

Chapter II

The Rise of OBCs in North India: The Case of Uttar Pradesh

Chapter II

The Rise of Other Backward Classes (OBCs) in North India: The Case of Uttar Pradesh

This Chapter presents the background to the process and understanding of Backward Caste/class Mobilization which eventually led to the formation of the present day Samajwadi Party. First, an attempt has been made to understand certain characteristics features related to advent of Backward Caste Mobilization in Uttar Pradesh. Further, this article presents forth the Constitutional understanding of OBCs and simultaneously the routes of Kisan and Quota politics through which lower Caste people got mobilized and started to press their demands for representation in politics and administration in North India. For this, it is pertinent to trace the growth of political consciousness among the Backward Classes in India (especially in Uttar Pradesh) under the British rule and since independence to delineate the context of the OBC-linked parties and politics during the period 1960s to late 1980s. The Samajwadi Party is merely an offshoot of this Backward Caste/class movement which gained a foothold after the gradual disintegration of the savarna-dominated Indian National Congress support base among the OBCs ever since the fourth general elections held in 1967.¹

2.1 Features of Backward Caste Mobilisation in Uttar Pradesh:

This chapter presents the background to the process and understanding of Backward Caste/class Mobilization which eventually led to the formation of the present day Samajwadi Party. It is under the backdrop of certain characteristics features that we would understand the formation of Samajwadi Party. These are:-

It was rather late:

The Backward Caste Movement in Uttar Pradesh as against the general Backward Caste Movement in India is, rather, a late-comer. On the one hand, the southern part of India experienced Backward Caste Mobilization as early as in 1920s. With the advent of Justice Party, which came to the power in erstwhile Madras Presidency in 1920, the reservation in government services started. Though it was not a balanced one, the reservation to some backward section of the people in Tamil Nadu had given an impetus to the agitation /movement by Backward Classes. In Mysore

state also the same story was repeated. On representation by 'Prajati Mandal' in 1921, the Maharaja of Travancore had given the eligibility to the people of the backward sections to be represented in the services. Proclamation to this effect was made in 1935. While, on the other hand, U.P. saw its arrival in late 1960s.

It took a different trajectory:

U.P accentuated this movement different trajectory, charting a middle course between the Bihar Model on the one hand and the Rajasthan/Madhya Pradesh model on the other. While, Bihar represents one end of the continuum, Rajasthan/ M.P appear at the other. The mobilization of the Backward Castes in Bihar intertwined with the peasant movement in the state which dates back to the pre-independence period. It started at a time when the Bihar Provincial Kisan Sabha led a movement for land reforms under the leadership of Swami Sahajanand Saraswati. The various measures of land reforms, rural development and green revolution benefitted the upper backward castes in rural Bihar. These upper castes consolidated their economic power and emerged as a politically conscious force in Bihar. The role of "Bhoodan Movement" and "J P Movement" further strengthened their resolve. This allowed the politics of Bihar to be totally dominated by the Backward Castes in the days to come, a process in which the upper Castes were completely marginalized. The rise of such aggressively dominant backward castes taking the form of KULAKS, was typically a Bihari phenomenon and was completely missing in Uttar Pradesh.

M.P. and Rajasthan offer entirely different models of Backward Caste Mobilization vis-à-vis Bihar. Despite a very strong presence of SCs/ STs and a substantial number of OBCs (48%) in M.P.², there is nothing like a backward caste/ class movement in the state. It is not that the backward caste/ classes do not face any difficulty in M.P., but somehow these communities have been so well accommodated in the political structures by the two National Parties- BhartiyaJanta Party(BJP) and Indian National Congress (INC)- that they have perhaps never felt neglected politically. These two national parties have given sufficient space to both the Dalits and the Backwards so that no fragmentation of the electorate has been possible along Caste lines. Rajasthan, too, has had no history of political mobilization of the backward castes. Although, the Jats of the state trace their movement to the one that was started by Sir Chhotu Ram in Punjab during 1920s-1930s to create awareness among Jat peasantry for realizing its collective strength. In Rajasthan³ OBCs

constitute 42% (Jats-10%, Gujjars & Yadavs-10% & Other OBCs-22%); SC-16%, ST-13% of total population. But despite this numerical preponderance, there is neither a backward leadership nor any separate backward political identity in the state. All the lower Castes, including the OBCs and SCs/STs, are either with the Congress or with the BJP. However, as the Jats of Rajasthan were given the OBC status as late as 1999, it is difficult to say that whether they are part and parcel of mainstream OBC movement. The other major component of OBC, the Gujjars started a violent movement under the leadership of Col. Kirori Singh Bainsla demanding their shifting from OBC to ST category in 2010, although Meenas vehemently oppose such a move.

No Homogenization of Backward Classes:

In U.P., we do not see any homogenization of Backward classes unlike what happened in Bihar. The OBCs and Dalits could not join hands here, which led to their heterogeneity. Both these communities mobilized masses in their own respective paraphernalia. For example, Chaudhary Charan Singh, former Prime-Minister of India, who is considered as the architect of KISAN POLITICS in U.P., was a Jat politician. He mobilized Jats from Western U.P., especially from the district of Meerut (His area of operation is currently district Baghpat, the then sub-division of district Meerut). Yadav community initially looked towards Charan Singh, but , after the arrival of Mulayam Singh Yadav on the political scene of U.P., it shifted its locus of focus towards him absolutely which culminated in the formation of the Samajwadi Party in November 1992. Similarly, Kanshiram led Dalit Movement through BAMCEF (All India Backward and Minority Community Employees Federation) and DS-4 (Dalit Shoshit Samaj Sangharsh Samiti) which resulted in formation of present day Bahujan Samaj Party (B.S.P.). His initial modus operandi was focusing upon entire backward classes along with minorities. But , this didn't pay off. BSP's leadership was seen as specifically Dalit-oriented. In the year 2007, BSP secured historic mandate (206 seats, 30.43% votes)⁴ and absolute majority using the formula of Social engineering, though it received a huge setback in 2012 assembly elections (80 seats and 25.9% votes)⁵ and slumped in 2014 Loksabha elections (seats-nil, 19.6% votes)⁶ to zero seats. The non-homogenization of backward classes was not only due to social conflict but also for economic contestation. The OBCs usually represented dominant peasantry that forced Dalits for manual labour without paying them adequate compensation. They also succeeded in coercing Dalits for Forced/

Bonded labour. Additionally, absence of charismatic backward Caste leader, unlike Laloo Prasad Yadav in Bihar, also ensured that Dalits and OBCs do not come together. There was a ray of hope in early 1990s when the Samajwadi Party (SP) and Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) entered into a pre-poll alliance for Nov. 1993 assembly elections. But Myopic policies of Mulayam Singh Yadav leading to Guest House incident⁷ at Lucknow sealed the fate of any joint agreement or coming together of SP and BSP i.e. OBCs and Dalits.

Inspired by the Kisan/Peasant Politics of Chaudhary Charan Singh:

The mobilization of peasant classes/castes in U.P., picked up pace in the wake of the decline of the Congress after the fourth general elections and Charan Singh's break with the Congress. His purpose in forming the BKD (Bhartiya Kranti Dal) was mainly to protect the interests of rich peasantry, particularly, the Jats and Yadavs of western U.P. (Even though, it was projected as aiming to protect the general interests of the peasants as such). Chaudhary Charan Singh held many Kisan rallies. When he was senior Deputy Prime Minister in charge of finance in 1979 (Janta Party govt.), he presented KULAK BUDGET, which helped many big farmers.

Critiquing Charan Singh's attitude towards small peasants and landless labourers, Prof. S. Pai observes⁸- "Charan Singh never offered anything to the marginal peasants and the landless; he never advocated a rigorous land ceilings and re-distribution of land. While in his writings, he made much of his concern for the Kisans and the rural poor, he does not even mention landless labourers anywhere in his writings, speeches or political programmes. Chaudhary Charan Singh was mainly concerned with the peasants holding more than two hectares of land and supported the rich peasants (beneficiaries of Green Revolution) from the middle and backward cultivating castes." The BKD capitalized on this to win their support. It also claimed proportional representation for them in politics along with furthering their interests. Initially BKD looked to be a party spearheading a caste movement, but in few years, it was able to unite sections of the lower and middle peasantry to give the organization the shape of a class movement. But inspite of having Charan Singh/ BKD and Backward class mobilization in U.P., we could not notice any robust land reforms. Moreover, the social constituency represented by the Communists seem to have dwindled with the rise of such mobilization. After the death of Chaudhry Charan

Singh in May 1987, this strand of Backward Caste mobilization received a heavy blow.

Containing the seeds of Lohiyaite Samajwad:

In U.P., Mulayam Singh Yadav epitomized the oscillation of Backward Caste leaders between Lohiya's Socialism and Charan Singh's Kisan Politics. The final victory is attributed to Quota politics over Kisan Politics. Mulayam Singh Yadav was born in 1939 at a village Safai in district Etawah, U.P. and brought up in an early Socialist stronghold. Arjun Singh Bhadauria, a veteran leader and Freedom Fighter was elected M.P. from this constituency in 1957 as independent with Socialist leanings. This local connection oriented him towards Socialist School of thought. Yadav was initiated in to politics by Dr. Ram Manohar Lohiya, (the propounder of Lohiyaite version of Socialism) when he came to his village for a "Jati Todo" i.e. Break Caste meeting in 1954. Yadav, thereafter, took a keen interest in the Canal Rate Agitation launched by Lohiya in 1954 in 13 districts of U.P. to protest against hike in the irrigation fee introduced by state government. He demonstrated and courted arrest even though he was just 15 years of age at that juncture. Yadav was first elected to the U.P. assembly in 1967 on the ticket of Samyukta Socialist Party (SSP) of Dr. Lohiya. After the Death of Lohiya in 1967, he joined the BhartiyaKranti Dal (BKD) OF Chaudhary Charan Singh. He was re-elected on the ticket of BKD in 1974. The BKD and SSP merged the same year to form the Bhartiya aLok Dal (BLD). This BLD became the constituent of Janta Party (JP) IN 1977. Yadav became the state cabinet minister in U.P.in JP Govt. Chaudhary Charan Singh pulled out of JP in 1979 and formed Lok Dal (LD). Mulayam Singh Yadav stayed with him. When Chaudhary Charan Singh died in May 1987, the LD split into LD(A) led by his son Ajit Singh and LD (B) led by Mulayam Singh Yadav in U.P. Yadav, subsequently, merged his faction with the Janta Dal (JD), a party which amalgamated two currents of Indian Politics- the Socialists of Lohiya school of thought and Chaudhary Charan Singh's follower of Kisan Politics. Janta Dal formed its government in U.P. in 1989 and Mulayam Singh Yadav was elected as Chief Minister of U.P. for the first time. The JD split in 1990. Yadav remained with the faction led by Chandra Shekhar. This faction came to be known as Samajwadi Janta Party (SJP). Ultimately, Yadav left SJP and formed his own Party on 4-5 September 1992 and named it as Samajwadi Party

(SP)⁹. In this way, we see that seeds of Lohiyaite Samajwad passed on to one or the other organization. This, in turn, led to the mobilization of Backward Caste in U.P.

Substantial Mobilization of the Backwards by the instrument of Political Parties:

The strategy of mobilization of the lower and backward Castes through the instrument of Political Parties started as a new phenomenon in the Post-Congress polity. The space vacated by Congress was open for acquiring political legitimacy. At least, three contenders appeared on the political scene in U.P. IN 1990s- the Samajwadi Party (SP), the Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) and the Bhartiya Janta Party (BJP). The BSP's game plan was very clear; it wanted to exercise the complete sway over the Bahujan Samaj but ended up consolidating its hold over the Dalits, especially the Chamars and Jatavas. The lower Dalits (like Parsi and Bhangi/Valmiki) known as Anti-Dalits went with BJP or Congress. The BJP also castled Brahmins and Baniyas. Now the battle was for OBCs.

The *Second Democratic Upsurge*¹⁰ in 1989 had left OBCs disillusioned with the existing parties- the BJP and the Congress. They began to look for the third space. This was provided by the Janta Dal (JD). JD made its government in Uttar Pradesh in 1989 under the leadership of Mulayam Singh Yadav. The electoral history of U.P. since 1989 is characterized by the rise of the backwards. Their presence in U.P. Politics sharply increased when the JD won 208 seats with 30% votes and formed the government. The SP had been formed largely on the social support base derived from the JD, which had emerged as a new political platform giving space to the newly energized marginalized sections of the society- largely the Dalits and the Backwards- in the wake of the second democratic upsurge. Since then, the JD and its later offshoot, the Samajwadi Party (SP) claim to be the true representative of the Backwards. Moreover, Manipulative Politics played by Political leaders for the benefit of their caste provided an ignition point for the backwards to vote in the favour of their leader/caste party.

However, as no community is totally cohesive and homogenous, it is not possible for any political formation to have a monopolistic control over it. The existence of Caste sub-divisions leading to factional fighting always allows space for the division of the voters of a caste group into more than one political party.

2.2 Different phases of Backward Caste Mobilisation in Uttar Pradesh

First Phase: British Rule from 1857 to 1930s:

Uttar Pradesh was one of the strongholds of the Congress Party during the Nationalist Period and in the early years of independence. There was no Anti-Brahmin Movement in the Colonial period. Brahmins dominated all walks of life. Even Congress leadership also came from the upper Castes. Myron Weiner's thesis about the "Open Elite System" of the Congress Party in 1960s does not fit with the situation prevailing in North India. This analysis was based on case studies from South and West India, but the Congress System was very different in the Hindi belt. In the four main states- Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and Bihar- the party remained dominated by elite groups from the upper Castes, either professional politicians from the intelligentsia, businessmen and landlords.

Paul Brass¹¹ suggests that Congress Party before independence and throughout the colonial period was a mass movement, rather than a political party, which combined in itself a wide diversity of political beliefs and social cohesion. Therefore, he identifies "faction" as the basic political unit in the state Congress Party. During the colonial period initially the Congress was able to gain the support of the landlords as well as the tenants and the smaller peasants. This was because it was a broad based party containing the conservative swarajists, socialists and others who were active in the Kisan Sabhas. The Base and support structure of the party was broader than its leadership. As the party which had led the National Movement and due to its secular image, it could gain the support of lower castes/classes, Muslims and prosperous peasant classes

From 1871 onwards, the British enumerated castes (like the religious groups). This process of Census provided castes with an opportunity to petition the government for a higher place in the order of precedence and for being recorded under new, *Sanskritised* names. In Northern India, Sixteen Castes did so in 1911 and twenty in 1921 including Kurmis, Gadariyas, Kachhis, Lodhs and Ahirs, who all wanted to be recognized as Kshatriyas.¹² This move was in keeping with the logic of Sanskritization since the objective was not to opt out from the Varna system , rather, to rise within it according to its own rules and values.

The period between the Mutiny of 1857 and the First Congress Non-Cooperation Movement of 1921 is of extraordinary importance in Modern Indian History. It was during this period that – 1) English Education began to flourish in Indian Universities. 2) Movements of Social Reform and Religious Revival developed. 3) New Political Institutions were introduced and 4) The Indian National Congress was formed in 1885. The Cultural, Intellectual and Political life of North India in this period was neglected by Historians of Modern India because North India occupied a secondary role in intellectual and political life of the late 19th and early 20th centuries compared to Bengal and Bombay (now Mumbai). Yet the root to many developments of 20th century in Indian Politics was provided by U.P.'s BANARAS (Hindu Tradition), ALIGARH (Muslim Tradition) and ALLAHABAD (Secular Tradition). The Non-Cooperation Movement of 1921 brought to Indian Politics a brief moment of unity which was never recaptured again. It appealed to the growing Hindu reaction against the dominance of western civilization and to Muslim resentment against the British because of the war against Turkey. In U.P., this movement had an economic content. In 1918, P.D.Tandon had begun to organize the peasants in Oudh to fight for their rights against Taluqdars. The Peasant Movement merged with the Congress Movement in U.P. when there were serious agrarian riots in the Oudh districts of Rai Bareilly and Faizabad. In 1923 full scale rioting broke out in northern U.P. This led to the resurgence of communal politics of Hindu Mahasabha in 1923 and re-emergence of Muslim League in 1924. Then, Congress Civil Disobedience Movement of 1930-31 was followed by terrible Kanpur riot of 1931. However, by independence, Congress emerged as a party supported primarily by the smaller zamindars and the bigger tenants in North India, particularly in U.P. In 1920s and 1930s we can discern two patterns of agrarian mobilization by Congress - 1) The poorer peasantry were mobilized not by the Congress led movements but by the Kisan Sabha agitations. 2) Its interest coincided with the smaller zamindars and bigger tenants who were the groups which had taken to commercialization of agriculture and prospered in the well-irrigated tracts of western U.P. and supported Congress during No Rent Campaigns/Civil Disobedience Movement. Hence, the Zamindari abolition of 1952 removed big zamindars and passed over Bhumidhari rights to intermediate peasant elite, who were based largely in western U.P.

Another new political development in this period was the growth of ideological politics within the Congress. Congress Socialist Party (CSP) was formed within the Congress in 1934. Though, it was led by Acharya Narendra Dev in U.P., CSP was the beginning of Lohiyaite politics in India.

Second Phase: Evolution of Paracomunities from 1930s to 1960s

The period from 1930s to early 1960s is characterized for the evolution of various Caste associations which were formed to improve the ranks of their castes in the Census so as to drain caste hierarchy and to demand reservation in education/administration. These associations or Paracomunities¹³ were simply the vehicles for Sanskritization-oriented demands to be put to the state initially but acted as pressure-groups and mutual aid structures vis-à-vis the state later on. For example- Sanskritization remained the doctrine of the All India Yadav Mahasabha formed by Kithal Krishna Khedekar in the late 19th century. The propensity of Yadavs towards this basic kind of sanskritization is evident from their attempt at “Aryanising” their history. The first history of Yadavs were written by K.K. Khedekar. This work was taken up by his son R.V. Khedekar and published in 1959 under the title “*The Divine Heritage of Yadavs*”. This book situates the Origin of Yadavs in ABHIRAS, who were immigrants from Central Asia and established kingdoms in North India. The most recent of such kingdoms was built in Rewari, Haryana in the 17th century. The scion of the dynasty, Rao Bahadur Balbir Singh established the Ahir-Yadav Kshtriya Mahasabha in 1910. This association claimed that the Ahirs descended from the Yadu dynasty, hence, the term Yadav, to which Lord Krishna belonged and that the Ahir’s real name was Yadav and that they were Kshtriyas. To promote a warrior ethos and caste unity, Association leaders could rely on the caste history since Ahirs have been deemed by the British ethnography as coming from the same ABHIRAS. and were known for their martial valour. The prince of Rewari took part in revolt of 1857, for instance. This is probably why M.S.A. Rao considers that the term Yadav refers to both an ethnic category and an ideology. Yadav leaders succeeded in their social fusion project since they persuaded their fellow caste members to downplay the endogamous units. This social fusion was made easier from the 1930s onwards when North Indian Yadavs migrated from their villages to urban areas and especially to Delhi.

Similarly, other major component of OBCs Kurmis formed All India Kurmi Mahasabha which was officially registered in Patna in 1910. But it gained momentum in late 1920s and early 1930s. “Ramanandi Sampraday” presented Kurmis as descending from Lord Ram’s two sons-Luv and Kush. The Kushwahas (Kories, Kachhis and Murao) also claim that their ancestor was Kush. In Bihar, Kurmis, Kories and Yadavs formed *TRIVENI SANGH*¹⁴ in 1934. However, its leaders co-opted with Congress in 1935, when it formed Backward Class Federation to counter such movements.

We see a series of Backward Caste Associations mushrooming in North India during second phase of backward caste mobilization like-All India Jat Mahasabha whose president was Chaudhary Charan Singh in 1937, U.P. Backward Classes Federation in 1929, Bihar State Backward Classes Federation in 1947. All India Backward Classes Federation (AIBCF) was formed on 26th January 1950, the day Indian Constitution came in force, under the presidentship of Punjab Rao Deshmukh who had thoroughly supported Backward Castes during the Constituent Assembly debates. Marc Galanter in his book- “Competing Equalities” suggests that in 1954 there were 88 organizations working for the backward classes in 15 states out of which 74 represented individual communities, 14 backward classes in general on a local or state basis. AIBCF split in 1957 due to Deshmukh’s reluctance to emancipate himself from Congress and Gandhian discourse. Then, R.L.Chandapuri created Indian National Backward Classes Federation. This faction merged itself later with Socialist Party in 1957 itself. Moreover, the first Backward Classes Commission was formed on 29 January 1953 under the Chairmanship of Kakasahab Kalelkar in this second phase of political mobilization of Backwards.

However, One should admit that these caste federations or fronts were not strong because of their differing ideologies and weak organizational machineries. Scholars like Jefferlot are doubtful about the transformational potentialities, especially of lower caste associations since they acted as both– the pressure group and vehicles for sanskritization against the same state. He holds that colonial ethnography was largely responsible for equating the “Aryans” with the upper Castes and Dravidians with the lower orders of Indian Society. This perception prepared the ground for interpretation of the Castes in ethnic terms, especially in Western and Southern India. In the Northern region, or the Aryavrata, the Brahminical pattern was supposed to

have taken root. Apart from forming caste associations and federations, the lower castes took to yet another strategy to secure and safeguard their interests by establishing common fronts first at regional level and later covering the entire country.

Third Phase: Politics of Agrarian Mobilization or Kisan Politics from 1960s to 1980s

We can trace the third phase of backward caste/class mobilization from 1960s onwards till the formation of Lok Dal in 1980s. This period was totally devoted to the Politics and policies favouring farmers and agrarian classes. The term Politics of Agrarian Mobilization¹⁵ means mobilization of agrarian classes into politics by political parties, groups and individual leaders. Since the mid-1960s, there has been a growing nexus between the nature of agrarian development, the rise of a rich peasant class and political alignments in North India in general and in U.P. in particular. This process became most visible in U.P. due to the formation of BKD (Bhartiya Kranti Dal) under the leadership of Chaudhary Charan Singh in 1967. This was exclusively a peasant based party. Moreover, one of the most important characteristics of U.P. is that its politics remain closely tied to rural and agrarian plank rather than urban and industrial. Thus, state politics in U.P. in this phase could be described as the “Politics of Agrarian Mobilization”. The introduction of new agrarian technology in the mid-1960s had a major impact on the levels of agricultural productivity and the agrarian sector in various parts of U.P. The resultant Green Revolution created in some areas a class of rich peasants who benefitted substantially from early adoption of new technology. Having gained economic power and prowess, this rich peasant class made an attempt to gain political power at both- state and national level- in order to equip it with control over public policy towards agriculture. By this phase, we can discern two major changes in agrarian structure of U.P. due to a number of Community Development Programmes and Panchayati Raj Schemes as well as more particularly through Green Revolution. These are - 1) Increasing Class Differentiation 2) Regional Inequalities While in the 1950s and 1960s issues such as land reform, taxation of agriculture, state trading of food grains etc. were important, in the 1970s and 1980s remuneration for farm products and terms of trade with industry had been the central issues. This trend was visible through 1969 elections in which BKD gained 21% of votes and the formation of BLD in 1974. By the mid-1970s, due to the spread of

Green Revolution in to more areas and large scale mobilization of the backward and middle castes, Janta Party got victorious in 1977 assembly elections. The formation of Janta Dal in due course of time, brought together for the first time important agrarian issues to the front and succeeded in capturing political power.

Fourth Phase: Empowerment of Backwards from 1980s to 2000s (Till the formation of Samajwadi Party Governments)

The 1980s were a period of fluidity in U.P. Politics. Following the 1980 elections and the return of Congress to power, opposition parties lost importance. This phase saw the substantial mobilization of the backwards and their subsequent empowerment. The beginning of 1980s reflected the confluence of socialist legacies and peasant politics (by Lok Dal) under the leadership of Chaudhary Charan Singh. This party fought exclusively for the disclosure and implementation of the Mandal Commission Report. But the demise of Chaudhary Sahab led to internal fractions and serious crisis in the party in mid-1980s. In 1980 and 1985 assembly elections, Congress was able to come back to power. This is because of the reason that in these elections national rather than local issues gained momentum. Due to this, agrarian issues were relegated temporarily in the background. Moreover, this double bonanza of victory of Congress in U.P. was part of the sympathy wave which ran in the mind and hearts of electorates due to assassination of Mrs. Indira Gandhi. The late 1980s represents the “Second Wave” of Backward Caste Mobilization in post-independence era. By the end of late 1980s, the vast mass of OBC (Ahirs, Kurmis and Kories) besides Jats and Yadavs, who remained outside politics, also got mobilized and entered in politics.

With the formation of Janta Dal in October 1988, OBC became a relevant category for the lower castes, as it concentrated more on caste and less on class. Janta Dal formed its government at the centre under the leadership of V.P. Singh and Mulayam Singh Yadav led Janta Dal government in Uttar Pradesh in 1989. The Prime-Minister V.P. Singh’s politics of reservation or affirmative/positive discrimination reminds us of return to Lohiyaite Principles in Indian Government and politics in general. On date 7th August 1990, he proclaimed the implementation of 27% reservation for OBCs as per the report of Mandal Commission in education and government service. This reflects the empowerment of the backwards “from the below”. After the resignation of V.P. Singh, Janta Dal broke down and split. Mulayam

Singh Yadav remained with the faction of Chandra Shekhar, called the Samajwadi Janta Party (SJP). In the wake of Chandra Shekhar's reluctance towards Mandal card (since Rajputs were his mainstay in eastern U.P.) Mulayam Singh Yadav launched his own party i.e. Samajwadi Party (SP) in Lucknow in November 1992. Since then, SP considers itself to be the true representative of the backwards in Uttar Pradesh. November 1993 assembly elections in U.P. were fought by SP-BSP Alliance. Mulayam Singh became Chief Minister on 5th December 1993. After that, he assumed charge of Chief Ministership of U.P. in 2003. He has become C.M. of U.P. thrice. Again he got a chance in 2012 when SP secured absolute majority in assembly elections, but owing to youth-orientation, he introduced his son Akhilesh Yadav as Chief Ministerial candidate. Thus, we see OBCs, as social and political category, have taken access to power so many times and have influenced public policy in their favour by forming government.

Fifth Phase: From Identity Politics and Empowerment to Good Governance and Development (2007 onwards till Date)

The landslide victory of the Bhartiya Janta Party (BJP) in Lok Sabha elections 2014 surprised not only its rivals and political observers, but even its own leaders. Winning 71 seats out of 80 with voting percentage of 42.3% in U.P., BJP secured absolute majority in Lok Sabha on its own. It is significant to note that the party made electoral gains across all castes and communities and across all regions in the state. Similarly, in 2012 state assembly elections, SP secured absolute majority with 224 seats and voting percentage of 29.27%. Voters of U.P. sent 21 Congressmen to parliament in 2009 when everybody thought that it must be a terminal decline of Congress party in U.P. BSP, too, in 2007 assembly elections with the help of Savarna politics or Social Engineering formula won 206 seats with voting percentage of 30.43%. What does this picture figure out in U.P. Politics. These examples have signalled a paradigm shift in voter behavior. After about 25 odd years people of state refused to go along with caste-based parties and preferred to vote for "Good Governance and Development." This has pushed out the identity politics of caste and community to the backstage.

Now the question arises as to why and how did voters of U.P. think so? The possible answer could be that the voters have well-understood the difference between National and State elections. Since caste politics have become redundant in National

politics, it was futile to vote for a party that does not have development and accountable governance on its agenda. Moreover, the people of state had seen two models of governance in the form of SP-BSP at the state level and UPA-NDA at National level. In 2014 parliamentary elections, people voted for developmental model of Gujrat as enunciated by Narendra Modi. They found in Modi an effective instrument of change. Therefore, they voted for Modi's vision of development and good governance as juxtaposed to SP's incompetence, lack of vision, blatant casteism, freebee politics, Muslim Appeasement and an environment of deteriorating law and order conditions. Whereas UPA's regime is marked by scams, political corruption, rising prices and misuse of power. It must be made crystal clear here that "Modi Wave" has surprised all, and not BJP.

Prof. Mirza Asmer Beg in his essay entitled "Ebb and Flow of Party support"(2014)¹⁶ opines that BJP registered accretions in vote share in 2014 Lok sabha elections among all social groups, cutting across caste and community lines, including Muslims. However, we must remember that this happened with BSP in 2007 and with Congress, too, in 2009. Therefore, BJP could not easily sit quite for assembly elections to be held in 2017. The Muslim vote is often thought of as tactical voting to defeat BJP, but that behavior seems to be changing in Uttar Pradesh. The traditional beneficiary of Muslim vote in U.P. the Samajwadi Party has fallen grace post-Muzzaffar Nagar riots. While Congress, SP, BSP, RLD and AAP, vie with each other for Muslim Votes, BJP has complicated the scenario by trying to access them too. Its efforts got impetus via Muslim clerics or Dharma Gurus, who warned non-BJP parties not to instill fear among Muslims in the name of BJP. It seems that in current times, Muslims are re-thinking now and their re-thought is driven by sociological and political considerations. Recent CSDS (Centre for the study of Developing Societies) studies substantiate this projection. While, 3% Muslims voted for BJP in 2007 assembly elections 7% in 2012 respectively, their support may go up to 11% in next elections if Modi government come true and supportive in their stance towards Muslims. Thus, we see, this phase reflects that entire dynamics of transition may shift focus in academic discourse from identity and empowerment to governance and development.

2.3 Constitutional understanding of the Other Backward Classes (OBCs)

The Constitution of India talks about the backward classes of citizen only and not about backward castes. Article 15¹⁷ of the Indian Constitution states about positive discrimination for them. The Constitutional understanding of the backward classes means socially and educationally backward classes. It also includes Scheduled Castes (SCs) and Scheduled Tribes (STs) under this category. For the purpose of clarity, it would be helpful to distinguish between Backward Classes and Backward Castes. The OBCs were mentioned in the Constitution in most general terms and there were no all- India list¹⁸ drawn up for them. The question of who constituted the SCs/STs was debated and roughly settled before independence. It was the first Backward Classes Commission (appointed under Article 340 of Indian Constitution) headed by Kaka Sahab Kalelkar that made use of caste as a criterion for determining social backwardness. This Commission was formed on 29 Jan.1953 and was consisted of 11 members mainly belonging to low castes except its Chairman, who was a Brahmin. It identified 2399 backward castes, which included 837 “Most Backward Castes”. The recommendation of this Commission was rejected, by the then government, due to the fact that it disagreed with the selection of caste as a criterion of determining social backwardness. In the absence of a central law or directive the states arbitrarily enlarged the benefits for backward classes. The second Backward Classes Commission was appointed on 1 Jan.1979. It was headed by B.P. Mandal and could do no better. Popularly known as Mandal Commission, it submitted its report on 31 Dec.1980. The Commission had recommended 27% reservation for the OBCs. The Mandal Commission recommendations were accepted and implemented in 1989 by V.P. Singh government at the centre.

It could do no better in the sense that it also made caste based social backwardness, a crucial element in the determination of the “backwardness” of Hindus, though it also used educational backwardness as a linked element and economic backwardness as a derived element. Thus, by the end of 1980s castes had become an accepted criterion for the determination of socially and educationally backward classes of citizens.

Since, the SCs and STs were the constitutionally recognized backward Classes, the other castes that qualified for the status of the “socially and educationally backward classes of citizens” were referred to as the Other Backward Classes

(OBCs). Now in common parlance and even in academic discourse the OBCs are referred to as the backwards while the SCs/STs are known as Dalits. Thus, OBC became a relevant unit and low castes started to rally around this administrative category in order to defend their reservations/quotas at the disposal of the state. It is with this segment of the society called the OBCs that we are going to address in this research.

The Other Backward Castes (OBCs) are castes in the Indian Social system that are situated above the untouchables but below the forward castes. These mainly consist of peasant castes of various descriptions, which usually occupy low positions in the Varna hierarchy. These castes lack the traditions of literacy and western education. They are often poorly represented in government jobs and in White-Collar occupations. Yet they usually occupy a dominant position in the economic and political system of village life. Hence, M.N. Srinivas has termed them as Dominant Castes. Scholars like Nomita Yadav puts that when they are numerically preponderant, they control a village, a district and even a state.

In pursuance of the directives of the Supreme Court, given in Writ Petition Civil no. 930 of 1990 of Indira Sawhney and others V/S Union of India and others (Judgement pronounced on 16.11.1992), Government of India enacted the National Commission for Backward Classes Act 1993 and set up the same at centre. This commission drew up a detailed list of backward castes in different states.¹⁹

2.4. Peasant and Backward Castes

The new agrarianism had an explosive effect on Indian politics following the official sponsored Green Revolution in the mid of 1960s. The effect of new agrarian was to led both the anti Congress parties (including the Hindu supremacist Jan Sangh and its allies) and the reborn Congress led by Indira Gandhi. Jati and varna themes received much emphasis in this pronouncement. The term KHAM, was an acronym for Kshatriyas, Harijan, Adivasis ('tribal') and Muslim. The Congress leaders in the key agricultural regions- most notably in the Hindi heartland states of Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan and Haryana- could no longer appeal to voters. They began to target their electoral appeal towards the two extremes of the economic and social spectrum.²⁰

The Muslim, Harijans and Adivasis or 'Tribals', the 'HAM' voters, continued to be thought of as natural congress voters because Congress was the party of

'secularism' and so-called protective discrimination for the deprived. Kshatriyas refer to the elite landowners who in the Gangetic north were typically of Rajput or Bhumi-har origin. They won over as Congress voters when the party signaled to them that its ruling state ministries were willing to favour their economic interest by suspending or relaxing the land ceiling laws. These Nehruvian quasi-socialist enactments of the early post-independence era had supposedly paved the way for the large scale transfers of the land to the rural poor by setting limits on the size of individual land holdings (Bayly 1999: 285). Mrs. Gandhi's 22 month period of dictatorship (emergency 1975-77). In the political spectrum the voters were being told to see caste bonds both as an asset and as a means by which others had hitherto been able to advance themselves unfairly.²¹

The state power played an important role in the linking of caste with the phenomenon of mass 'kisan' (peasant) mobilization. In 1970s, Indira Gandhi successfully alliance with the Communist Party of India and campaign with a slogan 'garibi hatao' (eradicate poverty). Mrs Gandhi projected herself as land reformer and pro-poor so that she could appeal the masses. It immediately affected the election scenario in 1971s general election and Congress Party captured the power in the Centre. The party got the support of tribals and untouchables. In the era of 'garibi hatao' politicians came to treat educational and employment quotas as electoral assets and raising the stakes at election times by promising larger quota allocations to important group of voters (Brass 1990).²² There were central policy makers of this giant new category called "Other Backward Classes (OBCs)". These communities were neither 'tribals' nor 'untouchables' but it was difficult to identify such communities.

In Uttar Pradesh, as a result of agrarian reform and quota politics, caste identities have not receded but evolved under the influence of political parties. The relationship between the political and the social spheres has passed through caste from the 1950s onwards. After getting independence from British, parties were looking for mobilization of masses. As ideological politics withered away and no new ideological orientations were offered. Caste provided with an easy-to use mobilization social basis.²³

The relations between social groups and the polity were bi-dimensional and reciprocal in democratic societies. The parties influenced and shape the society as

society shapes political parties. There was restructuring of political parties on the basis of social, caste based dynamics both regional as well as national levels. Uttar Pradesh has evolved from having a political system which is dominated by upper castes over the whole period considered (1952-2002). Muslim were 18 per cent of population, but no Muslim leadership has emerged in the state. Hindu marginalized groups have followed the social change to assert themselves but no such change occurred in Muslim communities.

In the post independence era (from 1952 to 1967), there was the dominance of upper caste in the assembly. During the period of 1967 to 1989, there was the increase in OBC members in the assembly. The number of upper caste MLAs in the assembly went from 58 per cent in 1952 to 45 per cent in 1967 and 1969.²⁴ In 1969, Jana Sangha party had 47 per cent upper caste party MLAs. But there was also 10 per cent MLAs from backward caste in the Jana Sangha Party. The Socialist Parties had more than 25 per cent belonged from backward castes middle tenants.

Table - 1

Caste and Composition of the UP Assembly, 1974-02 (Per cent)²⁴

Caste and Communities	1974	1977	1980	1983	1989	1991	1993	1996	2002
Upper castes	37.80	35.18	41.31	39.70	35.68	39.05	26.05	34.55	35.38
Intermediary Caste (Jat)	1.41	1.16	1.17	2.10	2.58	3.09	3.05	3.71	4.67
OBC	18.30	16.78	13.36	19.60	24.14	32.39	32.39	24.83	27.52
Scheduled Castes	21.35	21.42	21.58	21.94	22.02	22.14	22.30	22.07	21.87
Scheduled Tribes	0.23	0.23	0.23	0.23	0.23	0.24	0.23	0.23	—
Muslim	9.38	11.66	11.97	12.15	9.62	5.48	7.51	8.82	10.57

Source : Jaffrelot (2007).

The above data show that different social group's representation in the assembly election from 1974 to 2002 onwards. In 1974, the upper castes representation in the assembly was 37.80 per cent which reached 35.38 per cent in 2002 has been decreased by around 2 per cent. The intermediary castes (Jat) representation was 1.41 per cent in 1974 which reached 4.67 per cent in 2002. The OBC MLAs representation

was 18.30 per cent in 1974 which reached 27.52 in 2002 in the state. There was no such improvement in the representation of Scheduled Castes MLAs between 1974 to 2002. The Muslim representation increased by nominal 1 per cent between 1974 to 2002. We see that OBCs MLAs increased more than any other community during this period. It is important to know that the representation upper caste MLAs has decreased during this period in the state legislature.

The Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) launched by Kanshi Ram in 1984, was a party of Dalits aiming at forming alliances of Dalits, Minorities and OBCs.²⁶ implementation of Mandal Commission in 1990, the political scenario of the state has changed. The electoral success of Samajwadi Party (SP)- Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) alliance in 1993 had some record number of elected OBCs MLAs comparatively more than Upper Castes MLAs in the state legislature. After Mandal, whichever party came into power the OBCs MLAs remained in high number. Mandal opened the power sharing era. In 1993, the SP and BSP were the main contributors to the introduction of a new political personnel with more than 40 per cent of OBC MLAs in the state legislature. In 1993 election both the parties SP and BSP shows the specific trends. The SP and BSP both nominate more OBCs and SCs candidate respectively. Even BSP did not nominate any upper caste candidate due to anti-Brahmin strategy. But SP manage to win 10 per cent upper caste MLAs. In the same year, Yadavs with 35 per cent MLAs, were more than SCs and upper caste MLAs put together²⁶

Both the parties changed their strategy and introduced upper caste candidates in the election. As a result the share of OBCs and SCs candidate went down in 1996 compare to 1993. The dilution of the BSP's anti-Brahmin discourse was a result of the alliance entered with the Congress in which 15 per cent MLAs of Congress belonged to upper castes. The Congress party had 65 per cent MLAs belonged to upper castes, 15 per cent OBCs and 9 per cent SCs. Bhartiya Janta Party (BJP) which perceived as an upper caste party nevertheless had over 21 per cent of its MLAs coming from the backward castes²⁷ in terms of political representation, the OBCs MLAs increased since 1960s in the state.

We observe that OBCs vote was shifted to one party to another party during 1996, and 1999 election.

Table-2

Shift of OBCs voters in Percentage (1996-99)²⁸

PARTY	1996	1997	1999
CONGRESS	5.9	7.6	16.4
BJP	39.9	44.9	24.7
SP	38.0	33.1	18.2
BSP	11.7	10.9	10.8

Source : National Election Studies, New Delhi.

This table shows the OBC voters shift in four important parties like Congress, Bhartiya Janta Party (BJP), Samajwadi Party (SP), Bahujan Simaj Party (BSP). If we 1999 OBCs voters shifted towards 'congress Party by 16.4 per cent. The BJP and SP voters decrease by 24.7 and 18.2 per cent respectively. Only in BSP the OBC voters struck in this party with 10.8 per cent from 1997 onwards.

Mayawati has announced to give the ticket to so-called upper caste. She extended her friendship towards Brahmin and criticized political parties to not doing enough for them. Even she questioned Prime Minister Atal Bihari Bajpayee for not doing anything to Brahmin at that time.

The Yadav, Thakur/ Rajput, Muslim supporters of Mulayam Singh have to oppose by Dalit, Brahmin and Muslim supporters of BSP. The BSP leadership has launched Brahmin mobilization rallies in various districts. She gave the slogan during the election that Yeh haathi (election symbol of BSP) nahi, (Janesh haiti, Brahnia, Vishnu, Mahesh haiti.²⁹ in 2007 election; Mayawati got the majority and became the Chief Minister with the support of upper castes in the state.

2.5 The reservation policy for Other Backward Classes in Uttar Pradesh

After the 61 years of independence the reservation policy for backward classes could not play important role in social and economic aspects of the people. There may be various reasons for that. Some important factors could be negligence of political parties, government officials, the mind set of the people regarding the caste system or insensitiveness towards the implementation of the Government policies and competition at the higher level. There is also shocking news which revealed by the Arjun Sen Gupta Committee report that more than 75 percent of the people in the

country living at Rs. 13 per day. They show that after the growth of GDP, it could not improve the conditions of the people at the grass-root level.

The last caste based population available in 1931 census in India. After that population census on the basis is not available. The two Sociologists enumerated the population of Uttar Pradesh based on caste. They divided the population in Upper Castes, Lower Castes (Upper status) Most Backward Castes, Dalit Castes and Muslim.

Chhedilal Sathi Commission:

The Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh, Hemwati Nandan Bahuguna established three members Commission to find out the Backward Classes in the State, on 31 October 1975. Chhedilal Sathi was the president of the Commission and Majkhan Singh Saini and Sita Rain Nishad was the member of it. The Commission has submitted its report on 17th May 1977.

The Commission found 41 most backward castes, which were 26 per cent of the total, population of the State. It recommended 17 per cent reservation for them in Government jobs. In his report, he also shows that 12 castes were Upper Backward Castes, which were the 20 per cent of the total population and recommended 10 per cent reservation for them in jobs. He also suggested 2.5 per cent reservation for Muslim Backward Castes, which is 6 per cent of the total population in the State. The Commission also recommended free education, hostel facilities, scholarship, reservation in educational institutions and government support to establish the small-scale' industries as well as reservation in Lok Sabha, Rajya Sabha, Vidhan Sabha and Vidhan Parisad and also representation in Government Commissions.

Social Justice Committee:

The Uttar Pradesh government formed a Social Justice Committee on June 28, 2001 headed by Hukum Singh, Minister of Parliamentary Affairs and two other members were Rampati Shastri Health Minister and Daya Ram Pal member of UP Legislative Council. The Committee was formed to look into the existing government schemes, programs and facilities for the welfare of SCs, STs and OBCs to achieve the social justice in the state. A 'Social Justice Week' was organized from 30th July to 6th August in the state.³⁰ It registered the family of 53,000 village panchayats in the state. The committee received and considered 3,233 representations from various

interested groups in the state. It also analyzed SCs, STs and OBCs groups in the 11,27,311 government posts in UP.³¹ The committee submitted 200 pages Report on 31 August 2001. The Uttar Pradesh cabinet accepted the report on 13th September and in 15th September the Uttar Pradesh Public Service Commission (Reservation for SCs, STs and OBCs (Amendment Ordinance 2001) was accepted by the Governor.

There were 66 SCs groups and 79 OBCs groups in Uttar Pradesh. The spirit of reservation was to benefit for the all section of society in equitable manner. Then only sprit of social justice could be achieved here. The Social Justice. Committee found the share of jobs of SCs and OBCs. The data suggested that Chamars/Jatava among SCs and Yadava among OBCs occupied maximum share of government jobs.

In the higher education among SCs Jatava occupied 49.54 per cent of reserved seats followed by Koris (12.04 per cent), Pasis (10.04 per cent) and Dhobis (10.04 per cent), Among the Other Backward Classes (OBCs), Yadav occupied 32.37 per cent followed by Kurmis of 11.24 per cent. The Chamars and the Yadavs also took the advantage of land holdings and other benefits. Due to that SCs have been divided into Chamars versus 65 per cent sub caste of non Chamars. Among 21 per cent government jobs for SCs 10 per cent has reserved for SCs and 11 percent for non-Chamars.

At the same time OBCs group divided into three groups like A, B and C. The Yadavs/ Ahirs were placed into group A, Sonar, Jat, Kurmi, Gin, (3ujar, Gossain, Lodh and Kamboj in Group B, and the remaining 70 castes (viz, Kahar, Kevat, Koexi, Kumhar, Gaderia, Tell, Lohar etc.) included in group C.³² According to social justice committee, the reservation for OBCs raised by 27 to 28 per cent in government jobs. The 5 percent reserved for group A, 9 per cent for group B and 9 per cent for group C.

Table - 3**OBCs' share in Population and Government Job³³**

Caste	Caste Category	Population in Lakhs	Percentage in OBC Population	Percentage in Jobs
Yadav/Ahirs	A	146.77	19.40	33.00
Kurmi	B	56.46	7.46	12.49
Lodhi	B	37.06	4.90	4.16
Jat	B	27.26	3.60	6.85
Gujjar	B	4.12	0.50	1.70
Gadaria/PalC	C	33.50	3.43	3.78
Kewat/Mallah	C	32.74	4.33	1.36
Momin/Ansar	C	31.40	4.15	2.28
Teli/Sahu	C	30.47	4.30	2.82
Kumhar	C	25.84	3.42	2.34
Kahar	C	25.04	3.31	2.63
Kachchi	C	24.56	3.25	2.97
Nai	C	22.79	3.01	2.92

Source : Government in Uttar Pradesh (2001), *Social Justice Committee Report, 2001*.

In 1975 the Chhedilal Sathi Commission of Uttar Pradesh had found wide differences in socio-economic status of various castes of backward classes. Kaipoori Thakur suggested 8 per cent quota for intermediary OBCs and 12 per cent for the Most Backward Classes (MBCs). The Supreme Court gave its verdict to uphold the 27 per cent reservations for the OBCs and suggested the exclusion of 'creamy layer' or economically well-off from reserve seats.

According to new law 21 per cent government jobs were reserved for SCs, 2 per cent for STs and 27 per cent for OBCs. Now total 50 per cent government jobs are reserved which followed the Supreme Court decision of November 1992 to strict the reservation upto 50 per cent.

The Uttar Pradesh Public Service (Reservation for SCs, STs and OBCs) Act 1994, has been amended to insert a separate Scheduled III in new law. It enumerated 66 Scheduled Castes in UP and divided them into two parts. In part A the Chamars also known as Dhusia, Jhusia and Jatava and remaining 65 castes come under part B.

In part A constitutes 55.70 per cent of the total SC population. It has retained 11.5 per cent of the 21 per cent jobs reserved for all SCs.

Estimated Reservation for Other Backward Classes:

The Hukurn Singh Committee estimated that the population of OBCs in UP increased from 41.13 per cent in 1991 to 54.05 percent in 2001. It shows 12.92 per cent increased in a decade. The number of backward caste also increased from 55 in 1991 to 79 in 2001. The 24 new castes have included in the list of backward caste.

Table - 4

OBCs- Nomenclature of their Castes in Uttar Pradesh³⁴

Part of Scheduled	Categories	Name of castes	No. of Castes
Part-A	Other Backward Classes (OBCs)	Ahir/Yadav/GwalafYaduvashiya	1
Part-B	More Backward Classes (MRBCs)	Sonar/Sunar/Swarnkar, Jat, Kurzni/Chanau/Patel/Patnanwar/KurmiMai;/kurmi-Seinthwar, Giri, Gujar, Gosain, Lodh/Lodha/Lodbi/Lot/Lodhi-Rajput, Kamboj.	8
Part-C	Most Backward Classes (MBCs)	Arakh/Arakvanshiya, Kachclii-Kushwalia/Shakya, Kahar/ Kashyap, Kewat/Mallah/Nishad, Kishan, Koen, Kimihii-/Prajapati, Kasgar, Kunjra or Raeen, Gareria/ Pal Vaghel, Gaddi/Ghoshi, Chikwa/Qassab, Qureshri/Chak, Chhippi, Chipa, Jogi, Jhoja, Dhafali, Tomali/Barai/Chaurasia, Teli/samani /Rogangar/ Sahu/ Rauniar/ Gandhi / arrak Darji/drisi/Kakutstha, Dhiver, Naqqai, Nat(those not included in SC), Naik, Lohar/ Lahar-Saifi, Lonia/ Nonia/ Gole-Thakur/ Lonia-Chauhan, Rangrez/ Rangwa, Marchcha, Halwai/ Modanwal, Hajjam/Nai/ Salmain/ Savita/ Sriwas, Rai, Sikb, Sakka-Bhisti/Bhisti-Abbasi, Dhobi (those not included in SC/ST), Kasera/ Thathera/Tainrakar, Nanbai, Mirshikar, Shekh/ Sarwari (Pirai)/Peerahi, Mev/ Mewari, Koshta/ Koshti, Ror, Khumra/ Sangatarash/ Hansiri, Mochi, Khagi, Tanwar Singharia, Fakir, Banjara/ Ranki/Mukeri/Mukerani, Barhai/ Saifi/ Vishwakarma/Panchaal, Ramgadhiya/ Jangir/Dhiman, Bari, Beragi, Bind, Biyar,	

		Bhar/Raj-Bhar, Bhurji/Bharbhunia/ Bhooj/ Kandu/ Kashaudhan, Bhathiara, Mali/Saini, Sweeper (those not included in SC)/ Halalkhor, Kathura, Maheegeer, Dangi, Dhakar, Gada, Tantawa, Joria, Patwa/ Patahara/Patechara/Deovanshi, Kalal/ Kalwar/Kalar, Manihar/Kacher/Lakhara, Murao/Murai/maurya, Monia(Ansar), Muslim Kayastha, Mirasi, Naddaf (Dhuniya)/Kandere/Kadere/Karean (Karn).	
--	--	---	--

Source: UP Gazette Extraordinary, Sept15, 2001.

Government of Uttar Pradesh (2001), Social Justice Committee Report, Lucknow.

The OBCs are categorized into three parts. The Yadavs which are also known as Ahirs, Gwalas and Yaduvanshiyas kept in Part A to know their socio-economic conditions and shares in public services and posts. In Part B, there are eight intermediary castes belonging to More Backward Classes (MBCs). There were 70 castes recognized in Part C as MBC categories (above in the table no 4). Significantly, there are 22 Muslim OBCs castes included in the MBC category for their inclusion in government jobs.

2.6 Backward Caste Mobilisation: Movement in North India

When we look at the backward caste movement in Uttar Pradesh in relation to general backward caste movement in India, we find that the movement came to U.P. quite late, at the end of 1960s. India has a long history of backward caste movements in the south. The first regions to experience the political organization of the lower castes were the small princely states of Kolhapur, the state of Mysore & the province of Madras. Caste based reservations were implemented in these areas during the first quarter of the twentieth century.

Historically, the backward castes mobilization in North India in the post independence period dates back to the late 1950s & 1960s under the leadership of Dr. Ram Manohar Lohiya, Kanshi Ram & Chaudhary Charan Singh Prior to it in North India two of the largest mobilization institutions were the U.P. Backward class Federation (1929) & Bihar State backward Classes Federation (1947). The All India Backward Classes Federation emerged from these two state organizations. The AIBCF was created on 26 January 1950 to protest against the scant attention paid to the OBCs. Its architect & president Punjabrao Deshmukh thoroughly supported the backward castes during the constituent assembly debates. Christophe Jaffrelot in this

regard mentions two kinds of approaches. The first one concentrated on their mobilization as peasants (Kisan politics). This approach was initiated by members of cultivating castes such as Chhotu Ram (a jat from Punjab) between the 1920s & the 1940s, Swami Sahajanand (a bhumihaar) who became a leading figure of the Bihar Kisan Sabha in the 1930s. The second one relied more on caste identities (Quota politics) & was primarily articulated by Socialist leaders such as Dr. Ram Manohar Lohiya, who regarded caste as the main obstacles towards an equalitarian society. While the Kisan school endeavored to gather all those engaged in cultivating work on the basis of socio-economic demands, the caste-oriented socialists attempted to form an alliance of the non-elite group mainly on the basis of affirmative action techniques. They asked for caste-based quotas, especially in the administration.

The first Backward Classes Commission was appointed on January 29, 1953 under the chairmanship of Kaka sahib Kalelkar, a former disciple of Gandhiji. Its report relied heavily on the concept of caste for defining the OBCs. Caste was not the only criterion but it was a key element. The commission drew up a list of 2,399 castes, representing about 32% of the Indian population, as forming the bulk of the “socially & Educationally Backward Classes” that needed affirmative action programs. The report was rejected by Nehru’s government Home minister G.B. Pant on the grounds of:

- 1) establishment of society on socialistic pattern which disapproves of social & other distinctions
- 2) disapproval of use of caste as the most prominent criterion for identifying the backward classes.

The report was tabled before the parliament accompanied by a memorandum by pant on September 3, 1956 but was not even discussed. In May 1961 Nehru’s government eventually decided that there was no need for an all-India list of the OBCs & consequently there would be no reservation policy at the centre. Even though they were responsible for article 340 of the constitution, Congressmen were obviously reluctant to cater to the needs of the lower castes, either because of sheer conservatism or Socialist ideas. Although the report of the first backward classes commission was shelved, it was a milestone for the low caste movement in North India.

The Quota Politics & the Socialists:

The “rising star” of the Indian Socialist Movement, Dr. Ram Manohar Lohiya, a Baniya by caste, was probably the first who really incorporated caste in the movement ideology. The Socialists began to focus on the peasant’s condition at a time when the congress leadership was still rather urban-oriented. The founding conference of Congress Socialist Party (CSP) was held in Patna in May 1934. It advocated the organization of the peasants in Kisan Sanghs. CSP broke away from Congress in 1948, forming Socialist Party (SP). Then SP merged with Kisan Mazdoor Praja Party (KMPP) of Acharya Kripalani forming Praja Socialist Party (PSP) in 1953. PSP has done a lot for mobilization of lower caste peasants & workers in Travancore-Cochin state the PSP was in power in that state, but when his own government fired upon a group of agitating Estate workers, Lohiya criticized the government & asked for its resignation. He even advocated 60% reservation for minorities, backward castes, & SCs/STs in government service. Disagreeing with most PSP leaders who were inclined to collaborate with Congress, Lohiya launched his own Socialist Party in 1956. a laborious re-unification process led to the foundation of Samyukta Socialist Party (SSP) in 1964. Lohiya remained at the helm of the SSP till his death in 1967. By this time, it had become the largest socialist force in India.

Lohiya was of the view that “caste is the most overwhelming factor in Indian life”. He therefore, became the staunchest supporter of Positive Discrimination-what he called “Unequal Opportunities” and not only in the favour of the scheduled castes but also that of backward castes. Lohiya did not entertain any romantic idea of the Indian plebe- “the Shudra too has his shortcomings”. He had an even narrow sectarian outlook but in spite of this he maintained that Shudra deserved special treatment. This special treatment consists in pushing them to positions of power & leadership. Lohiya did not regard affirmative action in the education system as desirable but emphasized the need for quotas in administration & for the electoral candidates. Obviously, reservations were intended to give a share of power to the lower castes, it was an empowerment scheme. In 1959 the third National Conference of SP expressed the wish that at least 60% of the posts in the administration be reserved for OBCs. This demand was reiterated time & again in fifth annual session of the party in 1961 & in the first conference of SSP in April 1966.

Lohiya's strategy bore its most significant fruits in Bihar, the birthplace & cradle of Socialism in India since the foundation of the Congress Socialist Party in Patna in 1934. In 1967, SSP, Jan Sangha & the Communists formed a majority coalition called the Samyukta Vidhayak Dal (SVD) in Bihar. However, the socialist leaders were in a way, victims of their own strategy of promotion & mobilization of lower castes. Though SVD got success by increasing the number of lower caste MLAs especially Yadavs (14.8%) but this group didn't show commitment to the SSP. Soon after the elections B.P. Mandal, a yadav defected & formed Shoshi Dal with 40 lower castes dissident MLAs coming from different sides, including the SSP. I. after on. he became the first OBC Chief Minister of Bihar (to topple the SVD government) in February 1968 with the support of Congress.

Kisan Politics and the Mobilization of Jat Farmers:

Kisan politics made its impact in Uttar Pradesh under the aegis of a Jat leader. Chaudhary Charan Singh, at the same time as the Socialists were rising to power in Bihar in the late 1960s. Jat farmers had long been the crucible of Kisan politics because they embodied the independent-minded peasant proprietor, not only in U.P. but also in Punjab, its real birthplace. Actually, Sir Chhotu Ram was the architect of Kisan politics. Born in 1881 Sir Chhotu Ram was the son of small jat peasant in a village of Rohatak district. He was the first jat peasant to become the part of intelligentsia by studying in Delhi & practising in Agra as a lawyer in 1912. As early as in 1907 he wrote in The Imperial Fortnightly an article entitled "The Improvement of India Village Life". This article established the mainstays of the ideology of the Kisan. He propagated the idea of Biradari (peasant's brotherhood) among the AHJRS, JA TS, GUJARS & RAJPUTS-hence, the acronym AJGAR. Sir Chhotu Ram joined Congress in 1917 but soon left it due to its urbanized culture to form National Unionist Party (NUP) with Mian Faz-i-Husain. After the 1923 electoral success of NUP, he became the Agriculture Minister of Punjab. Chhotu Rant used two entwined languages- one was of jat cultural assertion & the other was that of a homogenous rural community embodying elements of Kisan culture. Logically enough, another jat Charan Singh articulated this ideology after independence.

Charan Singh and Kisan Politics:

Charan Singh's discourse is replete with his lowly origins. He always identified himself with the interests of peasants. For him, Nehru epitomized elitist, urban-oriented attitude in Indian society. According to Charan Singh priority has to be given to agriculture & not to industry for development. To implement a rural-oriented economic policy, the administration had to be staffed by the sons of farmers because only an official who understands & thought like a peasant could effectively solve his problems. Charan Singh's view of affirmative action is, therefore, very different from that of Lohiya. For him, it is a way of making an agriculture-based peasant proprietor more efficient while for others, it was a way of empowering the lower castes. In 1939, before the executive committee of the Congress Parliamentary Group, in Uttar Pradesh assembly (where he had been elected for the first time in 1937) he proposed a 50% quota in public administration in favour of the sons of farmers. He framed his project in terms of a "Urban India v/s Rural India" conflict. The All India Jat Mahasabha supported his proposal but he was less wedded to caste affiliations as such. He rather, tried to subsume caste identities into a feeling of class or at least into one of a peasant movement.

This approach was partly dictated by his own Caste background as jats occupy an intermediary position; though technically they have to be classified as Shudras. Their dominant caste status is often the root-cause of conflicts with lower castes. In addition, their number is comparatively small in Uttar Pradesh only 1.2% of the population. Therefore, he had good reasons to forge a Kisan identity that jats would be leading & for promoting an identity opposing the Kisans to town-dwellers in order to transcend caste divisions into a new group feeling of peasant solidarity. Even though OBC leaders rallied around Chaudhary Charan Singh, his scheme was not designed for their group's emancipation rather it was for the promotion of the interests of those who owned some land. In fact it was likely to reinforce the jat's hegemony over the lower castes.

As revenue minister in-charge of Land reforms in Uttar Pradesh after independence, he promoted the interests of what he called the middle peasantry by abolishing the Zamindari system. The bulk of this class was to come from the intermediary castes, including his own caste-jats. Such an approach largely explains the selective character of UP, land reform & his later conflicts with Nehru. In 1959,

he vigorously opposed the project of agricultural co-operatives announced by Nehru as Prime Minister in the Nagpur session of Congress. He immediately published a book called- "joint Farming X-rayed: The Problem & its solution" in which he proposed a strategy of global development radically opposed to that of Nehru. In some ways this book is the first manifesto of Kisan politics in post-independence India. The Congress displayed shortsightedness in marginalizing Charan Singh in UP politics because in the 1960s the social basis of his Kisan politics had mushroomed. The jats of Western U.P. & Haryana grew wealthy thanks to the increase in sugarcane production resulting from extensive programmes in the framework of Green Revolution. The assertion of these middle farmers, among 'whom the jats were over-represented largely explains the growing success of Charan Singh's Kisan politics in U.P. in 1960s.

Charan Singh's Kisan politics enabled him gradually to build a coalition encompassing the cultivating castes ranging from OBCs to intermediate castes. This coalition in fact was the old AJGAR grouping that Chhotu Ram had already developed in Punjab except the Raiputs. Mulayam Singh Yadav was among the Yadav followers whom Charan Singh attracted in the 1960s. He was first elected MLA in 1967. He was introduced to Charan Singh by another OBC Jairam Verma, a kurmi. Thus, Kisan politics gradually found its constituency in other leaders too in Uttar Pradesh. Charan Singh left Congress in 1967 & toppled C.B. Gupta's government in U.P. to become Chief Minister with the help of 16 non-upper caste MLAs out of which 9 were Yadavs

The comparison of Charan Singh's modus operandi in U.P. and the situation in Bihar suggest that two means of mobilizing and empowering the non-elite groups have been used more or less successfully in the 1960s through Kisan and quota politics respectively. Both trends converged in 1970s through the emergence of new political parties.

Movement By Kanshi Ram: BAMCEF

Even Kanshi Ram's initial focus was on mobilizing the entire backward classes, including OBCs, SCs/STs & Muslims. He founded a new movement on October 14, 1971 through the SCs/STs, OBCs, Minority Communities Employees Association in Poona. On 6 December 1978, he officially founded the All India

Backward (SC, ST, OBC & Minority Communities Employees Federation (BAMCEF). Its aim was to organize the elite of the Bahujan Samaj that is, essentially wage earners with educational qualifications who had benefitted from quotas. Thus, the mobilization of the backward classes through the efforts of BAMCEF prepared the ground for the backward class movement to take off. Its activities inculcated a sense of identity among the backward class government employee all over the country. This led to considerable politicization of the lower & backward castes in the bureaucracy which, in turn, passed on the newly acquired consciousness to the people of their castes in their villages & towns. The movement started by Kanshi Ram included all the middle & lower castes except Brahmins, Thakurs & Baniyas. It was unfortunate for the backward class movement in North India that BAMCEF degenerated into a movement for Dalits (SC/ST) mobilization. It ended as a political instrument in the hands of the Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) later on & allowing the OBCs to follow a different trajectory, which later on found its political expression in the Janta Dal (JD) & the Samajwadi Party (SP) of Mulayam Singh Yadav in 1990s. The political offshoots of BAMCEF- first the DS-4 & later the BSP-did try to bring the OBCs into their fold, but the 3SP has been regarded as a hardcore party of SCs. The BSP has allotted a good number of tickets to the OBCs in elections but the leadership of the Party, especially Kanshi Ram and Mayawati, exercised a tremendous sway only over dalit voters.

From the BKD to BLD; The emergence of new political force-

Paul Brass' argues that in contrast to the many people who left the Congress and rejoined it. After its coming back to power, Charan Singh did nothing of sort & even remained deaf to the calls of Indira Gandhi. Two days before becoming Chief Minister in April 1967, he created his own party-the "Jana Congress". This party soon merged with Bhartiya Kranti Dal (BKD) which was founded on the initiatives of Congress dissidents like Humayun Kabir. BKD's inaugural convention took place in Indore in 1967 but the largest delegation came from U.P., Bihar & West Bengal. This delegation consisted of CMs of non-Congress governments & other leaders. In April 1969 Charan Singh became the President of BKD. During this period BKD emerged as a regional party. 1968-69 election results show that BKD won 2 1.3% of votes in UP as against 1.5% in Haryana, 2.15 in Bihar & 1.7% in Punjab. In U.P. party's primary source of support were the jats from the western U.P. In this election BKD

fielded 115 candidates from OBCs. This strategy certainly helped BKD to become the second largest party in the state assembly with 98 seats, as against 211 for the Congress. This electoral breakthrough of BKD & then of its successor, The BLD (Bhartiya Lok Dal) which won 106 seats in 1974, explains the rise of OBCs among the U.P. MLAs from 13% in 1962 to 28% in 1974.

The BKD under Charan Singh's leadership was successful in building a base in the western UP as seen in its performance in the 1969 elections. Writing in the early 1970, Craig Baxter described it as "a flesh phenomenon", an offshoot of the fractional politics & crisis in the Congress party in the 1960s. However, studying electoral politics in this period, Baxter did recognize the importance of the party as a rural force in UP., but visualized its decline to less than a major competitor'. Lewis P. Fickett while describing the BKD as a regional political group held that it could in future play an important role. The party survived & reflected itself as an important political force in UP politics. Two inter-related factors seem to underline the success of the BKD-

- 1) The mobilization of certain caste groups which so far had not been politically active
- 2) Class based changes in the rural agrarian economy which have affected politics.

In the 1950s the middle & backward castes were politically not mobilized and were dominated by the upper castes in all walks of life. There had been no anti-Brahmin movement in North India during the colonial period. By the 1960s however, the backward & middle castes emerged as an important political force in North India and began to oppose domination by the forward castes, middle & backward castes had traditionally supported the opposition parties rather than the Congress & Charan Singh was able to use caste as an important tool of political mobilization. The HKD mobilized the backward castes by emphasizing their position in the caste hierarchy. Their distinct economic interests and hence, claiming proportional representation in politics. It tried to identify the Congress party with the government that served the interests of the upper castes & industrialists. Hence, it appealed the backwards to counter upper caste dominance. Paul has described the BKD as a party primarily of the middle peasants & backward cultivating castes which has been involved since 1967 in a continuous struggle with the congress representing the rich peasantry,

former landlords, the upper & lower castes. While, he does not deny the importance of agrarian interests' arising out of the Green Revolution in U.P.. Yet he describes it as a struggle between the old proprietary upper castes & the rising middle castes in North India. He holds that the success of BKD lies in the fact that it used caste rather than class as a basis of political mobilization. Brass has studied the BKD & its role in politics through the network of caste factions because he argues that economic appeals based on class are limited due to the imperfect congruence of caste & class in U.P. However, while caste is an important mobilizational tool in the hands of the political parties, class- based changes occurring in the countryside are equally & in fact, of primary importance. They form the underlying factors which made large scale caste-based mobilization possible (cit. Pai. 1993, p-51). The BKD/LD represents the emergence of the rich peasantry from among the middle & backward castes in UP. They were the sections who were able to take advantage of the new agrarian technology & prospered. In fact, the mobilization of the prosperous peasants as a class was reinforced by the simultaneous mobilization as a status order of the backward castes.

In 1967, the middle & backward castes were merely a rising class due to economic gains by the end of 1970s they had begun to acquire the characteristics of a class for Else!! The peasants mobilized by BKD belonged to the Jat & Rajput castes who had earlier enjoyed Zamindari rights under the British and dominated the politics and leadership of most political parties in the western districts of V.P. Hence, in class terms, the BKD and later BLD represented the rich peasants & big landowners & in caste terms, Rajputs, Jats and other backwards in V.P. Thus the party sought to combine horizontal & vertical mobilization. After the Green Revolution.it began to rely increasingly on the horizontal mobilization of rich peasants & capitalist farmers. The party's success lay in combining skillfully caste & class mobilization in a manner which appealed to certain groups. The backward castes were interested in social and economic advancement and hence both aspects appealed to them.

The BKD participated in the three coalition governments (SVDs) formed after the 1967 elections. In these for the first time the backward castes were able to handle political power for a brief period. In the first SVD government headed by Charan Singh formed in April 1967 30% of the ministers from the backward castes, 11% from SC & Brahmins each & 14.82% were Kshatriyas. Agrarian issues, for example

compulsory procurement of food grains, lowering of land ceilings & price of sugarcane & abolition of land revenue on small landholdings etc. were important & affected the various coalition governments due to the differing stands of the constituent parties. The BKD managed to survive as a distinct party till 1974 despite of Congress coming to power both in UP. & at the centre in 1971 unlike many small anti-Congress groups which came up during this period of fluid & unstable politics in V.P. & became unimportant vis-a-vis Congress.

In the late 1960s & the early 1970s the Socialists were in disarray. Dr. Ram Manohar Lohiya died in 1967 & his lieutenants fought each other, The faction of Raj Narain, a stalwart of SSP. which was strong in V.P. merged with BKD of Charan Singh to form BLD (Bhartiya Lok Dal) in 1974. This BLD was a joint venture of 7 parties. It consisted mainly of the BKD. The Swatantra Party. The Utkal Congress, & the socialist faction of Raj Narain. The formation of dalits had important political consequences. The BLD represented even more clearly than the BKD the rich capitalist farmers in the northern states. In contrast to the policies of Nehru & Congress.it tried to project the Gandhian image which, according to Charan Singh. required“ are-orientation of the entire set up”. This was seen in the Manifestoes of the party earlier in 1969 and particularly in 1974/1980. The party wanted to pursue “a middle path” avoiding the evils of Private and State capitalism by setting up an economy in which agriculture cottage and other labour intensive industries would have primacy. The BLD justified its demand for cheaper inputs and lower taxes as beneficial to the whole peasantry. From the mid-1970s and as part of Janata combine, it adopted a multi-class agrarian strategy together with caste appeals. As a result of this.it was able to gain the support of the middle & small peasant proprietors as a whole.

2.7 Janta Party and the confluence of Kisan and Quota Politics

The Janta Party was formed in 1977 resulting from the merger of 5 parties- the BLD. the Jan Sangh., the Socialist Party, the Congress (O) Morarji Desai & Congress for Democracy, a faction of Congress led by Babu Jagjivan Ram. Charan Singh could not dominate it largely because other leaders like Morarji Desai. the Prime Minister were weary of his personal ambitions, But the party further promoted the combination of quota & kisan politics I card initiated by the BLD.

Both of these strategies persisted during the JP Movement & in the subsequent Janata phase. It is evident from the discourse promoted by Madhu Limaye (Convenor of the JP Movement programme committee) and Charan Singh who became Deputy Prime Minister & Home Minister in 1977 respectively. Limaye emphasized the empowerment dimension of affirmative action schemes in the same way as his mentor Lohiya did. While Charan Singh regarded the “three decades of Congress rule in post-independence India as essentially elitist & urban-oriented”. Therefore he asked the Janta party to maintain-’its live links with the villages, with agriculture, with cottage & village industries & generally with the uplift of our kisans”. The Janata party was formed when the growing authoritarianism of Congress culminating into Emergency led the opposition parties to take a united stand against it. The Janata Party unlike other parties had no organizational structure & depended on the support base of its constituent parties. The overwhelming victory of Janata party in March 1977 Lok Sabha elections in the northern states gave the party a new confidence. This also gained majority in 1977 U.P. Assembly elections. The Janata Party came to power at the centre & in the U.P. on two broad platforms- 1) To change the focus of economic activities from urban to rural & 2) To rid the Indian polity of excessive degrees of centralism & authoritarianism.

Dismissed by Desai on the grounds of indiscipline, Charan Singh organized a huge peasant rally of about one million people in December 1978 and then rejoined the government as Senior Deputy Prime Minister in charge of finance. He presented ‘kulak budget’ in 1979 which gave primacy to Kisan and agriculture. For ex. it reduced several indirect taxes on- mechanical tillers, diesel for electric water pumps, chemical fertilizers. It also lowered interest rates for rural loans, increased subsidy of minor irrigation & earmarked funds for rural electrification & grain storage facilities. The Janta government did not last long enough to implement all these measures but Charan Singh had raised the peasant’s issues in such a way that they became central to political debates so much so that they were taken up by farmer’s movement in most of the states, amongst which the BKU (Bhartiya Kisan Union) of Chaudhry Mahendra Singh Tikait of District Baghpat, U.P. deserves special mention for projecting its apolitical character.

The Janta government was too heterogeneous a coalition to have a consistent affirmative action policy. One of its constituent the Jana Sangh, which was

representative of the urban & upper caste middle class, was reluctant to move in the direction of affirmative action. The differences showed clearly at the state level when socialist Chief Ministers of U.P.(Ram Naresh Yadav) & Bihar(Karpoori Thakur) tried to introduce quotas in state administration. Yet Desai yielded to OBC pressures & appointed the second Backward Classes Commission on 20 December 1978 under the chairmanship of B.P. Mandal. Its terms of reference were close to earlier one as it had to determine the criteria defining the OBCs & to examine the desirability of measures such as reservations in the administration. The Commission concluded from its survey that the OBCs were coterminous with low castes, representing 52% of the population. It recommended that their backwardness justified a quota of 27% of the posts being reserved for them in the Bureaucracy & the public sector. The tension between the BLD & the Socialists on the one hand & the Congress (0) & the Jana Sangha on the other led to the schism of June 1979 when Charan Singh founded the Janta Party(S) & receiving Indira Gandhi's support to become the Prime Minister. It was for the first time that a non-upper caste rural leader occupied the post. The appointment of Charan Singh as Prime Minister generated a great deal of excitement among the Kisans & the OBCs. This enthusiasm was short-lived since the Congress withdrew its support even before the vote of confidence & the Loksabha was dissolved. The 1980 elections brought Indira Gandhi back to power. The Mandal Commission report was submitted in late 1980, more than a year after the fall of Janta government and tabled in Loksabha on 30 April 1982. The Congress was not interested in implementing measures that might affect the upper caste supporter of the Congress or at least damage its image of a 'catch-all party'. The report was finally made public by the Janta Dal when it took power from the Congress in 1989.

The Lok Dal (LD):

In the meantime Charan Singh had launched a new political party-the Lok Dal, soon before the 1980 elections. Its aims & objects were to establish "a socialist society, consistent with individual freedom". In fact, the 1980 election manifesto of the party combined the socialist Legacy & the kisan politics. The Lok Dal leaders included Raj Narain, Madhu Limaye, H.N. Bahuguna, George Fernandes, Karpoori Thakur, Satpal Malik, Devi Lal, B.P. Chaudhary, Chandrajeet Yadav & SharadYadav, Mulayam Singh Yadav, Ram Vilas Paswan etc. These leaders exerted pressure on Congress government to table Mandal Commission report in the Parliament and to

extend positive discrimination not only to OBCs but also to Kisan communities. This party got split as its many leaders were expelled on the grounds of discipline. After the death of Charan Singh on 29 March 1987, a new split ensued with acting president Bahuguna founding Lok Dal (B) whose leader in U.P. was Mulayam Singh Yadav and his son Ajit Singh founding Lok Dal (A). In fact, the 1987 split of the party resulted also from the desire of Yadav leaders-such as Mulayam Singh Yadav-to emancipate themselves from the jat tutelage & underlying social & economic changes like entry of vast mass of OBCs into politics in 1980s.

2.8 The Janta Dal (JD) and the empowerment of lower castes

The Janata Dal, which was officially founded on 11 October 1988, amalgamated the legacies of Lohiya & Charan Singh. Lok Dal (A) of Ajit Singh & Lok Dal (B) of Devi Lal another Jat leader of Haryana) & Mulayam Singh Yadav (U.P.) merged in the Janata Dal. Many Socialist veterans such as Madhu Dandvate, George Fernandes, Surendra Mohan took active part in it. This amalgamation had its inner problems. For ex-until the last minute the party was to be called Samajwadi Janata Dal but Devi Lal strongly objected to the term Samajwadi & it was to be removed.

Yet the party's discourse on social justice remained heavily loaded with socialist references & most of its affirmative action programs drew its inspiration from Lohiya's modus operandi. The party's president V.P. Singh, was a late convert to this brand of socialism. Descending from a Rajput lineage which had been a ruling family of a small princely state near Allahabad. He was known as Raja of Manda. He had shown some early interest in Sarvodaya movement. He rose to power as Chief Minister of U.P. in 1980-82 & was then appointed as finance minister by Rajiv Gandhi but was expelled from the Congress in July 1987 on the grounds of accusing top Congress leaders as corrupt. The party, he then, formed was Jan Morcha. It was a small party but played a pivotal role in the foundation of Janta Dal & became a centre host of other opposition parties with which it formed the "National Front". V.P. Singh sworn in as Prime Minister on 3 December 1989. He, in his first address to the nation, sought Lohiya & Jai Prakash Narayan as his guides.

This shift from Congress to a mixed brand of socialist politics reflected his old commitment to Sarvodaya but also his dependence on socialist leaders. The Janata

Dal, indeed, tended to adopt the socialist program for social justice. It concentrated its attention more on caste and less on class and turned towards positive discrimination as its main social remedy. The program adopted by the party in its inaugural session promised that “Keeping in view special needs of socially and educationally backward classes, the party shall implement the recommendations of the Mandal Commission”.

The party was prepared to show the way & promised to allot 60% of the tickets in the general elections to “the weaker sections of the society”. Prior to that V.P. Singh had promised to apply this 60% reservations to the party apparatus. However, it could not be implemented due to opposition of Devi Lal. The JD, indeed, represented the aspirations of proponents of kisan politics as well. The National front government’s Deputy Prime Minister with the agriculture portfolio Devi Lal waived the co-operative loans up to Rs.10,000 of small, marginal & landless cultivators & artisans. Even though, the promise of land reform which directly concerned the agriculture & landless kisan remained unimplemented.

We can cite two reasons for the question-Why V.P. Singh’s government preferred quota politics over kisan politics? From a pragmatic point of view, V.P. Singh was more eager to cater to the needs of lower castes than to those of middle peasants. Moreover, kisan politics was won over by Ajit Singh, son of Chaudhary Charan Singh & Devi Lal in Haryana. Therefore, he was more interested in broadening his base among OBCs. From a more ideological point of view, likewise most socialist leaders, he behave less in economic & financial support than in the reform of the power structure within the society, for which affirmative action appeared to be the most relevant method. V.P. Singh’s government implemented the Mandal Commission reports recommendations. He announced this decision in Parliament on 7 August 1990. He justified it in his Independence Day Address on 15 August by proclaiming the need to give a share to the poor in running the government.

However, this approach could not please the proponents of kisan politics. For ex- Devi Lal, who was appointed by V.P. Singh as the chairman of the committee for the implementation of the Mandal Commission report recommendations did not take much interest in it. Devi Lal had strong reservations concerning the report because the jars had not been included among the OBC’s. Finally, Ram Vilas Paswan, a dalit leader did the job. Devi Lal resigned from the cabinet seeking social potential of V.P. Singh reforms as posing a threat to jat interests insofar as it could promote the

assertiveness of tenants & agricultural labourers from the low castes, Devi Lal's resignation signaled the breakdown of Charan Singh's coalition. For the partisans of quota politics, it was good because kisan politics merely served the economic interests of the peasant proprietors & maintained the social status-quo in the villages. Thus, the old socialist and Ambedkar approach based on an anti-caste discourse & affirmative action was considered as more promising by V.P. Singh & Janta Dal.

2.8.1. Caste Polarisation and the Mandal recommendation

The main achievement of V.P. Singh was to make a broad range of castes gathering under the label of OBC. In fact, OBC became a relevant category for the lower castes as per the quotas recommended by Mandal Commission. Many of those who were earlier known as shudra internalized this administrative definition of their identity in the early 1990s. The cleavage between upper castes & lower castes was suddenly reinforced.

Soon after the announcement of implementation of Mandal recommendations, upper caste students formed organizations like Arakshan Virodhi Sangharsh Samiti & Mandal Ayog Virodhi Sangharsh Samiti in U.P. These student organizations wanted to abolish all reservations even including reservations for SCs. The student agitation started in Delhi University where it turned violent. Rajiv Goswami, a Delhi University Student Union activist attempted self-immolation on 19 September 1990. He was the first of 152 people—mostly students—who tried to immolate themselves, of whom 63 succeeded. Immediately leaders from Janta Dal organized counter mobilization. Thus, the early 1990s were marked by the hostility & cleavage between upper castes & lower castes. At that time OBC as a social category turned out to be an emotional category. The new unity helped the OBC to organize as an interest group. Its aim was to benefit from its main asset 52% of the Indian population at the time of elections. Indeed, the share of OBC MPs increased in Hindi belt because lower caste people became more aware of their common interests & decided not to vote for upper caste candidates. In U.P. the share of OBC MPs rose from 11% in 1984 to 20.8% in 1998, while in Indian Parliament the share of OBC MPs doubled from 11.4% in 1984 to 20.9% in 1998. In U.P. state assembly the share of upper caste MLAs decreased from 58% in 1962 to 37.7% in 1996, whereas the proportion of OBCs grew from 9% to 30% in 1993.

The OBC rise to power, in conjunction with the increasing electoral participation of the lower castes has been called as a “Second Democratic Upsurge” by Prof. Yogendra Yadav. He further considers that the expression OBC has travelled a long way from a rather careless bureaucratic nomenclature in the document of Constitution to a vibrant & subjectively experienced political community”. En similar vein, Christophe Jaffrelot considers the transfer of power from upper castes to lower castes as “Silent Revolution” in India.

In 1996, one member of the UP. Backward Classes Commission observed that ‘Political change is leading to Social change. The OBC, which was a constitutional category, has now become a social category.’ While, low caste solidarity increased during the Mandal affairs then caste polarization was acute, it was much less prevalent from the mid-1990s onwards and the very notion of OBCs has lost some of its relevance in understanding political behavior. The capacity of OBCs to sustain the kind of unity that is needed in forming a ‘Political Community’ remains very doubtful.

2.8.2. Genuine mobilisation v/s Yadav Manipulation

The general OBC category was, in fact, often used by a Yadav elite to promote its interests. Such an elite manipulation was not uncommon in the past since the kisan identity promoted by Charan Singh was also perceived by many jats as a means to mobilize a large social base & Lohiya had already deplored it in the 1960s. The rise of OBCs is first of all the rise of the Yadavs & Kurmis. Together, they represent about 15% of North Indian MPs in the 1990s. Jaffrelot suggests that while the Yadavs & Kurmis alone had representatives in Loksabha until the 1970s, new castes joined the political arena in the 1980s (Lodhis, Kories, Gujars, Malis) and in 1990s (Jaiswals, Telis, Kachhis). However, the share of Yadavs and Kurmis amounts to around 65-70% OBC MPs of North India since 1989.

Even though, the Kurmis organized themselves as early as Yadavs through caste associations. Yadavs have been at the forefront of the OBC mobilization since the very beginning. The leader of the All India Backward Castes Federation in the 1960s & 1970s, Brahm Prakash Chaudhary, as a Yadav. B.P. Mandal, the chairman of the Second Backward Classes Commission, was also a Yadav. It is for this very reason that Yadav leaders have consistently paid greater heed to his report. After the

Janta Dal took over in 1989, they mobilized masses in favour of the implementation of the Mandal Commission report. In the wake of the Supreme Courts decision regarding the exclusion of the Creamy Layer of OBCs from quotas-the Janta Dal's Yadav leaders lobbied for excluding the well-off peasants from the "Creamy layer". In doing that, they were obviously defending the interests of their caste since many Yadavs had become relatively rich, thanks to the increased milk production & related business.

Eventually, the pressure exerted by Yadavs and other OBC leaders proved effective & the Creamy Layer" was defined in a rather loose sense of the term. It comprises only the OBC applicants from establishment families, or those whose fathers owned land beyond 85% of the acreage permitted by ceiling Laws. When the 27% reservation was eventually implemented at the Center after the Supreme Court's verdict of November 1992, the upper castes did not resist it any more .They resigned themselves to the rule of numbers. Moreover, the liberalization of the economy also began to make attractive careers with high salaries in the private sector. It as liked overwhelmingly by upper castes because affirmative action laws did not apply here & only efficiency & talent is looked upon by private recruiters.

Simultaneously, after having won the battle over quotas. the lower castes did not feel an acute need for solidarity any more. The very notion of OBCs. therefore, in the 1990s started to lose its edge.

2.8.3. Yadav Politics in Uttar Pradesh

The way Yadav leaders used the Janta Dal reservation policy, fir promoting their caste interests. is evident from the strategies of Mulayam Singh Yadav who became the Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh in November 1989 & also, from neighborhood state Bihar where LalooPrasad Yadav took on power in March 1990. Of Course, the Yadavs were likely to be among the first beneficiaries of the quotas because they are more numerous & relatively more educated than the other OBCs in U.P. & other Hindi belt states. but they were also favoured by Mulayam Singh's government in U.P. for ex.-in U.P. out of 900 teachers appointed by his second government,720 were Yadavs. Moreover, in the police force, out of 3,151 newly selected candidates,1223 were Yadavs.

Even before V.P. Singh's reservation policy was announced, Mulayam Singh Yadav (as Chief Minister) had promulgated an ordinance providing the OBCs with a quota of 15% in the state administration (Hasan, 149). Though he came from the Lok Dal (Charan Singh's party). Mulayam Singh Yadav decided to place a far greater emphasis on the collective identity of the Backward classes than the Lok Dal had ever done. It was well in tune with what Lohiya had taught him in his early career. At this point of time, he had become an experienced campaigner in UP. politics, in fact, Mulayam Singh Yadav was initiated into politics by Lohiya when he came to his village-Safai, District-Etawah, UP) for a "jat itodo" i.e. Break Caste meeting. He then took an active part in the Canal Rate Agitation launched by Lohiya in 1954. He left Janta Dal in 1990 along with Chandra Shekhar and remained with his faction Known as Samajwadi Janta Party.

After breaking away from the Samajwadi Janta Party (a faction of Janta Dal led by former Prime Minister Chandra Shekhar Yadav had launched the new "SAMAJWADI PARTY"(SP with 'BICYCLE" as its symbol in a bid to attract old socialists of the Lohiya school of thought. This was done in order to give his party a broad based national character. However, it emerged as a strong regional force in later years. The Samajwadi Party was formally launched at the two day National Convention at Lucknow 4-5 November, 1992. Since then Samajwadi Party has usurped power in the state thrice.

All of the above-Listed parties & organizations& their various strands, (of backward castes movement) thus, have led to the formation of the Samajwadi Party, for which, this research is focused upon I will discuss at length in next chapters about SP's electoral performance, social base, ideology, programmes and functioning in UP. politics. This will also include its development as an offshoot of backward castes/class movement & gradual uprising & decline in recent years.

2.9 Conclusion

The Backward Class Movement in Uttar Pradesh took a different trajectory. This movement in UP led to a very substantial mobilization of the backward community and also to their empowerment. It did not take off along class lines and got stuck at the caste level, unlike what happened in neighborhood state Bihar. The OBCs and Dalits could not join hands in UP. Hence, there was no homogenization of

the backward classes in U.P. All of these features of backward class movement continued in 1990s.

The backward-class mobilization in U.P. acquired a definite character in the late 1960s & during the past four decades, it has travelled a long way. It took different routes in UP First, through the mobilization of the peasant classes/castes by Chaudhary Charan Singh; second, through the mobilization of the Lohiyaite Socialist forces by Mulayarn Singh Yadav and third, through the mobilization of the lower & middle castes by political parties. Fourth, through the rnobilization of lower middle class consisting of government servants i.e. BAMCEF led by Kanshi Ram. There is no evidence to suggest that these movements took on an independent & 'autonomous character rather, there was a lot of overlapping & interconnection among these forms of mobilization or movements. However, it becomes crystal clear that Samajwadi Party, the later offshoot of Lok Dal (LD) and Janta Dal (JD) brings with it, the constituent elements or legacies of backward caste)class mobilization in Uttar Pradesh.

REFERENCES

1. Shafiuzzaman, 2003. The Samajwadi Party: A Study of its social base, ideology and programme. New Delhi: APH Publication.
2. Shankar, Ram.2004. Consolidating Bi-partism in Madhya Pradesh. Paper presented at a seminar on state politics at Pune, under joint auspices of ISPE Pune and CSDS Delhi January.
3. Lodha, Sanjay.2004 'Rajasthan: India shines as BJP trounces Congress' EPW, 18 Dec.
4. Statistical Reports of the Election Commission of India 2007.
5. Statistical Reports of the Election Commission of India 2012.
6. Ibid.
7. BSP leader Mayawati was attacked with BSP MLAs at State Guest House, Lucknow on 2nd June 1995 when she withdrew support to Mulayam Singh Govt.
8. Pai, S. 1993. Uttar Pradesh: Agrarian Change and Electoral Politics. New Delhi. Shipra, p. 48.
9. Vema, A.K. 2004.Uttar Pradesh: Caste and Political Mobilization. EPW. 18 Dec.
10. This term is cited in Yadav, Yogendra. 1996. "Reconfigurations in Indian Politics: State Assembly Elections 1993-1995" EPW 13-20 Jan, 95-104.
11. Brass, Paul.1966. The Factional Politics in an Indian State: The Congress Party in Uttar Pradesh.
12. Blunt, E.A.H. 1969. 'The Caste System of Northern India' S. Chand Publication, p. 227.
13. Rudolphs and Rudolphs: Modernity of Tradition.
14. Ibid., p. 196
15. Pai, S. 1993. 'Uttar Pradesh: Agrarian Change and Electoral Politics'. New Delhi. Shipra, p. 9.

16. Mirza Asmer Beg, Sudhir Kumar and A.K. Verma. 2014."Ebb and Flow of Party Support" in Suhas Palshikar, K.C.Suri and YogendraYadav (eds.) Party Competitions in India: Electoral Politics in Post-Congress Polity. New Delhi: Oxford University Press.
17. Article 15 of the Indian Constitution states that- Nothing in this article or clause (2) of the Article 29 shall prevent the state from making any special provision for the advancement of any socially and educationally backward classes of citizens or for the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes.
18. Yadav, Nomita.2002. "Other Backward Classes: Then and Now", EPW.2-9 Nov.
19. See the website of National Commission for Backward Classes (NCBC) for the complete list of OBCs in India, [http:// ncbc.nic.in](http://ncbc.nic.in) visited on 20/05/2015
20. Bayly, Susan, (1999), The New Cambridge History of India : Caste, society and Politics in India from the Eighteenth Century to the Modern Age, New Delhi : Cambridge University Press, Reprint-2005, p. 284.
21. Ibid. p 284
22. Ibid. p 286
23. Christophe Jaffrelot and Sanjay Kumar (2008), Rise of the Plebeians?: The Changing face of Indian Legislative Assembly. London: Rutledge Taylor & Francis Group. p. 27.
24. Ibid. p 33
25. Ibid. p 33-37
26. Shah, Ghanshyam (eds.) (2002), Caste and Democratic Politics in India, New Delhi: Permanent Black. p. 21.
27. Ibid., p.44
28. National Election Studies, New Delhi.
29. Bhambhri, C.P. (2006), Sonia in Power, UPA Government: 2004-2006,, Delhi : Shipra Publications. p. 124

30. Verma, A.K. UP : BJP's Caste Card, Economic and Political Weekly, 1st Dec. 2001. p. 4451
31. Ibid. p. 4452
32. Ibid. p. 4452
33. Government of Uttar Pradesh (2001), Social Justice Committee Report Lucknow : 2001. Ibid
34. Ibid. p. 27