | 7 | 54.0 | 0 | 6.6 | 1 | 15.5 | 5 | 29.3 | 1 | 23.1 | 0 | 4.0 | 0 | 21.5 |
| Jaunpur | 9 | 55.6 | 1 | 7.5 | 1 | 14.4 | 7 | 33.8 | 0 | 27.3 | 0 | 6.0 | 0 | 11.2 |
| Ghazipur | 7 | 57.6 | 0 | 3.9 | 0 | 6.0 | 6 | 36.1 | 0 | 27.6 | 0 | 2.0 | 1 | 24.4 |
| Chandauli | 4 | 61.4 | 0 | 3.6 | 0 | 9.2 | 1 | 28.4 | 1 | 29.8 | 2 | 16.4 | 0 | 12.7 |
| Varanasi | 8 | 58.2 | 1 | 18.1 | 3 | 16.1 | 1 | 20.4 | 2 | 21.1 | 0 | 2.0 | 1 | 22.5 |
| Sant Ravidas Nagar | 3 | 56.3 | 0 | 2.8 | 0 | 7.2 | 3 | 45.1 | 0 | 31.7 | 0 | 1.7 | 0 | 11.5 |
| Mirzapur | 5 | 62.4 | 1 | 13.3 | 0 | 10.9 | 3 | 32.8 | 1 | 28.1 | 0 | 2.1 | 0 | 12.8 |
| Sonbhadra | 4 | 58.7 | 0 | 6.5 | 0 | 12.7 | 2 | 27.6 | 1 | 26.1 | 1 | 17.3 | 0 | 9.9 |
| West | 44 | 62.8 | 8 | 23.7 | 9 | 17.3 | 10 | 20.5 | 17 | 29.2 | 0 | 2.8 | 0 | 6.4 |
| Saharanpur | 7 | 71.6 | 1 | 30.2 | 1 | 11.2 | 1 | 21.1 | 4 | 30.6 | 0 | 4.3 | 0 | 2.6 |
| Muzaffarnagar | 9 | 61.2 | 2 | 22.3 | 2 | 20.0 | 2 | 22.1 | 3 | 27.8 | 0 | 3.0 | 0 | 4.9 |
| Meerut | 7 | 65.4 | 0 | 20.2 | 4 | 24.0 | 3 | 25.0 | 0 | 23.3 | 0 | 1.8 | 0 | 5.7 |
| Baghpat | 3 | 58.8 | 1 | 37.3 | 0 | 3.9 | 0 | 15.5 | 2 | 35.5 | 0 | 1.2 | 0 | 6.6 |
| Ghaziabad | 8 | 59.7 | 2 | 22.8 | 0 | 20.0 | 2 | 18.0 | 4 | 32.3 | 0 | 2.2 | 0 | 4.7 |
| Gautam Buddha Nagar | 3 | 56.5 | 0 | 20.6 | 1 | 21.7 | 0 | 17.1 | 2 | 33.7 | 0 | 2.3 | 0 | 4.5 |
| Bulandshahar | 7 | 62.2 | 2 | 20.0 | 1 | 13.5 | 2 | 19.6 | 2 | 27.4 | 0 | 3.7 | 0 | 15.7 |
| Doab | 73 | 61.1 | 8 | 14.5 | 8 | 16.5 | 41 | 29.4 | 15 | 26.8 | 1 | 3.7 | 0 | 9.1 |
| Aligarh | 7 | 63.0 | 3 | 26.3 | 0 | 12.8 | 4 | 19.9 | 0 | 24.6 | 0 | 3.2 | 0 | 13.2 |
| Mahamaya Nagar | 3 | 62.2 | 0 | 14.6 | 0 | 10.2 | 1 | 33.9 | 2 | 35.4 | 0 | 2.6 | 0 | 3.2 |
| Mathura | 5 | 65.2 | 4 | 36.2 | 0 | 14.6 | 0 | 8.3 | 1 | 25.7 | 0 | 4.1 | 0 | 11.0 |
| Agra | 9 | 62.1 | 0 | 12.8 | 2 | 18.2 | 1 | 25.0 | 6 | 33.1 | 0 | 5.6 | 0 | 5.3 |
| Firozabad | 5 | 64.7 | 0 | 2.9 | 1 | 15.2 | 3 | 41.8 | 1 | 29.3 | 0 | 6.4 | 0 | 4.4 |
| Etah | 7 | 61.7 | 0 | 9.7 | 0 | 9.1 | 6 | 32.5 | 1 | 22.7 | 0 | 2.6 | 0 | 23.4 |
| Mainpuri | 4 | 60.0 | 0 | 9.1 | 0 | 10.7 | 4 | 42.7 | 0 | 26.7 | 0 | 2.3 | 0 | 8.5 |
| Farrukhabad | 4 | 58.9 | 0 | 11.2 | 0 | 17.8 | 3 | 26.4 | 0 | 14.9 | 1 | 9.8 | 0 | 20.0 |
| Kannauj | 3 | 58.4 | 0 | 4.3 | 0 | 22.0 | 3 | 39.5 | 0 | 26.5 | 0 | 2.6 | 0 | 5.1 |

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|--------------|----|------|---|------|---|------|---|------|---|------|---|-----|---|------|
| Etawah | 3 | 61.2 | 0 | 4.3 | 0 | 12.3 | 3 | 47.1 | 0 | 30.2 | 0 | 0.4 | 0 | 5.8 |
| Auraiya | 3 | 60.4 | 0 | 5.6 | 0 | 21.4 | 3 | 38.6 | 0 | 28.7 | 0 | 1.0 | 0 | 4.7 |
| KanpurDehat | 4 | 63.7 | 0 | 11.5 | 0 | 14.5 | 3 | 32.7 | 1 | 30.7 | 0 | 5.2 | 0 | 5.6 |
| Kanpur Nagar | 10 | 55.9 | 1 | 19.6 | 4 | 25.8 | 5 | 26.9 | 0 | 22.3 | 0 | 2.0 | 0 | 3.3 |
| Fatehpur | 6 | 60.7 | 0 | 14.9 | 1 | 19.7 | 2 | 24.5 | 3 | 26.4 | 0 | 2.7 | 0 | 11.8 |
| Bundelkhand | 19 | 62.8 | 4 | 18.6 | 3 | 18.9 | 5 | 25.3 | 7 | 26.2 | 0 | 4.1 | 0 | 7.0 |

Contd...

| Regions/Districts | Total Seats | Turnout (%) | Congress + RLD Won Vote(%) | BJP | | SP | | BSP | | Independents | | Others | | |
|-------------------|-------------|-------------|----------------------------|------|----------|------|----------|------|----------|--------------|----------|--------|----------|------|
| | | | | Won | Vote (%) | Won | Vote (%) | Won | Vote (%) | Won | Vote (%) | Won | Vote (%) | |
| Jalaun | 3 | 61.5 | 1 | 18.9 | 0 | 14.9 | 1 | 23.9 | 1 | 26.6 | 0 | 1.3 | 0 | 14.5 |
| Jhansi | 4 | 64.6 | 0 | 16.1 | 1 | 20.9 | 2 | 27.9 | 1 | 28.4 | 0 | 3.0 | 0 | 3.7 |
| Lalitpur | 2 | 73.6 | 0 | 12.9 | 0 | 22.5 | 0 | 24.8 | 2 | 27.8 | 0 | 6.9 | 0 | 5.3 |
| Hamirpur | 2 | 59.9 | 1 | 26.7 | 1 | 17.0 | 0 | 22.7 | 0 | 22.1 | 0 | 5.0 | 0 | 6.5 |
| Mahoba | 2 | 62.9 | 0 | 17.2 | 1 | 26.5 | 0 | 23.2 | 1 | 23.3 | 0 | 4.3 | 0 | 5.5 |
| Banda | 4 | 57.5 | 2 | 24.8 | 0 | 15.1 | 1 | 24.2 | 1 | 26.0 | 0 | 3.3 | 0 | 6.6 |
| Chitrakoot | 2 | 61.7 | 0 | 12.0 | 0 | 18.0 | 1 | 30.2 | 1 | 26.7 | 0 | 7.9 | 0 | 5.2 |
| North-east | 61 | 55.9 | 7 | 12.2 | 10 | 17.7 | 32 | 28.1 | 9 | 22.7 | 0 | 5.9 | 3 | 13.4 |
| Bahraich | 7 | 59.9 | 2 | 21.1 | 2 | 20.0 | 2 | 21.5 | 1 | 21.0 | 0 | 6.6 | 0 | 9.9 |
| Shrawasti | 2 | 61.7 | 0 | 17.9 | 0 | 20.2 | 2 | 33.0 | 0 | 19.5 | 0 | 5.0 | 0 | 4.5 |
| Balrampur | 4 | 50.1 | 0 | 12.4 | 0 | 15.5 | 4 | 31.6 | 0 | 20.1 | 0 | 5.4 | 0 | 15.0 |
| Gonda | 7 | 57.3 | 0 | 7.0 | 1 | 17.4 | 6 | 35.4 | 0 | 25.2 | 0 | 6.7 | 0 | 8.2 |
| Siddharthnagar | 5 | 53.0 | 0 | 10.1 | 1 | 17.3 | 3 | 30.9 | 0 | 21.2 | 0 | 4.7 | 1 | 15.9 |
| Basti | 5 | 58.3 | 1 | 17.9 | 0 | 9.0 | 2 | 30.2 | 2 | 31.5 | 0 | 2.6 | 0 | 8.7 |
| SantKabir Nagar | 3 | 54.4 | 0 | 6.5 | 0 | 19.1 | 2 | 25.0 | 0 | 22.5 | 0 | 2.8 | 1 | 24.1 |
| Maharajganj | 5 | 61.5 | 1 | 16.3 | 1 | 18.6 | 2 | 26.9 | 1 | 18.9 | 0 | 1.9 | 0 | 17.4 |
| Gorakhpur | 9 | 53.1 | 0 | 4.4 | 3 | 21.4 | 1 | 24.9 | 4 | 25.6 | 0 | 7.6 | 1 | 16.1 |
| Kushinagar | 7 | 57.4 | 2 | 14.6 | 1 | 15.8 | 3 | 25.0 | 1 | 20.0 | 0 | 7.6 | 0 | 17.0 |
| Deoria | 7 | 52.2 | 1 | 10.3 | 1 | 18.8 | 5 | 30.3 | 0 | 21.3 | 0 | 9.1 | 0 | 10.2 |
| Total | 403 | 60.3 | 37 | 13.9 | 47 | 15.0 | 224 | 29.2 | 80 | 25.9 | 6 | 4.1 | 9 | 11.9 |

An analysis of the results by proportion of Muslim population in constituencies reveals that contrary to popular impression, the SP's performance in terms of votes was much better in constituencies without any significant Muslim population than in constituencies where Muslims are present in high numbers. For instance, while the SP secured around 31% of the total vote in the 260 seats where Muslims constitute below 20% of the population, it could manage lesser votes in seats with a larger con-

centration of Muslims. In constituencies where Muslims are over 20% of the total population, the SP faced some stiff competition in terms of votes from the BSP, the BJP and other parties like the Peace Party and the Quami Ekta Dal. But here too it ended up winning many more seats.

Survey-based estimates of vote by social background reveal that while both the SP and the BSP continue to get an overwhelming proportion of their total votes from Yadavs and Jatavs, respectively (their core voters), they were unable to retain their 2007 dominance among these sections. While the SP saw a 6 percentage point vote drop among Yadavs and Muslims, the BSP's decline among Jatavs was even bigger. The extraordinary polarisation of Jatav votes that was witnessed in favour of BSP in 2007 came down this time, with 62% of Jatavs voting for Mayawati's party, a drop of 24 percentage points. While these figures may surprise many, it must be pointed out that this is a trend which was already noticed by a CSDS survey conducted in Uttar Pradesh in July 2011 when 66% of Jatavs had said they will vote for the BSP in the event of an immediate election. Among other dalit categories too (except the Pasis) the BSP lost votes this time compared to 2007.

The party's votes declined by 29 percentage points among Balmikis, and 19 percentage points among Dhobis. The BSP's loss of votes among dalits seems to have benefited SP the most. In fact, SP'S gains were most impressive among communities that are not considered as its core supporters. Among brahmins for instance the sp secured 19% of the votes, up 9 percentage points since 2007. Among Rajputs its vote share went up by 6% and among Kurmi and Koeris its votes more than doubled. Not just that, SP gained across categories of age, education, gender, class and locality. Among men, women, poor, rich, rural and urban voters, SP'S gains were in the range of 3 to 5 percentage points since 2007. While the BSP lost a significant chunk of its core, it seems to have held on to some of its gains among upper castes and Muslims in 2007. However among lower OBCS who had also given BSP an advantage in 2007, the party lost 11% votes. It's not just the BSP, but the BJP too which lost its grip over its traditional voters, namely, the brahmins, Rajputs and other upper castes. While the party came down 6 percentage points among brahmins, the losses among Rajputs and other upper castes were much bigger at 17 and 24 percentage points, respectively. Economically well off voters and college educated voters, core supporters of the BJP

for a long time, also seem to have moved away from the party. In urban areas however, where the BJP has done well in the past, the party suffered only marginal losses. As for the Congress, while its performance was way below expectation, it did improve its performance among some sections. The party made gains among dalits, Kurmis and Koeris, Muslims, Poor, Young (18-25 years) and the college educated compared to 2007. That said, it had done much better among these sections in the 2009 Lok Sabha elections and was simply unable to retain that same level of support. While age was not much of a factor this time, Gender certainly was with the BSP losing the edge it had among women in 2007. While 32% of the women had voted for BSP in 2007, this time only 25% voted for the party. In terms of locality, most of BSP'S losses came among rural voters. The SP, on the other hand, gained among both rural and urban voters in equal measure. In terms of class, the BSP improved in the upper and middle sections but lost substantially among the lower sections and the poor. The SP gained across classes, whereas the BJP saw its support drop among the upper and middle classes. The Congress which did well mostly among the upper class in 2007, read some gains among the lower economic sections this time.

The CSDS post poll survey findings show that the satisfaction of people with the BSP government was exactly the same as the satisfaction expressed by voters with the SP government in 2007 when a similar survey was conducted. Even on issues of governance, there was very little difference on how people assessed the performance of the BSP government and the SP government in 2007..While on the issue of controlling corruption and maintaining peace and security, the BSP government was rated better than what the SP government had been rated in 2007, but it was seen to have performed much worse as far as the condition of roads was concerned (Table 4.12).

The Mayawati-led BSP government it seems was also as unpopular as the previous SP government led by Mulayam Singh Yadav. When voters were asked whether the government should get another chance to rule, nearly half of them (48%) said no and only 27% were willing to give it another chance. When the same question was asked during a similar survey in 2007, 47% had wanted the then Mulayam Singh government to go and 37% had said it should get another chance. However when respondents were specifically asked to compare the two governments in the post-poll

survey this time, nearly half of them (46%) said that the previous SP government had been better and only 25% said the BSP government was better.

The survey reveals that the most popular leader in Uttar Pradesh at present is Mulayam Singh Yadav and by a wide margin. While 33% wanted him to be the next chief minister of the state, 24% wanted Mayawati to continue as chief minister. Rajnath Singh and Rahul Gandhi were the choice of 8% and 7% voters respectively. Akhilesh Yadav was the choice of 2% of the respondents (Table 4E, p 84). When respondents were asked who they would prefer as chief minister if the SP came to power, Mulayam Singh or his son Akhilesh, nearly half of them opted for father. Among SP voters, two-thirds preferred Mulayam Singh.

The survey revealed that price rise was the most important issue for voters (36%) during the election. Condition of roads emerged as the second most important issue (26%), followed by farmers' problems (14%). Corruption was an issue for 7% of the voters.

On the issue of dividing Uttar Pradesh into smaller states, there is greater support for division today than it was seven months ago. While 37% of the respondents agreed with the statement that "Uttar Pradesh should be divided into smaller states", a slightly lesser proportion 35% disagreed. When the same question was asked during a survey conducted by CSDS in July 2011 (before the proposal by the Mayawati government to divide Uttar Pradesh into four smaller states), those in favour of dividing UP were marginally lesser than those against it, across regions. The 2012 post-poll survey reveals that while most people in Poorvanchal and Awadh oppose the idea of division, in Bundelkhand and Paschim there are more people who are in support of the idea than those who are against it (Table 4.12, p 84).

Nearly half the respondents were of the view that the Election Commission did the right thing by ordering the covering of the statues of Mayawati and the Elephant during the elections. Only 16% said it was a .wrong decision. Even among dalits most felt the EC did no wrong. Majority of the respondents (51%) were also of the view that the BSP government had wasted money on building statues and parks. Less than half the respondents had heard of the recent announcement by the central government

of giving reservation to minorities within the OBC quota. However many of those who had heard about the move supported it (48%).

The Congress Party may have performed below expectations but appears to have created some potential for itself for the future by emerging as the second preference party among voters. When people were asked which party would they vote for if the party of their first choice put up a bad candidate, most (18%) said Congress.

Another reason for hope for the Congress is that more people have faith in Rahul Gandhi as a future leader compared to Akhilesh Yadav, Jayant Chaudhury and Varun Gandhi. When asked who among the four would make the best leader in the future, 38% said Rahul Gandhi and 20% opted for Akhilesh Yadav. Even among SP voters, Rahul Gandhi did rather well on this question.

Table 4.13

Social Basis of Voting: Survey-based Estimates of Vote for Major Alliances/Parties by Gender, Age, Education, Locality, Class and Caste/Community in Assembly Elections (2007 and 2012)

| | Congress | | BJP | | BSP | | SP | | RIO | | Others | | N for 2012 |
|---------------------------------|----------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|--------|------|------------|
| | 2007 | 2012 | 2007 | 2012 | 2007 | 2012 | 2007 | 2012 | 2007 | 2012 | 2007 | 2012 | |
| Age groups Up to 25 years | 10 | 15 | 19 | 15 | 28 | 23 | 27 | 30 | 4 | 1 | 13 | 16 | 1,167 |
| 26-35 years | 8 | 11 | 19 | 16 | 30 | 26 | 26 | 29 | 4 | 3 | 13 | 14 | 1,879 |
| 36-45 years | 8 | 11 | 18 | 13 | 32 | 29 | 24 | 27 | 3 | 2 | 14 | 18 | 1,661 |
| 46-55 years | 8 | 11 | 18 | 16 | 31 | 24 | 25 | 30 | 5 | 2 | 13 | 17 | 844 |
| 56 years and above | 9 | 11 | 18 | 15 | 30 | 26 | 24 | 31 | 3 | 3 | 15 | 15 | 1,061 |
| Gender Men | 9 | 11 | 19 | 16 | 30 | 27 | 25 | 28 | 4 | 3 | 13 | 16 | 3,940 |
| Women | 8 | 12 | 18 | 14 | 32 | 25 | 26 | 31 | 3 | 2 | 13 | 16 | 2,673 |
| Level of education Non-literate | 7 | 10 | 13 | 10 | 37 | 33 | 25 | 30 | 4 | 2 | 15 | 16 | 2,217 |
| Up to primary | 9 | 10 | 17 | 15 | 30 | 26 | 27 | 34 | 4 | 2 | 13 | 13 | 1,025 |
| Up to Metric | 9 | 10 | 20 | 16 | 28 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 4 | 3 | 12 | 18 | 1,665 |
| College and above | 11 | 17 | 27 | 21 | 22 | 17 | 23 | 27 | 4 | 3 | 12 | 15 | 1,693 |
| Locality Rural | 8 | 10 | 18 | 14 | 32 | 27 | 26 | 29 | 4 | 3 | 13 | 16 | 5,438 |
| Urban | 16 | 18 | 21 | 18 | 21 | 20 | 23 | 29 | 2 | 1 | 18 | 14 | 1,174 |
| Class Upper | 12 | 16 | 30 | 17 | 14 | 21 | 25 | 27 | 6 | 5 | 14 | 15 | 1,487 |
| Middle | 10 | 9 | 24 | 15 | 24 | 26 | 28 | 33 | 5 | 1 | 10 | 16 | 2,086 |
| Lower | 10 | 12 | 15 | 15 | 33 | 26 | 25 | 28 | 2 | 2 | 15 | 18 | 1,916 |
| Poor | 5 | 10 | 12 | 12 | 41 | 33 | 23 | 28 | 4 | 2 | 15 | 15 | 1,123 |

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|-------------------------|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|-------|
| Caste community Brahmin | 19 | 13 | 44 | 38 | 16 | 19 | 10 | 19 | 3 | 1 | 8 | 11 | 522 |
| Rajput | 9 | 13 | 46 | 29 | 12 | 14 | 20 | 26 | 5 | 2 | 9 | 16 | 565 |
| Vaishya | 10 | 21 | 52 | 42 | 14 | 15 | 12 | 12 | 0 | 0 | 12 | 10 | 67* |
| Other Upper Caste | 12 | 13 | 41 | 17 | 15 | 17 | 17 | 15 | 1 | 4 | 14 | 34 | 450 |
| Jats | 2 | 11 | 18 | 7 | 10 | 16 | 8 | 7 | 61 | 45 | 2 | 15 | 132 |
| Yadav | 4 | 4 | 5 | 9 | 7 | 11 | 72 | 66 | 1 | 1 | 10 | 10 | 657 |
| Kurmi/Koeri | 6 | 13 | 42 | 20 | 16 | 19 | 17 | 35 | 4 | 1 | 16 | 12 | 389 |
| OtherOBC | 9 | 12 | 17 | 17 | 30 | 19 | 20 | 26 | 6 | 3 | 19 | 23 | 768 |
| Jatav | 2 | 5 | 3 | 5 | 86 | 62 | 4 | 15 | 1 | 2 | 4 | 12 | 817 |
| Balmiki | 4 | 12 | 11 | 3 | 71 | 42 | 2 | 9 | 4 | 0 | 9 | 34 | 59* |
| Pasi/Pano | 7 | 7 | 12 | 4 | 53 | 57 | 16 | 24 | 0 | 0 | 11 | 9 | 178 |
| Other SC | 4 | 17 | 9 | 11 | 58 | 45 | 16 | 18 | 1 | 1 | 13 | 8 | 344 |
| Muslim | 14 | 18 | 3 | 7 | 17 | 20 | 45 | 39 | 8 | 1 | 13 | 15 | 1,105 |
| Others | 12 | 9 | 14 | 16 | 30 | 23 | 23 | 31 | 3 | 0 | 18 | 21 | 559 |

4.7. Minority report: Is Muslim voting behaviour changing?

The "Muslim vote" is often thought of as tactical voting to defeat the BJP. But that behaviour seems to be changing in UP. The traditional beneficiary of Muslim votes in the state, Samajwadi Party (SP), has fallen from grace post-Muzaffarnagar. While Congress, BSP, SP, RLD and AAP vie with each other for Muslim votes, the BJP has complicated the scenario by trying to access them too. Its efforts got some impetus via Muslim clerics who warned non-BJP parties not to instill fear among Muslims in the name of the BJP.

Muslims are rethinking. And their rethink is driven by sociological, economic and political considerations.

The sociological expression-" Muslim voting behaviour"-is based on questionable logic that seems to suggest en bloc voting on the premise of Muslims being a homogenised community. But that subsumes poor, exploited and marginalised Muslims under the rubric of "Muslim identity".

When concerns of azlaf (backward) and arzal (dalit) Muslims are different from those of ashraf (upper caste/class), how long will they vote alike? The upsurge of pasmanda Muslims is redefining Muslim identity and giving it a class-orientation. Their grouse is that despite the 85% share of backwards, like ansari, ghosi, dhobi, idris, etc, among Muslims, the political leadership is grabbed by upper-caste Muslims

like Salman Khurshid (Congress), Naseemuddin (BSP) and Azam Khan (SP). Their ire is also directed against ulema and Muslim organisations that ignore their concerns.

Backward Muslims are better placed vis-a-vis ashrafs to win. In 2009, the BSP gave tickets to 17 Muslims in UP; three to backwards, out of which two won, and 14 to ashraf Muslims, out of which, again, two won. So, if non-BJP parties refuse to provide them due space, they may turn to the BJP. The plight of Muslims may not, actually, apply to all Muslims, especially ashrafs, many of whom are landlords, educated, employed and politically empowered. But a large section of pasmanda Muslims may be really deprived.

The "Muslim picture" is changing at the grassroots: Muslim representation has gone up in assembly and municipal bodies in Uttar Pradesh. Muslim representation in the assembly may be 17.1%, close to the Muslim population (18.5%), but at the district level, we find a Muslim upsurge. In 13 out of 70 districts, the share of Muslim MLAs is 10-25%; in 21 districts, it is 25-50%; and in five districts (Moradabad, Rampur, Amroha, Balrampur and Shravasti), there are 50-70% Muslim MLAs. In municipal bodies, there are 3,681 Muslims elected out of a total of 11,816 members, pushing their representation to 31.5%.

Political empowerment of Muslims is a result of neo-liberalism that has created a neo-rich middle class of Muslims. As the political space in Congress, BSP, SP or established regional parties is occupied by uppercase Muslims, the BJP may become an attractive destination for them.

Backward Muslims may also look at the secular-communal discourse differently. Their experience in BJP-ruled states like Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh and Bihar (in coalition with Nitish Kumar) made them realise that life there was no different from non-BJP-ruled states. On the contrary, in some such states, better governance may have brought some prosperity. Gujarat 2002 riots and the Ram Janmabhoomi-Babri Masjid issue are usually raised during elections. But are Muslims still interested? Using these issues, non-BJP parties try to create fear among Muslims. But insecurity among Muslims, if any, may be akin to that faced by Hindus, though the latter's insecurity does not figure in the secular-communal discourse due to their greater numbers. Muslims, including pasmanda Muslims, may still vote tactically to defeat the BJP, but a small section may vote differently. Such voters may

renounce the "marriage model" of relationship with a party that warrants voters to be wedded to a party. Instead, they may go for a "stock exchange model" that permits voting for a party that promises better returns. Modi's backward caste status may play a key role in this.

Recent CSDS studies substantiate this. While 3% and 7% Muslims voted BJP in 2007 and 2012 respectively, their support may go up to 11% in this election. This signals a paradigm shift, making the BJP more inclusive and Muslims more autonomous in their voting behaviour.

4.8. A saffron sweep in U.P.

"The Bharatiya Janata Party seems to have succeeded in evolving a grand Hindu coalition, while the Muslim vote by and large went to non-BJP parties

The 2014 election results in Uttar Pradesh (U.P.) indicate a complete saffron sweep. The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) won 71 seats and its ally Apna Dal (AD) won two seats: Mirzapur and Pratapgarh. Thus, the BJP-AD combine won 73 out of 80 seats, completely decimating all their opponents. The Congress barely retained the seats of its president Sonia Gandhi and vice-president Rahul Gandhi from Rae Bareilly and Amethi respectively. The Samajwadi Party (SP) won only five seats which were contested by Mulayam Singh Yadav's family—Mulayam from Mainpuri and Azamgarh, Dimple Yadav from Kannauj, Akshay Yadav from Firozabad and Dharmendra Yadav from Badaun — whereas the Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) and other parties could not open their accounts.

Caste politics

What actually happened in U.P.? How did the Modi wave work in all regions of the State? Three things simultaneously took place. One, the traditional caste and community-based model of politics was redefined. Two, development became the focal point for voters' aspirational upsurge. And three, regional variations practically disappeared. Our post-poll survey will help us in understanding how these factors shaped the outcome of the polls. Not only caste, but class too lost its relevance in this election. Voters of all ages, educational backgrounds, economic statuses and genders supported the BJP and its prime ministerial candidate Narendra Modi. The highest support (47 per cent) came from the first time voters (18-22 years). Even though caste

politics took a back seat in this election in U.P., it would be hasty to say that caste politics has ended in the State.

In 2014, the BJP improved upon its previous best performance in 1998 when it won 52 seats and 36 per cent votes (this data does not include the Uttarakhand portion of U.P.). The SP managed a mere 22 per cent then and the BSP got 20 per cent of the vote share. While a high vote share for the BJP is important, it is the difference between the winner and the runners-up which helped the party virtually sweep the State.

Dissatisfaction

Why did this happen? The survey data suggests that the voters were dissatisfied with the SP-led government in the State and the Congress-led United Progressive Alliance (UFA) government at the Centre. Both governments were seen as inept, ineffective and unresponsive to popular expectations. Mr. Modi focused his campaign on the Gujarat model of governance and development. He offered voters a platform where they could channelise their anger against both the incumbent governments. In his campaigns, Mr. Modi was critical of both "*Maa-bete ki sarkaar*" (the government by the mother and son duo) and the "*baap-bete ki sarkaar*" (government of the father and son). These evidently resonated with the voters. Mr. Modi ran a highly individual-centred campaign in which he targeted Rahul Gandhi. His high-voltage campaign virtually settled the matter in favour of his party.

Though the BJP got support from all sections of society, there are three critical aspects to its support base in U.P. First, the BJP regained the support of lower Other Backward Classes (more than half of the Kurmi community and Most Backward Classes voted the BJP). Second, the party garnered a substantial proportion of Dalit votes, mainly among the non-Jatavs. And third, there was an unprecedented level of polarisation among the upper caste voters in favour of the party. Since the 90s, the BJP in U.P. has had two main support groups: the upper castes and the lower OBCs. Mr. Modi's repeated emphasis on his caste background in his campaign speeches seems to have helped the BJP improve its vote share among OBC voters.

However, the larger puzzle pertains to the dismal performance of the SP and the BSP. The BSP won the 2007 Assembly election single-handedly, while the SP won the 2012 Assembly election with a much larger seat share. While the Congress'

decimation is all-round, it is not as if the traditional support groups of the SP and the BSP have altogether deserted them. The 2014 election verdict in U.P. rather suggests a story of failed social engineering on their part. The SP continues to receive support from Yadavs and Muslims; however, its support among Yadavs has decreased. It has also failed to get support from any other social section. In the case of the BSP, its Jatav support remained more or less intact but it did not receive support from either the lower OBCs or the Muslims. This has left the BSP to shrink to its Jatav vote base alone. With a limited support base, the capacity of both these parties to post any victories was seriously restricted.

The BJP seems to have succeeded in evolving a grand Hindu coalition, while the Muslim vote by and large went to non-BJP parties. Thus, the saffron sweep has created an imbalance in minority representation as there is no Muslim MP elected from U.P. One thing is clear: the rhetoric and the success of the BJP have posed a serious challenge to politics based merely on caste or community identities. Whether this will usher in a new era in the State's politics, where the paradigm of performance and development will shape electoral destinies in the future, is an open question.

4.9. U.P. Politics: Agenda ahead

The 2017 Assembly elections in Uttar Pradesh may be around 09 months away. But, strategies are being made and knives sharpened, so to speak, with each passing day. What lies in store for the contesting parties?

The next Assembly elections in Uttar Pradesh (UP) in 2017 are about 20 months away, but the electoral battle lines are being drawn.

People are becoming increasingly analytical about the possible outcome of the election. Questions are being asked.

Will the Samajvadi Party (SP) regain power, or will it be thrown out of office? Will the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) replicate its 2014 Lok Sabha (LS) performance in UP? What about the Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP)? Is Mayawati still relevant in UP and a serious bidder for power? Will the Congress manage to regain its previous low or will it slip further? Or, does the party have any chance of revival at all? How about the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) and the All India Majlis-e-Ittehadul Muslimeen (MIM), which might give sleepless nights to some self-proclaimed secular parties in UP?

The electoral politics in UP is complex because of multi-corner contests and the role of the caste factor. However, some parties have made new moves by attempting social engineering, shifting the public discourse from caste to class, or running electoral campaign primarily on development.

Samajwadi Party's Prospects

The Samajwadi Party won 224 seats and 29.1% votes in the 2012 Assembly elections. That was the lowest vote share with which any government had been elected in the UP since the independence. Earlier, the Mayawati government in 2007 had been elected with 30% votes. But, the Akhilesh Yadav-led government earned a bad reputation soon. Yadav's initial years were touted as the government of many chief ministers (Akhilesh Yadav, Mulayam Singh Yadav, Ram Gopal Yadav, Shivpal Yadav and Azam Khan). There was constant focus on his inability to provide leadership to government and bureaucracy. His government also earned a bad name for Muslim appeasement, promoting Yadavs in jobs and plum postings, and, failing on the law and order front. That resulted in the Samajwadi Party's humiliating defeat in LS elections 2014. The Akhilesh government has done a few things on the development front, most importantly on Lucknow metro, express-highway, energy sector, etc. But, all the credit for development comes to nothing if the citizens feel unsafe.

The present SP government is facing exactly this situation. The people see law and order during Mayawati regime as the golden era. That's the reason the SP supremo Mulayam Singh Yadav publicly reprimanded Akhilesh and his ministers to mend their ways or face the wrath of the public in the next elections.

Why does Mulayam criticise Akhilesh and his government in public so often? One argument is that, sensing the impending defeat of the SP in 2017, he wants to dissociate himself from the failure. In other words, he wants to create an escape route for himself by referring to his previous warnings. The second thesis is that, by rebuking Akhilesh, the head of the government, he is, by proxy, also rebuking all Ministers, thus saving Akhilesh from the unpleasant task. The Akhilesh government needs to worry that SP's support base in UP was seriously eroded in the 2014 LS elections. It lost votes across all the sections of the society except the Muslims.

The chances are that, because of the emergence of Owaisi's party MIM, SP may lose some votes from among the Muslims. That has forced staunch communal elements in the SP as Azam Khan to change the tone, tenor and substance of their speeches to find ways to get Hindu votes.

The SP is in trouble also due to Rashtriya Swayam Sevvak Sangh (RSS)-supported Muslim Rashtriya Manch's (MRM) mobilisation of Muslims under the leadership of Indresh Kumar, targeting those who come from arzal Muslims (Dalit Muslim community). The class schism in Muslim community is contributing to this mobilisation. And, this community is very large among Muslims.

What about Mayawati?

Mayawati had been defeated in the 2012 assembly elections. Her party BSP lost 126 seats and 4.5% votes. But in the 2014 LS elections, her losses were very substantial. She could not win a single seat and her vote share was reduced from 25.5% in 2012 to 19.6% in 2014 - a massive loss of 5.9% votes.

Many feel that Mayawati cannot be written off in UP politics since she has a substantial Dalit base. However, having a support base is one thing and, converting those numbers into votes, something else altogether.

Will the Dalits vote for Mayawati in the next Assembly elections? After all, she used to be a symbol of the Dalit identity, which had always strengthened her claim over the Dalit voters. But, how long can her image of an icon influence voters in the absence of qualitative improvement in their day-to-day lives?

It is possible that the Dalits believe that they want to back a party that may give them better returns, better life. Indeed, in the 2014 LS elections, a substantial chunk of Dalit voters moved away from the BSP to the BJP. However she is devising a new social engineering formula by combining dalit-muslim together to form a formidable force. Eighteen percent of Jatavs (hardcore BSP voters) and 45% non-Jatav Dalit voters voted for the BJP, although 68% Jatavs and 29% non-Jatavs still voted for Mayawati. But, finally, the myth of Dalit voters being captive to Mayawati dissolved. They were prepared to vote for another promising leader. That is the risk for Mayawati.

Additionally, BJP is not leaving any stone unturned to win the support of the Dalits. Through the help of RSS, it is accommodating them in organisational structure

and leadership positions. Also, the BJP government at the Centre is trying to improve their economic lot by bringing in schemes of financial inclusion (Pradhan Mantri Jan-Dhan Yojana) and social security (Pradhan Mantri Suraksha Bima Yojana), which will benefit Dalits, who are also at the lowest rung of social and economic hierarchy. The latest in the series is the creation of over one lakh SC/ST start-ups through public sector banks with each branch patronising at least one SC/ST start-up. These may facilitate a Dalit shift from identity politics to development politics. And, there, Mayawati stands to lose.

BJP's Chances

The BJP lost power in UP in 2002 with Rajnath Singh as the Chief Minister. For the last 13 years, the party had been in a complete disarray in the state. It was powerless, leaderless, and virtually voter-less.

Mulayam's SP and Mayawati's BSP dominated.

In the previous assembly elections (2012), the BJP was reduced to just 47 seats and 15% votes. Viewed in that backdrop, the party's performance in the 2014 LS elections looked very puzzling. Political pundits searched for answers and came up with many as well.

Will the BJP replicate its LS performance in the assembly elections in 2017? In 2014, BJP's LS show was mainly credited to Modi. He was able to convince the voters about his twin agenda of inclusion and development. His impact was proved when the party received votes from all the sections of the society, including Muslims. A Centre for Study of Developing Societies (CSDS) post-poll survey shows that about 10% Muslims in UP voted BJP.

So, should the BJP feel confident about its victory in the 2017 assembly elections? UP politics is complex; one needs a good grasp of electoral arithmetic and political chemistry to comprehend electoral dynamics.

In the 2014 LS elections in UP, BJP's vote share was an impressive 42.3%. Earlier, Mayawati won a clear majority with 30% votes in 2007 and Akhilesh with fractionally less in 2012. Can one expect the BJP to manage a vote share between 30% and 40% to register a clear win? And, is the BJP preparing for the same to happen in 2017?

Modi's development agenda was the focal point that brought the voters together in 2014. But, there are serious doubts on whether BJP will develop a similar focal point for assembly elections.

It is possible that people won't view Modi with the sort of reverence that they did during the national-elections. The BJP boasts of being a cadre-based party, but it has not been able to project state level leaders.

In the previous election, the party had to import Uma Bharati from MP, leading to a big fiasco. Who else, then? May be Smriti Irani. That is the dilemma. If the BJP has no face to project in the UP, more prominent leaders -that is, Akhilesh and Mayawati - may emerge as the frontrunners.

Who can BJP introduce as its political face in UP? A beginning was made when Smriti Irani contested in Amethi against Rahul Gandhi. Perhaps, the idea was not only to take Rahul head-on and give Smriti wider publicity but also to explore whether she would click with voters of UP. Smriti provided a stiff challenge by polling three lakh plus votes.

Minister of Human Resource Development, Smriti Irani Given the facts that the young leader scripted the few first lines of her story of rise with debut in UP and now has the experience of an important ministerial portfolio at the Centre, she can possibly-become a formidable candidate for the top leadership position in UP. At present, no one seems even close to her in that race. Besides, she can take on Mayawati and Akhilesh, who definitely cannot match her oratory skills.

If she is projected as a potential chief ministerial candidate, the BJP can hope to make it to the finishing line with a clear victory in the state.

What is Congress Doing?

The Congress lost power in UP on 5 December 1989 to Mulayam Singh Yadav, then in Janata Dal. Since then, it has suffered regular setbacks before hitting the rock bottom in the 2014 LS elections in which it could win only two seats.

The party is not ready to believe that it can be run without Nehru-Gandhi dynasty, and hence, without Sonia, who has been the President for 17 long years. It is not ready to democratise its party apparatus and reward grassroots workers,

discourage sycophantic culture and promote dedicated workers. How, then, will it revive?

As Sonia Gandhi is desperate to elevate Rahul to the top, chances of democratization of Congress have become very slim. Steadily, all the other influential leaders in the party both at the state and national level have been marginalized. Is that really a sign of party democracy? Can a party steered by feudal principles dream of winning in a democracy? Unless the Congress is prepared to change itself, chances are that the people of UP will continue to reject the Congress.

AAP and MIM

The Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) and MIM of Owaisi may play the spoilsport in the next elections. While AAP has suffered due to party factionalism and leadership war between Arvind Kejriwal and Yogendra Yadav and Prashant Bhushan, Owaisi has created panic for self-styled secular parties, especially SP.

The SP got 39% Muslim votes in UP in 2012, while Owaisi's MIM, an alternative and autonomous political platform, may make inroads among the Muslims. That means danger for the SP.

4.10. Conclusion

The electoral politics of Uttar Pradesh gives the evidence of endemic instability throughout the 1990s up to 2007 until BSP came to power with thumping majority. Hung assemblies in 1996 and in 2002 were an outcome of the logic of the electoral identity politics practiced by all parties in the state. As studies on elections in India have shown, the dialectics of the working of identity politics in an electoral democracy is inevitably one of increasing polarization of the electorate and break-up of political parties. In U.P., this process has resulted in the fragmentation and decay of parties and de-institutionalization of the party system. Further, the internal decay of parties reflected in weak leadership and lack of firm ideological moorings. The Samajwadi Party is also the same and it is no different from others.

Prof. Sudha Pai argues that three developments, namely, the decline of parties, poor governance and a growing financial crisis with negative economic growth are collectively responsible for the political instability that U.P. has experienced. Due to ethnic mobilization parties, confine to their narrow sectarian bases, have been unable to aggregate public opinion and get public support. The impact of identity politics on

Samajwadi party is visible at two levels - the internal structure and working of the party and the party system as a whole. Loosely held together by caste leaders with little inner democracy SP suffers from centralization, factional divisions and low level of discipline, criminalization, relentless pursuit of power and absence or ambiguity of ideological foundations. It seems that Samajwadi Party is declining and along with it, there is a halt to backward class mobilization as well. The Samajwadi Party has changed its ideological commitment of Lohiyaite Samajwad in favour of Corporate Samajwad, in the name of development discourse, thanks to the efforts of Amar Singh, ex. Gen. Secy, of the SP. But now the prized question after Amar Singh's stunning comeback is- Would SP revert back to its old ideology or search out other ways to clinically handle the situation. The answer lies in future.

Reference:

1. Verma. A.K.2004. 'Samajwadi Party in Uttar Pradesh', *Economic and Political Weekly*, April 3-10, p.1509.
2. These districts are now the part of the state of Uttarakhand which was carved out from U.P. in 2001.
3. Bribhoomi is so called because of the mythological association with Lord Krishna. It is understood that Mathura is the birthplace of the Lord Krishna.
4. Now the number of seats remaining is 22 since SP has lost Firozabad bye-election.
5. However in the 2007 Assembly elections electorates has given an absolute mandate in the favour of BSP.
6. Samajwadi party got 35 seats in 2004 Lok Sabha elections.
7. See The Hindu, 16th July, 2010, Delhi.
8. For detailed discussion see- Pai S. (ed.). 2007'.*Political process in Uttar Pradesh-Identity, Economic Reforms and Governance*. New Delhi. Pearson Longman, p.xxx.