5.1. About the Uttar Pradesh

5.1.1. The History of Uttar Pradesh

Uttar Pradesh was created on 14th April 1937, as the United Provinces during British rule, and was renamed Uttar Pradesh in 1950. Its history is very much associated with the broad history of India. It runs concurrently with the history of the country. It could be traced back to the Aryan period when they arrived and started establishing settlements in the central country, which they called “Madhya Pradesh.” They laid down the foundation of their civilisation in the region. It was during the Aryan inhabitation in the region that epics of Mahabharata, Ramayana, Brahmanas and Puranas were written. Buddhism and Jainism developed in this region. It is the land which is glorified by the stream of Indian spirituality, that is, the great Ganga and Yamuna and the footprints of legends like Ram, Krishna, Buddha, Jain Tirthankars and Sufi Saints and the sites associated with them. It was ruled by numerous kingdoms in history. The historical background of the state is also associated with the Muslim and British rule. The contribution of the people of the state in the national freedom movement had been significant. Religiously and politically, the state has a rich historical heritage and plays a significant role in defining the present day Uttar Pradesh.

5.1.2. Geography, Demography and Administration

Uttar Pradesh is a state in northern India. Its name means Northern provinces. It is bound by Nepal on the North, Himachal Pradesh on the Northwest, Haryana on the West, Rajasthan on the Southwest, Madhya Pradesh on the South and South-West and Bihar on the East. This is the fourth largest state of the country spread over about 240,928 sq. km. Lucknow is the Capital of the state. It is divided into seventy five districts. It is situated

3 Frayne, The Indian Hundi, 138, Lal “Indian States.”
between 23° 52’ N and 31° 28’ N latitudes and 77° 3’ and 84° 39’ E longitudes. The state can be divided into three distinct hypsographical regions:

I. The sub-Himalayan Terai region in the North - Highly fertile soil, thick forests with rich flora and fauna.

II. The Gangetic Plain in the center - Highly fertile alluvial soils; flat topography broken by numerous ponds, lakes and rivers; slope 2 m/km.

III. The Vindhyas and plateau in the south - Hard rock Strata; varied topography of hills, plains, valleys and plateau; limited water availability.

Districts are administered by District Magistrates (DM), and divisions by Divisional Commissioners (DC). All the districts are further divided into administrative units commonly referred as subdivisions and blocks, administered by Sub-Divisional Officer (SDO) or Sub-Divisional Magistrate (SDM) and Block Development Officer (BDO), respectively. The Panchayati Raj has a three-tier structure in the state. On 9th November 2000, a new state, Uttarakhand, was carved out from the state’s Himalayan hill region. Hindi is the most widely spoken language and is also the official language of the state.

5.1.3. Population

The state of Uttar Pradesh is the most populous state in the Republic of India. It is the most densely populated state. It has over 200 million inhabitants. According to the 2011 census reports of India, the population of India is 1,210,854,977 comprising of 623, 724, 248 males and 586,469,174 females. But as per to the religious census data of 2011 released by the Registrar General and Census Commissioner provides that in India the Hindu population is 96.63 crore (79.8 percent), Muslim population 17.22 crore (14.2 percent), Christian 2.78 crore (2.3 percent), Sikh 2.08 crore (1.7 percent), Buddhist 0.84 crore (0.7 percent), Jain 0.45 crore (0.4 percent), Other Religions and Persuasions (ORP) 0.79 crore (0.7 percent) and religion not stated 0.29 crore (0.2 percent).

6 NIDM, Uttar Pradesh National, 3-5.
7 State Disaster Management, 4.
The population of Uttar Pradesh as per the 2011 census is 199,812,341 comprising of 104,480,510 males and 95,331,831 females and among of them 77.73 percent resides in the rural areas and 22.27 percent resides in the urban areas. On the basis of religion, the majority follows the Hindu religion with 79.73 percent whereas Islam is followed by approximately 19.26 percent and Christianity by 0.18 percent, Jainism by 0.11 percent, Sikhism by 0.32 percent and Buddhism by 0.32 percent. Around 0.01 percent stated ‘Other Religion’; approximately 0.29 percent stated ‘no particular religion.’ (Table: 5.1)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Population</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hindu</td>
<td>159,312%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muslim</td>
<td>38,483.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sikh</td>
<td>643,500%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not Available</td>
<td>582,622</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christianity</td>
<td>356,448</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jain</td>
<td>213,267%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Buddhism</td>
<td>206,285%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Religion</td>
<td>13,598%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table: 5.1: Source: “Uttar Pradesh Population Census Data 2011.”

5.1.4. Communal and Political Background of Uttar Pradesh

The state of Uttar Pradesh has been the theatre of politics both in pre and post Independence days. It has historically been a state/area dominating and influencing the rest of the subcontinent. It was the center of opposition to British rule. The major political movements in India like the Revolt of 1857, Freedom Movement, Backward Caste and Dalit Politics, and the rise of Hindutva were largely developed here. After the Independence it became one of the most important states in electoral politics of India, most commonly seen and believed as political road to New Delhi. Political Parties consider that Uttar Pradesh having the maximum seats of 80 representatives in Indian

11 Ibid.
Parliament plays a decisive role in the formation of the Union Government. This was the state thought as the natural home of the Indian Prime Ministers. This position was diluted by the Congress under P.V. Narasimha Rao when it won just five of 84 Lok Sabha seats from Uttar Pradesh in the 1991 General Elections but nonetheless formed the Union Government at the New Delhi. Besides this, the state has 403 Legislative Assembly representatives in India\(^{13}\) sending the largest Rajya Sabha members.

In this regard some scholars specify this aspect of Uttar Pradesh. Sudha Pai argues that the Uttar Pradesh reserves its political status, as it is the state where the politics of Hindutva, Mandal and Low Caste identity- have acquired national importance and centenal place.\(^{14}\) Zoya Hasan argues that the communal politics in Uttar Pradesh functions around three approaches: the Hindi-Urdu controversy, the Ayodhya movement and Hindu-Muslim violence.\(^{15}\) Raphael Susewind and Raheel Dhattiwala believe as “with 80 parliamentary constituencies and the Muslim population share of 18 percent, Uttar Pradesh is often seen as the classic blackboard of electoral arithmetic. Because the political fractionalisation in Uttar Pradesh and the advent of coalition politics in the center–in which regional parties from Uttar Pradesh play a considerable role – provides more complex choices for Muslims.”\(^{16}\) Both Hindus and Muslims are used chessmen of the communal politics, where religion is used as a puppet/tool/tactic.\(^{17}\) Parties never hesitate to play the game of Communal Politics. The Uttar Pradesh Government Report reflects the number of incidents of the Communal Violence suffered by the state from 1946 to 1958.\(^{18}\) (Table: 5.2). Wilkinson identifies 203 communal riots in the period between 1950 and 1993.\(^{19}\) Right after Independence, the state was the target of commnialist beginning with the Babri Masjid issue.

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\(^{15}\) Zoya Hasan, *Quest for Power* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1998), 175.


\(^{17}\) Singh, “Uttar Pradesh: India’s.”


Communal Riots in Uttar Pradesh 1946-1958

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>No. of Incidents</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>No. of Incidents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1946</td>
<td>374</td>
<td>1959</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1947</td>
<td>464</td>
<td>1960</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1948</td>
<td>467</td>
<td>1961</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1949</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>1962</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1950</td>
<td>458</td>
<td>1963</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1951</td>
<td>07</td>
<td>1964</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1952</td>
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<td>1954</td>
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<tr>
<td>1955</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>1968</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1956</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>1969</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1957</td>
<td>08</td>
<td>1970</td>
<td>03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1958</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table: 5.2: Source: Singh, “Communal Riots in Meerut,” 199.

Gradually the communal situation particularly from 1980s increasingly became consistent with a communal, sectarian, and caste-based cultural reservoir. Communalism began to surface more prominently when Indira Gandhi’s lost her traditional supporters: Muslims and the Dalits. She played a communal political game, sensitising the issue of Meenakshipuram (Tamil Nadu) religious conversion 1981, and exploitation and manipulation of religious sentiments of communities including the Punjab/Khalistan/Terrorism. Historical reasons and facts define that Uttar Pradesh has been politically a key state in the Indian Union. Its economic backwardness and political manipulations are among the factors intertwined with the history of Uttar Pradesh. The major political parties continue to place the State at the center of their electoral calculations. Therefore, each political party whether it is national or regional works to strengthen their political prospects. This causes the Uttar Pradesh to become a politically

http://www.manushi.in/docs/214. percent20The percent20Body percent20as percent20Symbol.pdf
(Retrieved August 16, 2016).


21 Ibid, 122.
sensitive state. It becomes the most politically consequential state in Indian democracy, in the electoral strategies of the political parties, in their larger political imaginary and therefore they create the ground for communal politics more at the time of elections.²²

5.2. Babri Masjid Issue, Communal Violence, State Politics, and 9th General Elections -1989

The Babri Masjid issue is centered on a plot of land in the city of Ayodhya, located in Faizabad district, Uttar Pradesh. It has roots in history. It has vigorously political connotations. Babri Masjid is a structure in Faizabad/Ayodhya which was built in 1526 during the reign of Mughal king Babar, the founder of the Mughal Empire in India. A group of Hindus particularly the Sangh Parivar claims that the Babri Masjid was built where the ‘Ramjanmabhoomi temple’ was once located. In 1885, some Hindus filed a claim in the British colonial courts that this Masjid was forcibly built by Muslims after the demolishing a Hindu temple built on the birth site of their Lord Rama. Their request for restoration was denied by the court on the grounds that the plaintiff had been unable to substantiate the claim.²³ After Independence, the district magistrate of Faizabad reported in December 1949 that “a few Hindus entered Babri Masjid at night when the Masjid was deserted and installed a deity there… Police picket of fifteen persons was on duty at night but did not apparently act.”²⁴ Muslims complained and filed the suit. Hindus filed the counter-suit, leading the government to declare it disputed and lock its gate. The issue resurfaced as a symbol of militant Hindu revivalism, which launched a movement for its restoration. This issue revolves around access to a site of the Babri

²²Ibid,122.
²⁴ A. G. Noorani, “Legal Aspects to the issue,” in Anatomy of a Confrontation: Ayodhya and the Rise of Communal Politics in India, ed. Sarvepalli Gopal (London & New Jersey: Zed Books, 1993), 70, https://books.google.co.in/books?id=47AARF595dUC&pg=PA70&lpg=PA70&dq=a+few+Hindus+entered+Babri+Masjid+at+night+when+the+Masjid+was+deserted+and+installed+a+deity+there+Police+picket+of+fifteen+persons+was+on+duty+at+night+but+did+not+apparently+act&sourc e=bl&ots=7mXbRpApkR&sig=ahd-MywuhQvFVhdon6g7ExzmK- 8&hl=en&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEwi0353MmnMaAhU/SvFMKHajLCowQ6AEIYjAG#v=onepage&q=a percent20few percent20Hindus percent20entered percent20Babri percent20Masjid percent20at percent20night percent20when percent20the percent20Masjid percent20was percent20deserted percent20and percent20installed+percent20a percent20deity percent20there percent20Police+picket+of+fifteen+persons+percent20was+percent20on+duty+at+night+but+percent20did+percent20not+apparently+percent20act&f=false (Retrieved March 26, 2018).
structure communally contextualised to be the birthplace of the Hindu Lord Rama by the Sangh Parivar.\(^{25}\)

From 1980s, it became a source of Hindu communal mobilization. Jaffrelot argues that “the most important change affecting the politics of procession and rioting of India probably took place in the late 1980s to early 1990s, during the wave of riots induced by the Ayodhya affair. At that time, the two dimensions of communal use of procession, i.e. anti-Muslim mobilisation and election oriented use of shows of political strength and violence—merged to a great extent.”\(^{26}\) Sudha Pai believes that “the 1990s was the period of the resurgence of communal identity politics.”\(^{27}\) In the 1980s, the Ayodhya dispute escalated from Uttar Pradesh as a local issue to a national one.\(^{28}\) When in 1981, in Meenakshipuram low caste Hindus about 1,000 untouchables got converted into Islam, led to the communal tension in all over country especially in Uttar Pradesh state.\(^{29}\) In 1984, Hindu leaders responded to it describing it as the threat of Islam. Around 500 Sadhus and Vishva Hindu Parishad (VHP) members from all over India gathered at Vigyan Bhavan to hold a conference where from Karan Singh, a former Minister in prime minister Indira Gandhi’s cabinet spoke about the need to reconnect individual life and politics with the tenets of Hinduism. The main agenda of this conference was to claim that the Babri Masjid, as the Lord Ram’s birthplace.\(^{30}\)

Since 1980s, socio-political environment started to become communalised. The Babri Masjid turned out to be a focal point of agitation and communal vote politics.


\(^{27}\) Pai, Sharma, Kanungo & Mukherji, “Uttar Pradesh,” 2145.


\(^{29}\) Christophe Jaffrelot, Religion, Caste and Politics in India (Delhi: Primus Books, 2010), 162.


Pokharel and Beckett, “Ayodhya, the Battle.”
The Shah Bano case also caused direct bearings upon the contours of Indian politics when Congress government headed by Rajiv Gandhi nullified the 1985 Supreme Court judgement by legislating the Muslim Women (Protection of Rights on Divorce) Act 1986, allegedly succumbing to the demands of the agitating All India Muslim Personal Law Board (AIMPLB) on the Shah Bano case in the Supreme Court on the maintenance for divorced Muslim women. This action of the Rajiv Gandhi became controversial and was criticised as Muslim appeasement for vote politics.\(^{31}\) To ward off the criticism he allegedly tried to counter-appease the Hindus\(^{32}\) and his government helped remove the locks from the Babri Masjid’s door on February 1, 1986 when the Faizabad District Court Judge ruled that “there had been no official order that placed the lock on the Masjid’s gate”\(^{33}\) on plea of the District Magistrate (DM) and Superintendent of Police (SP) who personally appeared before the court stating that removing the lock from the main gate of the disputed structure will not create any law and order problem. The announcement to reverse the Supreme Court judgement (Shah Bano case) and the removal of the locks happened within a span of two weeks. This to most people appeared a move to counter-appease the Hindus.\(^{34}\) Engineer examines that “after this episode the whole nation witnessed a communal flare.”\(^{35}\) The removal of the lock practically accepted the disputed structure as a temple and consequently the demand to build a proper temple gained more strength. Hindus were given access to what they consider the birthplace of Lord Rama.\(^{36}\) For the Vishva Hindu Parishad (VHP) it was a moment of celebration thinking of it “as a major step towards the Hindu nation.”\(^{37}\) This action also helped the struggling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) (still in infancy stage) get its first big break in Indian politics.\(^{38}\)


\(^{33}\) Pokharel and Beckett, “Ayodhya, The Battle.”


\(^{36}\) Elst, “What If Rajiv.”


\(^{38}\) Guruprasad, “Rajiv Gandhi was the father of BJP,” *Guruprasad’s Portal*, http://guruprasad.net/posts/rajiv-gandhi-was-the-father-of-bjp/ (Retrieved August 22, 2016).
The Shah Bano case and the removal of locks from the gate of Babri Masjid changed the course of Indian politics. Both these acts were building up to the 1989 General Elections. The Congress needed an issue that would change the dynamics of the upcoming General Elections. The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), not a major force then having just two seats in parliament, has seized Ram Janambhoomi-Ayodhya as its chief electoral campaign issue. Some scholars also point out that broadcasting/telecasting some programmes on ‘Doordarshan’ (a national television network) like epic of Ramayan (78 weekly episode in 1987-1988) and Mahabharat (91 Episode) fertilised the ground for the subsequent Ram Janambhoomi campaign from 1989 onwards. It was all related to the communal political tactics of political parties especially in view of the 1989 General Elections. The opening of the locks in 1986 was prelude to the demolition of Babri Masjid on December 6, 1992 and future communal politics.

5.2.1. Ram Shilnyas Pujan versus Electoral Campaign and State Politics

The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) raises the issue of Ram temple in its Palampur resolution of 11th June 1989 by stating as “It just cannot be sorted out by a court of law. A court of law can settle issues of title, trespass, procession etcetera. But it just cannot adjudicate as to whether Babar did actually invade Ayodhya, destroy a temple and build a Masjid in its place. ... The sentiments of the people must be respected and Ram Janambhoomi handed over to the Hindus—if possible through a negotiated settlement, or else by legislation. Litigation certainly is no answer.”

The Congress under stress undertook certain decisions which exacerbated the communal environment in India. Of these the most significant was Shilnyas at the disputed site of Babri Masjid. In spite of 75 percent seats in the Lok Sabha, Congress was going into the 1989 General Election in the presence of number of unfavourable situations being faced by it. The relentless unravelling of the Bofors scam by a determined media put Rajiv Gandhi under immense pressure. Mishandling of the situation in Punjab, Kashmir and

Sri Lanka led to an escalation of violence. To make matter worse, Union Defence Minister V. P. Singh quit the Cabinet and subsequently the Congress Party to unite the Janata Dal (JD) in 1987 to fight against the corruption and the Congress, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and the Left to form an opposition front—the Jan Morcha. The Congress needed to reverse the country’s sentiment back in his favor. At the time, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) with its two seats in parliament and even with its resolve to build the Ram temple at the disputed site of Babri Masjid was not a serious contender. The Sangh Parivar became active in this regard.

The Vishva Hindu Parishad (VHP) in June 1984 launched Ram Janmabhoomi Mukti Yagna Samiti (RMYS) to liberate the site. In February 1989, it called for building the Ram temple. It also announced it would conduct the Shilanyas or the foundation laying ceremony for a Ram temple on November 10, 1989. The Congress facing serious challenges decided to latch on to the popular Hindu sentiment of the day believed as a politically prudent move of the time. The Congress tried to win over Hindus by playing the temple card at Ayodhya. Ram temple agitation attained its highest peak in 1989. Major riots took place in the wake of pseudo religious processions organised by the Vishva Hindu Parishad (VHP) on the occasion of Ram Shilan Pujan (literally worship of the Ram bricks) inside the Babri Masjid. Jaffrelot point out that this religious tactic was the utilization of ritual forms borrowed from Hinduism to raise the value of political symbol in pre electoral context and rapidly encouraging the cycle of rioting. The Vishva Hindu Parishad (VHP) had made appeals surrounding the event containing hateful language and inviting the audience to think in terms of confrontation and aggression with Muslims. A typical example of this was the propaganda through audio cassette as “the blood of foreigners (Muslims), of traitors who do not venerate the ancestor, will flow....the Ram Shila will be protector of Hindu culture....The foreigner’s conspiracies [an allusion to conversions allegedly financed with money from Arab countries] will be

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no longer succeed. The Ram Shila will be the death of those who call Mother India by the name of sorceress.”

This communal language in the procession of Ram Shilan Pujan Yatra left a bloody trail in its wake in all over India. The Home Ministry also officially classified 100 districts as hypersensitive areas for communal tension in 1989 and estimated around 62 major Communal Violence in 1989 in which around 1,174 people died. In Bhagalpur (Bihar) in October 24, 1989 about 1000 people died. Uttar Pradesh alone witnessed various riots like Kalpi - Jalaun (April 14; Dead: 1; Injured: 4), Mathura (April 16; Injured: 8), Meerut (Dead: 1; Injured: 3), Badaun (September 28; Dead: 60) and Fathepur in November, in all riots almost 25 people died. Udayakumar says that 1989 General Elections witnessed the worst ever Communal Violence in Independent India’s electoral history and took the massive toll of about 800 lives in the Hindi belt regions. The Vishva Hindu Parishad (VHP) agitation endangered the communal harmony, setting off communal fires across the country. It has taken a bloody toll and rekindled the Hindu-Muslim tensions across the nation particularly in Hindi belt.

### Communal Violence in 1989

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Incidents</th>
<th>Killed</th>
<th>Injured</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1989</td>
<td>922</td>
<td>802</td>
<td>3871</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Table: 5.3: Source: Engineer, Communal Riots After, 223.*

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53 Engineer, *Communal Riots after*, 94-96 & 228.
On the Shilnyas issue, they succeeded in forcing the Government to capitulate. To the Sangh Parivar the communal bloodbath of the time mattered little. Ashok Singhal, the general secretary of the Vishva Hindu Parishad (VHP), made it clear that no amount of blood-letting will stop his cadres from constructing the Ram temple at the controversial site. With elections approaching close, the Congress leadership let the tension mount to a dangerous point. With Bajrang Dal (BD) activists threatening to storm the shrine, the Government did not take any chances. Suspicious of antagonising the Hindus on election eve, Buta Singh the then Home Minister and other Congress leaders decided to allow the Vishva Hindu Parishad (VHP) to lay the foundation-stone at the controversial site. By doing this, it hoped to placate both communities: the Hindus, by allowing the Shilnyas, and the Muslims, by not allowing it on the disputed land. By following the Shilnyas which took place in November 1989, just a day before the commencement of General Elections. Congress made the mockery of the Indian Judicial system.

The Sangh Parivar presented the ‘Lord Ram’ as the Hero of significance and glory of Hindu of all sects and as a ruler of the whole India. This strategy of Ram symbol during the elections campaign cannot be separated from the invention of new aggressive myths, rituals and hateful comments and slogans to create the atmosphere for a wave of Communal Violence. On the other hand Rajiv Gandhi in October 1989 also launched his election campaign from Ayodhya land promising to establish the “Ram Rajya” across the country if returned to power. It was an attempt to secure the Hindus vote bank. Subsequently caste boundaries blurred, the Hindu-Muslim divide sharpened, and the lotus bloomed, radiating communalism all around, setting up directions and laying down of acceptability of future communal politics in India.

### 5.2.2. Election Results

The 1989 General elections were held to elect the members of the 9th Lok Sabha. V. P. Singh united the entire contrasting band of parties including regional parties such as

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the Telugu Desam Party (TDP), the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK), and the Asom Gana Parishad (AGP), forming the National Front (NF) with N. T. Rama Rao as president and V. P. Singh as convener with additional outside support from the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and Communist Party of India (Marxist) (CPIM) led Left front they defeated Rajiv Gandhi’s Congress (I) in the 1989 elections, the party which had won the 1984 general election by a landslide victory. The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) had won only 2 seats in the eighth general elections of 1984 increased its seats tally to 85 (out of the total 225 seats contested) in the 1989 elections with 11.36 percent vote. In terms of both seats won and votes polled, the party ranked third after the Congress (I) and the Janata Dal (JD) which had won 197 and 143 seats and polled 39.53 and 17.79 percent vote respectively. In this election Congress (I) securing 197 seats emerged as the single largest party. In the 8th General Elections it had secured 404 seats with vote share of 49.01 percent. This time its strength was reduced to less than half. The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) emerged as the second biggest gainer increasing its tally from 2 seats in the 1984 to 85 seats. The National Front at the union level managed to secure a simple majority, that is, 143 seats with Communist Party of India (Marxist) (CPIM) and Communist Party of India (CPI) securing 33 and 12 respectively and formed the new government under the prime ministership of V. P. Singh with the outside support of the Left Front and the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP).

The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), with its predecessor the Bharatiya Jana Sangh (BJS), had never exceeded 10 percent of the vote or 35 seats nationally, except for 1977 when as a component of the Janata Party (JP) it won 99 of 295 seats won by the Janata Party (JP), experienced a meteoric rise in seats from two in 1984 (7.4 percent of votes) to 85 (out of 226 contested, 11 percent of votes) in 1989. This was due to a combination of number of factors like seat adjustments with the Jana Dal (JD) resulting in one-on-one contests against the Congress in most of the seats it contested in Uttar Pradesh, Delhi, Rajasthan, Gujarat, Himachal Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh; a sizeable swing in its

60 Srinivasan, “Rise and fall of V P Singh.”
62 Hasan, Congress after Indira, 22.
63 Statistical Report on General Election, 1989 to the 9th Lok Sabha.
favour due to the change in the party leadership and the party’s reaffirming faith in the Sangh Parivar ideology and its articulation of issues like abolition of the article 370, replacement of Minorities Commission by a Human Rights Commission, implementation of Uniform Civil Code (UCC) and above all construction of Ram Mandir at the disputed site believed by them to be the birth place of Lord Ram. From 2 seats in 1984 general elections to a resounding 85 seats in the ninth Lok Sabha was the beginning of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJPs) upward journey and a morale booster.65

In the state of Uttar Pradesh the poll turnout was 51.27 percent. The Congress (I) which started its campaign from Ayodhya wishing to establish politics Ram Rajya66 aimed at influencing the Hindu vote fallen down from 83 seat (vote share of 51.03 percent) in 1984 to 15 seats (vote share of 31.77 percent) in 1989.67 On the other hand, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) clothing it electoral campaign with communal political overtones to mobilise Hindus became successful in improving its tally by receiving 8 seats (vote share of 7.58 percent) in 1989 from 0 seats in 1984.68 (Table: 5.4). In this way Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) firmly established itself as a credible national alternative to the Congress (I) and the Janata Dal (JD).69 In this election the Congress and Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) were not an able to capture the seats in communal conflict zones. (Table: 5.5). At the state level Janta Dal (JD) in alliance was the major beneficiary contesting the largest share of seats. The prime looser was the Congress. The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) which was the second largest party in alliance to contest gained much in comparison of its 1984 performance. On the achievement of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), A. G. Noorani says that the success of Bharatiya Janata Party could be linked to its choosing the ‘Ram temple’ issue. The Bharatiya Janata Party’s (BJP) Palampur (Himachal Pradesh) resolution on Ayodhya on June 11th, 1989, Advani himself said “I am sure it will translate into votes.” On December 3, 1989, after the General Elections, he

66 Hasan, Congress after Indira, 21.
expressed satisfaction that the issue had contributed to the Bharatiya Janata Party’s success.\(^7\)

**Seats and Vote Share of Four Major Political Parties in Uttar Pradesh General Elections-1989**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>INC S/V.S</th>
<th>SP/JD S/V.S</th>
<th>BJP S/V.S</th>
<th>BSP S/V.S</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1989</td>
<td>15/ 31.77</td>
<td>54/ 35.9</td>
<td>8/ 7.58</td>
<td>2/ 9.93</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Table: 5.4: Note: INC= Indian National Congress, SP= Samajwadi Party, JD= Janta Dal, BJP= Bharatiya Janata Party, BSP= Bahujan Samaj Party, S=Seats, V.S= Vote Share.*


**List of Successful Candidate from Uttar Pradesh, Conflict Constituency in 1989 General Elections**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Constituency</th>
<th>Winner</th>
<th>Sex</th>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Party</th>
<th>Votes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kalpi riot, 1989</td>
<td>Ram Sewak Bhatiya</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>SC</td>
<td>JD</td>
<td>164933</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mathura riot, 1989</td>
<td>Manvendra Singh</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>SC</td>
<td>JD</td>
<td>233318</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meerut riot, 1989</td>
<td>Harish Pal</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>GEN</td>
<td>JD</td>
<td>312856</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Badaun riot, 1989</td>
<td>Sharad Yadav</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>GEN</td>
<td>JD</td>
<td>225712</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muzaffarnagar riot, 1989</td>
<td>Mufti Mohammad Sayeed</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>GEN</td>
<td>JD</td>
<td>335324</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fathepur riot, 1989</td>
<td>Vishwanath Pratap</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>GEN</td>
<td>JD</td>
<td>245653</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Table: 5.5: Note: M=Male, F=Female, SC=Scheduled Caste, GEN= General.*


### 5.3. Mandal versus Rath Yatra

After the elections of 1989, the Ayodhya issue became the defining issue in Indian politics. It set the political agenda of the nation for the future years.\(^7\) The conflicting stage was built-up to the 1989 elections which witnessed the preparation and mobilization to demolish the Babri Masjid for building the Ram temple. The assurances given to the Sangh Parivar by the Congress government before the 1989 elections and its collusive hand in opening the locks of the Babri Masjid set the stage for the Parivar to pursue the temple issue vigorously. To ward of the growing communal agitation on the


\(^7\) Joyti Sharma, *Secularism and Ayodhya Politics in India* (New Delhi: Deep & Deep Publication, 2007), 133.
issue, prime minister V. P. Singh responded by establishing a Special Bench on January 8, 1990, and pleading for a ban on construction till the title to the disputed site could be decided and the site-plan approved. In the meantime, the Vishva Hindu Parishad (VHP) fixed the 14th February, 1990 to begin the temple construction. This time V. P. Singh managed the situation with great trouble by pointing out the grave situation in Kashmir and Punjab. Then in July 1990 the Vishva Hindu Parishad (VHP) announced that it would start temple construction on 30th October. To counter the growing Communal hysteria V. P. Singh decided to consolidate “backward class vote base” in his favour. With certain political motives, he decided to implement recommendations of the Mandal Commission. It was his endeavour to consolidate and command votes of backward castes with himself in upcoming elections. On 7th August 1990, he issued order for implementing the report of the Mandal Commission which was established in 1979 by the Janata Party (JP) government with a mandate to identify the socially or educationally backward to consider the question of seat reservations and quotas for people to redress caste discrimination and which for about a decade remained neglected in public discourse till V.P. Singh became prime minister of India in 1989 facing the Politics of Sangh Parivar on Babri Majsid/Ram Temple issue.

This was the beginning of the stage of Mandal-Kamandal politics in India. Meanwhile, the entire politics that remained active in public discourse over merits and demerits of reservation to Other Backward Class (OBCs), its possible social, economic and political effects, ulterior political motives surrounding the recommendations of Mandal Commission is collectively termed as “Mandal Politics.” On the other hand Kamandal refers to Hindutva politics that emerged during the same time span by virtue of aggressive posturing of Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) on national political discourse. To counter the political dominance of backward caste oriented parties, Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) initiated Hindutva brand of politics to consolidate Hindu votes within its umbrella. The announcement the acceptance of Mandal Commission recommendations on reservations for the other backward castes made V. P. Singh the target of criticism from across the political gamut. This act of V. P. Singh led a great storm of agitation among the upper caste Hindus. Because Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) Party with its

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72 Udayakumar, “Historicising Myth.”
73 Ibid.
74 “Rise and fall of V. P. Singh.”
Hindutva forces has started to feel that the implementation of Commission Report may erode their political base and could fragment the Hindu votes.\textsuperscript{75} Among his largely upper caste critics, there was none more vociferous than the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP). By cynical political manipulation of caste fissures in Hindu society, the party argued, Mr. Singh was risking the balkanisation of the Indian polity. The then party president L. K. Advani justified his Rath Yatra undertaken soon after the Mandal announcement – as a necessary step towards healing the caste wounds allegedly opened by Mr. Singh’s chicanery.\textsuperscript{76}

To weaken the effects of enforcement of the Commission Report and to consolidate the Hindu votes, Lal Krishan Advani, the then Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) president started the Rath Yatra from Somnath to Ayodhya to agitate and spark the political environment in India.\textsuperscript{77} He started his Rath Yatra on 25\textsuperscript{th} October 1990 from Somnath to reach Ayodhya on 30\textsuperscript{th} October 1990 to join the Kar Seva to build the Ram temple.\textsuperscript{78} Jaffrelot and Engineer argues that the movement in favour of the rebuilding of Ram temple was largely the reaction to Mandal Commission implementations, aiming to reunite the Hindu community that had been dived along caste line by the reservation issue.\textsuperscript{79} On the other hand Hansen argues that it was the Indian elite that turned to the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) to guarantee the continuance of the privileges available to the dominant strata – the upper-castes of the Indian society, thus it is the “elite conspiracy/revolt.”

During the course the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) made its political intentions unmistakably clear.\textsuperscript{81} From this platform it also alleged as a “party with differences,” a party which could provide alternative to the Congress misrule. On the other hand Muslims were projected as the “pampered minority and responsible for keeping the

\textsuperscript{75} Singh, “Communal riots in Meerut, 203, see also Asghar Ali Engineer, Communal Challenge and Secular Response (Delhi: Shipra Publications, 2003), ix.


\textsuperscript{77} Singh, “Communal riots in Meerut,” 203.


\textsuperscript{79} Engineer, Communardism in Secular India, 121; Jaffrelot, Religion, Caste, xx.


\textsuperscript{81} Engineer, Lifting the veil, 124.
Congress in power.” In this project Uma Bharti and Sadhvi Rithanmbara have used bare communal languages in public addresses. They along with Advani were openly inciting Hindu religious sentiments and no action was taken against them. In this way Advani has became an instant hero and wherever he went by his Rath Yatra he has attracted large number of peoples. Ram Janambhumi campaign that culminated with demolition of Babri Masjid and subsequent resurgence of Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) in national political landscape was peak of Kamandal politics. During this time in 1991, in Uttar Pradesh elections, Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) resurrected in the state with a decisive victory and formed government. It single handedly won 221 seats in Legislative Assembly of 403 members.

5.3.1. Rath Yatra versus Rakt Yatra (Journey of Blood)

The Rath Yatra was described by Asghar Ali Engineer as the Journey of Blood. However Advani during the Yatra repeatedly said his Yatra disproves/ anxiety of a communal flare-up and proves/d that Lord Rama was a unifying figure in Indian society. He also said that his Yatra was not politically motivated and the credit for its success did not go either to him or his party but to the overwhelming reverence of the people for Rama. He also urged that not a single riot took place on its route. But his claimed was far from reality, because Engineer have examined that he waded through pools of blood in his Rath Yatra. Because from the period of 30th October 1990 to December 1990, witnessed an unprecedented Communal Violence incidents. A series of riots occurred in Uttar Pradesh districts like as Gonda and Colonelganj (September 30; Dead: 14; officially: 300 unofficially; Injured: 1,000), Bijnor (October 30; Dead: 87 officially, 300 unofficially: Injured: 127), Ayodhya (October 30-November 2, 1990; Dead: 26), Aligarh (December 7; the total number of deaths is uncertain the media reported 75 deaths. Official accounts put the death toll at 92; two-thirds of whom were Muslims.

82 Engineer, Communalism in Secular India, 122.  
83 Engineer, Communal Challenge, ix, Engineer, Communalism in Secular India, 122.  
84 Engineer, Communalism in Secular India, 122.  
85 Engineer, Communal Riots after, 22.  
87 Engineer, Lifting the veil, 124.  
88 Engineer, Lifting the veil, 124, cited by Noorani, “How a mosque.”  
89 Engineer, Communal Riots after, 22.  
Muslim organizations listed 100 deaths in the Muslim community alone. A Report by the People’s Union for Civil Liberties (PUCL) claimed the death toll to be 150 or 200.\(^{91}\) Kanpur (December 10; Dead: 20), Agra (December 16; Dead: 22), Khurja (December 15-23, 1989 and January 31, 1991; Dead: 96), Bulandshehar and the like, these riots not only occurred in North belt but in South also such as Karnataka (Dead 46 officially), Hyderabad (Dead 134 officially, 200 or 300 unofficially).\(^{92}\)

The environment was sensitively communalised to the extent that a rumour caused violence. In early October 1990, a false rumour spread in one area of Uttar Pradesh that Muslims had killed hundreds of Hindus, including butchering women and children. Riots erupted, leaving 80 people dead.\(^{93}\) Arresting of Advani in Samastipur, Bihar on 23\(^{rd}\) October 1990 under the National Security Act\(^{94}\) further worsened the situation. The government of Uttar Pradesh has made arrangements not to allow the entry of Rath Yatra in Ayodhya. However, Kar Sevaks had started gathering at the Ayodhya and their strength gradually became more than 10,000.\(^{95}\) When they had started to assault the Babri Masjid and the situation became uncontrollable, the government undertook preventive action ultimately leading to the opening of fire by the police killing number of persons and claims of different casualties.\(^{96}\)

The action of the government led the storm of anti-Muslim violence at several places (Brado, Ahmadabad, Indor, Uttar Pradesh and Bihar), claiming dozens of lives and imposition of curfew at more than thirty towns.\(^{97}\) After to this, the Vishva Hindu Parishad (VHP) exploited the event by mobilising and organizing Asthi Kalash Yatras (processions carrying the ashes and bones of the Kar Sevaks) throughout the country. These processions left another bloody trail of communal riots.\(^{98}\) (Table: 5.6).

\(^{91}\) Graff and Galonnier, *Hindu-Muslim Communal Riots in India II*, 14.
\(^{93}\) Pokharel and Beckett, “Ayodhya, The Battle.”
\(^{94}\) Upadhyaya, “The Drama.”
\(^{95}\) Ibid.
\(^{97}\) Graff and Galonnier, *Hindu-Muslim Communal Riots in India II*, 12.
\(^{98}\) Ibid, 12.
Communal Violence in Uttar Pradesh during the ‘Rath Yatra’ and After the Arrest of Mr. Advani

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<th>Town/city</th>
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<td>14</td>
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<td>4</td>
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<td>4</td>
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<td>12</td>
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<td>Meerut</td>
<td>1990</td>
<td>12</td>
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<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rampur</td>
<td>1991</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
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</table>

*Figure: 5.6: Source: Wilkinson, Religious Politics and Communal Violence, 406–444.*
This Ayodhya storm became responsible for political crises at centreal and state level. At centreal level it led to the dissolution of the Lok Sabha when Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) withdrew its support from V. P. Singh’s government immediately after the arrest of Advani in Bihar. On 7\textsuperscript{th} November his government lost a vote of no-confidence and following the resignation of V. P. Singh, Chandra Shekhar became the prime minister with the outside support of 197 Member of Parliaments (MPs) of Congress (I). After sometimes Congress withdrew its support paving the way for the fresh election in 1991. Of these squabbles it was/is Bhartiya Janata Party (BJP) that emerged as strong party\textsuperscript{99} in Uttar Pradesh and in 1991 assembly elections it acquired the power\textsuperscript{100} winning 221 seats out of total 425 seats and Kalyan Singh sworn in as chief minister of Uttar Pradesh on 24 June 1991 while the Congress became successful in forming a minority government at the Union level.

\textbf{5.4. Mandal-Mandir Politics, Communal Violence and 10\textsuperscript{th} General Elections -1991}

The 10\textsuperscript{th} General elections were held in India, in 1991, to elect the members of the 10\textsuperscript{th} Lok Sabha. These elections were held in a polarised environment and are also being termed as the ‘Mandal-Mandir’ elections after the two most important poll issues, the Mandal Commission fallout and the Ram Janmabhoomi-Babri Masjid issue.\textsuperscript{101} While the Mandal Commission Report implementation led to the widespread violence and protests across the country by the upper castes Babri Masjid–Ram Temple became the main plank of this election, where there was a debate over the disputed Babri Masjid structure at Ayodhya, which the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) used it as its major election manifesto. The Babri Masjid–Ram Temple issue led to the numerous riots in many parts of the country and the electorate was polarized on caste and religious lines.

In this election also Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) has used the temple issue in its campaigns in such a way that it became the only cause for its electoral success. It started to campaign in an efficient way at all India level especially in Uttar Pradesh state where Ms. Uma Bharti addressed number of meeting stressing more on the temple issue openly


\textsuperscript{100} Scharada Dubey, \textit{Portrait from Ayodhya} (New Delhi: Tranquebar Press, 2012), forwards note.

\textsuperscript{101} Dubbudu, “History of Indian.”
communalising elections. She allegedly says “Jo Ram Virodhi hain, Unhen hum kisi bhi qimat pr vote nhi dena hai (Don’t vote for those opposed to Lord Ram at any cost).” The issue of temple was fully exploited directly and indirectly. This communal campaigning became responsible for the list of communal incidents in the year of 1991. The state of Uttar Pradesh alone witnessed various riots such as in Ghaziabad (26 January; Dead: 10), Saharanpur (24 March; Dead: 15 officially, 40 unofficially), Mustafabad (8 April; Dead: 3; Injured: 1), Kanpur (April; Dead: 24), Kanpur (19 May; Dead: 20), Meerut (20 May; Dead: 30 officially, 50 unofficially), Sikandrabad (20 May; Dead: 12), Banaras (8-12 June; Dead: 28 officially, 50 unofficially; Injured: 75).

The political parties attempted to manage the most of the polarization to get the most seats. The result of the election was that no party could get a majority.

### 5.4.1. Election Results

This election was different from different angles. A day after the first round of polling took place on 20 May, 1991; former prime minister Rajiv Gandhi was assassinated while campaigning at Sriperembudur in South India. The remaining election was postponed until mid-June and voting finally took place on 12 and 15 June 1991. In the second phase of election the Congress (I) due to Rajiv Gandhi assassination gained a lot, by emotional votes, to win many seats of parliament. Since the assassination took place after first phase of polling in 211 of 534 constituencies and the balance constituencies went to polls after the assassination, the 1991 results varied greatly between phases. The Congress party did poorly in the pre-assassination constituencies and swept the post-assassination constituencies. However, voting was the lowest ever in parliamentary elections just, that is, 53 percent. No party could get a majority. The results threw a hung parliament. The Congress emerged as the largest party with 232 seats (vote share of 36.26 percent). The Congress was able to form the government with the support of smaller parties and the Communists. The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) was on the

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105 “History of Lok Sabha.”
second position with 120 seats (vote share of 20.11 percent) and the Janta Dal (JD) came at distant third with just 59 seats (vote share of 11.84 percent).\textsuperscript{107}

In Uttar Pradesh state where communal politics was mobilised in extreme way in compare to the others states, polls turnout was only 49.24 percent. The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) secured the highest, that is, 51 seats (vote share of 32.82 percent) in comparison to 8 seats (vote share of 7.58 percent) in 1989. Whereas the Congress closed its account to just on 5 (vote share of 18.2 percent), BSP-1(vote share of 8.7 percent), CPI-1(vote share of 1.04 percent), CPI-M-0 (vote share of 0.73 percent), Janta Dal (United)-22 (vote share of 21.27 percent), and others got only 4 seats.\textsuperscript{108} (Table: 5.7). The seat ratio in Uttar Pradesh shows that the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) in Uttar Pradesh emerged as a victorious party. The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) won almost constituencies/seats where the riots had taken place before the elections. (Table: 5.8).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>INC S/V.S</th>
<th>JD S/V.S</th>
<th>BJP S/V.S</th>
<th>BSP S/V.S</th>
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<td>22/21.27</td>
<td>51/32.82</td>
<td>1/8.7</td>
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List of Successful Candidate from Uttar Pradesh, Conflict Constituency in General Elections - 1991

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Constituency</th>
<th>Winner</th>
<th>Sex</th>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Party</th>
<th>Votes</th>
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<tr>
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<td>SC</td>
<td>BJP</td>
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<td>Gonda, 1990 Riot</td>
<td>Brij Bhusan Saran Singh</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>GEN</td>
<td>BJP</td>
<td>217115</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kanpur, 1990 &amp; 1991 Riot</td>
<td>Jagatveer Singh Bron</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>GEN</td>
<td>BJP</td>
<td>193275</td>
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<td>Agra, 1990 Riot</td>
<td>Bhagwan Shanker Rawat</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>GEN</td>
<td>BJP</td>
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<td>Mathura, 1990 Riot</td>
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<td>M</td>
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<td>Aligarh, 1990 Riot</td>
<td>Shila Devi Gautam (W)</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>GEN</td>
<td>BJP</td>
<td>177161</td>
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<tr>
<td>Saharanpur, 1991 Riot</td>
<td>Rashed Masood</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>GEN</td>
<td>JD</td>
<td>246445</td>
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<tr>
<td>Varanasi (Mustafabad), 1991 Riot</td>
<td>Sheesh Chandra Dixit</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>GEN</td>
<td>BJP</td>
<td>186333</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bulandshahr (Sikandrabad), 1991 Riot</td>
<td>Chhatterpal</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>GEN</td>
<td>BJP</td>
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Table: 5.8: Note: M=Male, F=Female, SC=Scheduled Caste, GEN= General.

In the general parliamentary election, the seat (51 seats) and vote share (32.82 percent) of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) was the highest in comparison to last elections. In the same year 1991 the state of Uttar Pradesh also went to assembly polls. In this election the Bharatiya Janata Party’s (BJP) tactic of communal polarisation also paid dividends. In the election it improved its tally by capturing 221 seats (vote share 31.45 percent). This was its first highest vote bank since Independence. The elections were held for 404 seats out of 425 for the State Assembly. The Janata Dal (JD) and the Janata Party (JP) in sharp contrast were able to win only 92 seats (vote share of 18.84 percent) and 34 seats (vote share of 12.52 percent) respectively. The Congress fared badly and got only 46 seats (vote share of 17.32 percent). The Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) won 12 seats (vote share of 9.44 percent). The other left parties gained only 5 seats.  

of both the state assembly elections and the general parliamentary elections portrays that the Bharatiya Janata Party’s (BJP) communal tool, that is, the Ram Rath Yatra proved beneficial for it. The Bharatiya Janata Party’s (BJP) political journey from 2 seats (1984) to 120 seats (1991) shows that the politics of communalisation and Communal Violence politics is really a successful tactic for the party.

5.5. Communalisation, Destruction of Babri Masjid and the wave of Communal Violence -1992

With the formation of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) government in Uttar Pradesh, the Sangh Parivar took up the issue of implementation of the promise of construction of the Ram temple more aggressively. The state government started in an instant way to take over the surrounding lands about 2.77 acres, demolition of all other structure on it, and also withdrawal the various security arrangements from there. In February 1992 the construction of boundary wall (named the Ram Diwar, that is, the Ram Wall) was also started to construct. In March the government of Uttar Pradesh leased out appropriately 42.09 acres of land acquired in the year 1988-89 purportedly for implementation of the Ram Katha Park project of the previous government to the Vishva Hindu Parishad’s (VHP) sponsored ‘Ramjanambhoomi Nyas.’

A demand for the construction of the Ram temple was made by the Sangh Parivar affiliates in July 1992. A new call was made for volunteers to amass in Ayodhya in July 1992 again to try to start construction of a temple. The prime minister P.V. Narsimha Rao tried to defuse the situation. However, the Sangh Parivar continued to mobilize the Kar Sevaks to press ahead with the plans to demolish the Babri Masjid. Mr. Advani undertook once again a Yatra from Varanasi towards Ayodhya while Joshi took it from Mathura to Ayodhya. The various affiliates of Sangh Parivar like the Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP), the Bajrang Dal (BD) and the Shiv Sena (SS) by holding several meetings (chowk sabhas-street meeting) have carried out propaganda in favour of the construction of the Ram temple at Ayodhya. The Gchantanaad programmes were

110 Hasan, Congress after Indira, 24-25.
112 Pokharel and Beckett, “Ayodhya, the Battle.”
113 Hasan, Congress after Indira, 25.
114 Rao, Ayodhya 6 December, 103.
organised in various parts of the city to coexist with the kar seva at Ayodhya. Jaffrelot says that as early as 27th November over 10,000 kar sevaks from different part of the country had already reached to Ayodhya. This number has steadily increased by 5 December about 1, 50,000. The Sangh Parivar estimated that around 10 lakh people had signed the pledge to reach Ayodhya.

While the Sangh Parivar continued to mobilise people for the Ram temple construction. On this huge gathering of crowd both the central and the state intelligence warned the union and state administrations for the possibility of destruction of the Babri Masjid well in advance. Mr. Rao received assurances from the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) leaders that law and order would be maintained. However, Mr. Advani warned the union government in political tongue that “a confrontation with the Uttar Pradesh government would be politically profitable for the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), but would not be in the interest of the country.” It might be “disastrous for the Congress government at the center.” He has also claimed that Kar Seva in Ayodhya from 6 December will not be stopped in any circumstances and the construction of the Ram temple will start with the Bhajan, Kirtan etcetera. We are prepared to face any eventuality arising from the kar sevaks and are ready to give any sacrifice for it. The Bhartiya Janata Party (BJP) in 1991 gained heavily and formed its government in Uttar Pradesh and Congress took to ruling at the center. With two rival political parties on either sides, pushing and pulling started taking place from both the sides making the whole situation all the more critical. The campaign which in the 1980s, the Vishva Hindu Parishad (VHP) began for the construction of Ram temple with the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) as its political voice ended on 6th December 1992 in the form of demolition the 16th century Babri Masjid in the city of Ayodhya, in Uttar Pradesh by a large crowd.

117 Rao, Ayodhya 6 December, 105.
120 Rao, Ayodhya 6 December, 104.
of Hindu Kar Sevaks after a political rally at the site allegedly turned violent.\textsuperscript{122} (Table: 5.9).

According to the Sri Krishna Committee Report, the news of demolition of Babri Masjid spread by 1430 hours on 6 December 1992\textsuperscript{123} that a mob of Hindu militants \{Vishva Hindu Parishad (VHP), Shive Sena Party, and others Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP)\}\textsuperscript{124} has torn down a Masjid and attacked on the Muslim in the north Indian town of Ayodhya.\textsuperscript{125} This sparked the Communal Violence in all over India which continued for months. According to the government report by 9 to 16 December various states saw interreligious conflicts.\textsuperscript{126} The ensuing riots spread to cities like Mumbai, Surat, Ahmedabad, Kanpur, Delhi, Bhopal and several other places. The Mumbai riots alone, which occurred in December 1992 and January 1993 and in which the Shiv Sena played a big part in organising, caused the death of around 900 people, and estimated property damage of around Rs. 9,000 crore ($3.6 billion) and recognised as one among the major factors behind the 1993 Mumbai bombings and many successive riots in the coming decade.\textsuperscript{127} The British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) reported that the destruction of the Babri Masjid in Ayodhya provoked some of the worst inter Communal Violence in which around more than 2,000 people died throughout the India.\textsuperscript{128} On the other hand ‘India today’ has also reported that over 1,000 people had died in various part of the country.\textsuperscript{129} Jaffrelot also examined that the demolition was responsible for about 1250 causalities in all over India.\textsuperscript{130} The demolition of the Babri Masjid symbolised the militant Hindu eagerness to go to war creating an environment of fear and violence further strengthening and making visible the invisible boundary sprang up between

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{122} Pokharel and Beckett, “Ayodhya, The Battle.”
\item \textsuperscript{123} “Shrikrishna Commission Report.”
\item \textsuperscript{126} Pokharel and Beckett, “Ayodhya, The Battle.”
\item \textsuperscript{128} “1992: Mob rips.”
\item \textsuperscript{130} Jaffrelot, \textit{Religion, Caste}, 364.
\end{itemize}
Hindus and Muslims and to convey to Muslims their unequal status, their subservience, regardless of the rights guaranteed under the constitution.

Communal Violence in Uttar Pradesh after the Demolition of Babri Masjid

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Town/city</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Reported Killed</th>
<th>Reported Injured</th>
<th>Duration</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aligarh</td>
<td>1992</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>176</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faizabad &amp; Ayodhya</td>
<td>1992</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ghaziabad</td>
<td>1992</td>
<td>12</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kanpur</td>
<td>1992</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>25</td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rampur</td>
<td>1992</td>
<td>12</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Varanasi</td>
<td>1992</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>28</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Varanasi</td>
<td>1992</td>
<td>12</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


5.5.1. Centre-State Politics and Reports/Views after the Demolition of Babri Masjid

In the aftermath of the demolition of Babri Masjid the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) state government was dismissed by the union government. The politics of blames and allegations against each other ensued. Kalyan Singh declared that the 6 December marked the emergence of “New India” in which Hindus will not remain number two. He described the controversial the Ram temple partly built on the structure of Babri Masjid as a “symbol of national pride, unity, self reliance, self respect and strength.” Mr. Advani claimed that “I am not at all ashamed of the Babri Masjid demolition. There is no question of feeling so.” On the other hand Joshi argues that “6 December incident has brought Hindutva to the Centre stage. The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) became the voice of Hindu nationalism redefining the political ideology of every aspect of national life, be it secularism, socialism, foreign policy or economic issue.” The Organise, in its issue of 13th December 1992 stated that “the Sangh Parivar played its card well in this battle of wits with the P.M....It was decided to devise a strategy to confront the Center

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133 Ibid, 310.
while avoiding a clash with the judiciary. It was a part of this strategy that the Uttar Pradesh government filed [an] affidavit in the Supreme Court...that the government would not allow violation of courts order.”\textsuperscript{134} On the other hand, prime minister Mr. Rao expressed that “the nation was double crossed by the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and the Vishva Hindu Parishad (VHP) which had agreed to hold only a symbolic kar sevas. The then president of India Dr. Shankar Dayal Sharma said that such acts causing damage to a religious structure were “absolutely against the conviction and practice of Hinduism and all other great religions.”\textsuperscript{135}

To investigate the destruction of the Babri Masjid the union government set up the ‘Liberhan Commission’ on 16 December 1992 headed by the retired High Court Judge M. S. Liberhan. The Report of the Commission submitted 2006, alleges that the top leaders of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and its Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) allies and mentors bear responsibility for the 1992 razing of the Babri Masjid. The Report clearly points out that the razing of the Babri Masjid was a conspiracy. A conspiracy “carried out with great painstaking preparation and preplanning,” organized by the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS), and aided and abetted by the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) state government of Uttar Pradesh.\textsuperscript{136} The report further says that “Kalyan Singh’s Ministers and his handpicked bureaucrats created manmade and cataclysmic circumstances which could result in no consequences other than the demolition of the disputed structure… They denuded the State of every legal, moral and statutory restraint and wilfully enabled and facilitated the wanton destruction and the ensuing anarchy.”\textsuperscript{137} Justice Liberhan further examines that “it cannot be assumed even for a moment that L.K. Advani, A.B. Vajpayee or M.M. Joshi did not know the designs of the Sangh Parivar. Even though these leaders were deemed and used by the Parivar… to reassure the cautious masses, they were [in fact] party to the decisions which had been taken.”\textsuperscript{138} The sting operation by the Cobrapost also claimed in its report that the


\textsuperscript{135} Gupta, “Communal Riots after,” 311.


\textsuperscript{137} Subrahmaniam, “Babri Masjid.”

\textsuperscript{138} Ibid.
demolition of the Babri Masjid on 6th December 1992 was pre-planned by the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS), with the knowledge of senior Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) leaders. The blame was also put on prime minister Mr. Rao. A.G. Noorani in his book titled as *Destruction of the Babri Masjid: A National Dishonour* argues that “Mr. Rao was the prime culprit in the demolition of the Babri Masjid as he acted in such a manner that he would not be blamed for this National Dishonour and virtual collusion of the judiciary and executive in this shameful act.” Zoya Hasan alleges that how Rao was opposed to the dismissal of Uttar Pradesh government even though there was actionable intelligence about the threat of demolition. Kuldip Nayyer in his book *Beyond the Lines* also alleges that “Rao’s government will always be held responsible for the demolition of the Babri Masjid.” The destruction of the Babri Masjid and the movement leading to it took communalism to a different level altogether. The demolition incident changed India’s political scenario communalising all aspects its life. The violence that followed and the conflicts that happened changed India, particularly Uttar Pradesh’s, social fabric. The fact is that the temple issue enabled Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) to blunt the politics of caste defined around the politics of Other Backward Classes (OBC) and Dalit vote banks. The Congress too indulged in competitive communalism by both pandering to Muslim orthodoxy and adopting some version of Hindutva. But by its nature, Congress is incapable of becoming the main force mobilizing Hindu nationalism. The Mandir-Masjid issue was/is never a religious issue and it was/is instead a political issue. All political parties especially the Sangh Parivar strategize to reap political benefit out of it.

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141 Hasan, *Congress after Indira*, 27.


5.5.2. Assembly Elections -1993 and State Politics

After the demolition incident the assembly elections in Uttar Pradesh were held in 1993. In this election the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) could not gain the electoral benefits from the demolition of the Babri Masjid and its communal politics. This was made possible when the Samajwadi Party (SP) formed in 1992 entered into a strategic poll alliance with the Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) against the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP). The Samajwadi Party (SP) and Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) contested 256 and 164 seats respectively, and won 109 with vote share of 17.94 percent and 67 with vote share of 11.12 percent. During the elections their election slogan was “Mile Mulayam Kanshiram, hawa mein ud gaye Jai Shri Ram (Alliance of Mulayam Kanshiram signals/indicates expulsion/demise of Bharatiya Janata Party).” This alliance came to power with Mulayam Singh Yadav (SP) on 3rd December 1993 as chief minister.144 Whereas, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) contested for 422 seats and won only 177 seats with vote share of 33.30 percent. The Congress contested for 421 seats and won only 28 seats with vote share of 15.08 percent. The Janata Dal (JD) contested for 377 seats and got only 27 seats with vote share of 12.33 percent and others 10.145

After the demolition the electorate of Uttar Pradesh split in three ways along the caste line: the upper caste and some Other Backward Classes (OBCs) went with the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), the Dalits consolidated in favour of the Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) and the Yadav, a politically dominant Other Backward Classes (OBCs) segment, rallied round with Mr. Yadav’s Samajwadi Party (SP). Another significant shift in the state’s politics was that this time the Muslims associated themselves with the Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) and Samajwadi Party (SP), thus forming a winning combination.146 In the most important and most complex political battleground of India this alliance failed midway leading to the fall of Mulayam government and Mayawati being sworn in as chief minister with the support of Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) in 1995. The politics of


communalism in this election could not gain over the first Dalit-Other Backward Class (OBC) coalition. However, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) which contested for 422 seats and won only 177 seats with vote share of 33.30 percent remained the single largest party in Uttar Pradesh.


The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) became Mayawati’s saviour in June 1995 to help her become the first Dalit chief minister of Uttar Pradesh who then emerged as an icon face of Dalits and their voice in a state in which they are almost 21 percent of the population with a significant impact on the country’s politics. On the other hand the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) continued to setup and strengthens its political ground in the state for the next general elections. It very cleverly decided to support the Mayawati to over through the rule of Mr. Yadav in the end of June 1995. By applying this tactic the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) highlighted its support for the implementation of the Mandal recommendations to impress and improve its image among the Scheduled Castes (SCs).

The defeat of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) in the assembly elections of Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh and Himachal Pradesh made it to rethink its strategy that had allegedly alienated many voters especially in the rural constituencies. They started to adopt the soft pedal on the Ayodhya issue and gave up the idea of mobilising the Hindus against the Muslims through politico-religious procession. This new altered strategy became responsible for the decline of number of Communal Violence. Jaffrelot examines that since early 1993 the number of Communal Violence steeply declined from 1601 (1681 died) in 1992 and 2292 (952 died) in 1993 to 179 (78 died) in 1994. He pointed out that the pattern of communal mobilisation has not disappeared completely. The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) strategy of support to Mayawati as chief minister of Uttar Pradesh could not become successful. The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) due to the clash of ideology withdrew its support forcing Mayawati to resign from the government. With no party in a position to form the new government the governor of the state decided to request the president to impose the ‘President Rule’ which was imposed from the 18th October 1995 to 21st March 1997.

147 Statistical Report on General Election, 1993 to the Legislative Assembly of Uttar Pradesh, 15-16.
In between the campaign for general elections, that is, the 11th general elections started. The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) started its campaign by practicing ‘soft Hindutva.’ The Vishva Hindu Parishad (VHP) in 1995 launched the Kashi and Mathura temple movements receiving no large public support.\(^\text{149}\) In October 1995 the ‘ekatmata yatra’ (March for unity) of the Vishva Hindu Parishad (VHP) was also met by public indifference. Advani’s ‘suraj yatra’ too met with an embarrassingly low response.\(^\text{150}\) However, the Vishva Hindu Parishads (VHP) released a 40-points of Hindu agenda for the poll, such as new laws to hand over the Ayodhya site to the Ram Janmabhoomi Nyas discarding of the ‘Place of Worship (Special Provisions) Act’, the Article 370 of the Constitution, the banning cow slaughter etcetera. By declaring such major points Vishva Hindu Parishad (VHP) president Shri Vishnu Hari Dalmia and working president Ashok Singhal said at a press conference in Delhi on 16th January 1996 that “their organisation will provide support to any party which incorporate majority of the issues raised in the agenda.” They further said that “we are mobilising the Hindu vote-bank. It is up to the political parties to encash this vote-bank.”\(^\text{151}\) The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) decided to include most of the issues from the Vishva Hindu Parishads (VHP) agenda for its Lok Sabha election.\(^\text{152}\) The party this time decided to project itself as ‘responsible’ national party focusing on national issues.\(^\text{153}\)

However, it mobilised the cow propaganda starting it from Uttar Pradesh to all over the India about a month before the general elections in which the Bajarng Dal (BD) was used as mobilisation tool.\(^\text{154}\) The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) leaders mobilised the issue of cow protection in Agra and in adjoining areas of the Uttar Pradesh. Cow protection was the poll strategy for the


\(^{152}\) Ibid.


The caste politics game in these elections was played by each political party. Sudha Pai argues that the election campaign in Uttar Pradesh for 1996 general elections was free from the ‘Ram Lehar’ (Ram wave) because the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) has given importance to the local level developmental concerns and caste based issues. The sole Dalit party, that is, the Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) also went round looking for a vote for Kashi Ram by projecting him as the Massiha for oppressed caste and presented as the future prime minister of India. Mr. Yadav has widened his image from the Muslim-Yadav to the Muslim-Yadav-Thakur. In this election besides Bharatiya Janata Party’s (BJP) communal overtones caste was mobilised all parties to seek political dividends.

5.6.1. Election Results
In the 11th general elections the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) tried to polarise the vote on “Caste-Cow Communal” lines. The electoral result was a hung parliament. The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) grew its vote share graph and emerged as the single largest party in a hung parliament. With the support of Shiv Sena and other allies, it nationally got 161 seats (vote share of 20.29 percent), the Congress 140 seats (vote share of 28.80 percent) and the Janata Dal (JD) 46 seats (vote share of 8.08 percent). However, in Uttar Pradesh where 46.50 percent was the poll turnout, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) won 52 seats (vote share of 33.44 percent), Congress 5 seats (vote share of 8.14 percent) and the Janata Dal (JD) 2 (vote share of 4.26 percent). The regional parties, that is, the Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) won 6 seats (vote share of 20.61 percent) and the Samajwadi Party (SP) won 16 (vote share of 20.84 percent). (Table: 5.10). The Hindutva plank was used to a great extent in the election by the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) in which for the first time, a party espousing Hindu nationalism eclipsed the Congress.

155 “RSS helps BJP chalk out poll strategy,” The Indian Express, March 22, 1996, p.3.
159 Ahuja, Electoral Politics, 172.
In this election the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) obtained a strong voting share from the Communal Violence constituencies of Uttar Pradesh. (Table: 5.11). In the 1991 general elections the party launched the Ram Rath Yatra and was able to capture 51 seats (vote share of 32.82 percent). In 1996 general elections it increased its seats, that is, 52 (vote share of 33.44 percent) after the demolition of the Babri Masjid and the mobilisation of the new cow propaganda. It could be argued that the election results from Uttar Pradesh demonstrated that the “Caste-Cow-Communal” tactics proved successful for the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Congress S/V.S</th>
<th>SP S/V.S</th>
<th>BJP S/V.S</th>
<th>BSP S/V.S</th>
<th>JD S/V.S</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Table: 5.10: Note: INC= Indian National Congress, SP= Samajwadi Party, JD= Janta Dal, BJP= Bharatiya Janata Party, BSP= Bahujan Samaj Party, S=Seats, V.S= Vote Share.


162 Ibid.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Constituency</th>
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<th>Category</th>
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<td>GEN</td>
<td>BJP</td>
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<td>Babri township- Muzaffarnagar riot, 1994</td>
<td>Sohan Veer</td>
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<td>GEN</td>
<td>BJP</td>
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<td>M</td>
<td>GEN</td>
<td>BJP</td>
<td>233130</td>
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<td>Saharanpur riot, 1995</td>
<td>Nakli Singh</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>GEN</td>
<td>BJP</td>
<td>235811</td>
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<td>Rajkumari Ratna Singh</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>GEN</td>
<td>INC</td>
<td>139326</td>
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<tr>
<td>Moradabad riot, 1995, 1996</td>
<td>Shafiqur Rahman Warq</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>GEN</td>
<td>SP</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lucknow riot, 1996</td>
<td>Atal Bihari Vajpayee</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>GEN</td>
<td>BJP</td>
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<td>Amar Pal Singh</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>GEN</td>
<td>BJP</td>
<td>310732</td>
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<td>Bahraich riot, 1996</td>
<td>Padam Sen Chaudhari</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>GEN</td>
<td>BJP</td>
<td>162165</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table: 5.11: Note: M=Male, F=Female, SC=Scheduled Caste, GEN= General.


Being the single largest party, the president invited the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) under the leadership of Atal Bihari Vajpayee to form the new government and prove its majority support within two weeks.\(^{163}\) The government was formed but it failed to win


140
over necessary support and fell down after lasting for just 13 days on first June 1996. After this, the Congress Party choose to extend outside support to the Janta Dal (JD) and other smaller parties that formed into the ‘United Front’. H.D. Deve Gowda on 1st June 1996 became the prime minister but his government also lasted for the short of period 18 months. I.K. Gujral replaced to Deve Gowda and ultimately the Lok Sabha was dissolved for the 12th general elections.

5.6.2. Uttar Pradesh State Politics and President Rule

During the ups and down at the center, the assembly elections in Uttar Pradesh started in 1996 after the period of President Rule. The Political groups started to merge or allied with each other to stop the communal strengths/forces. Such as the Congress has decided to assign with the Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP), on the other hand the Congress was also extending outer support to the United Front (UF) government at the center to which the Samajwadi Party (SP) of Mr. Yadav was an important element. All these viz. the United Front and the Congress - Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) alliance were all made in opposing the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP). Whereas, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) leader Kalyan Singh favoured that the party this time should support non-upper caste candidates for the upcoming assembly elections in the State. This was because of the changing factor of caste mobilization from one region to another that was making difficult for the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) to build base around the larger caste groups in the State. Therefore, Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) nominated backward candidates in 190 out of the 420 constituencies for the September 1996 general elections. However, this move of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) disturbed the old upper caste support base of the party. However, the result was the hung assembly. This result was a stunning shock for all the political parties especially for the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP). Commenting on the elections Kanchan Chandra and Chandrika Parmar argue that “the political parties in Uttar Pradesh attempted for ethnic mobilisation but separated it from ethnic polarisation, earlier with Rath Yatra in 1990s, a pro- Hindutva stance has gone

164 History of Lok Sabha.
165 Hasan, Congress after Indira, 75.
hand to hand with an anti Muslim one, with Mandal Commission report, a pro backward caste position went with a anti forward one and a pro-Bahujan platform with an anti-Manuvadi one. But this trend was somehow absent in 1996 assembly elections of Uttar Pradesh."\textsuperscript{168}

However, in this election the Congress - Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) alliance certainly helped the Congress to win 33 seats (vote share of 8.35 percent). The Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) strength remained almost the same as it was in the 1993 elections with 67 seats (vote share of 19.64 percent). The United Front led by Samajwadi Party (SP) seized 134 seats, the majority share being contributed by the Samajwadi Party (SP), which won 110 seats (vote share of 21.80 percent), the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) secured 174 seats (vote share of 32.52 percent), whereas Janta Dal (JD) received 7 seats (vote share of 2.56 percent).\textsuperscript{169}

In the 1996 assembly elections, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) securing 174 seats, 39 short of majority was the single largest party. The assembly was kept in suspended animation, following which President’s Rule was imposed. At last, at the end of March 1997, Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) with pressure from the Sangh decided to enter into an agreement with the Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) which had 67 Member of Legislative Assembly (MLAs) and under which both the parties would have a chief minister for 6 months by rotation according to which six months (21\textsuperscript{st} March to 20\textsuperscript{th} September 1997) the Bahujan Samaj Party’s (BSP) chief minister Mayawati will rule and later six months will be ruled out by the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) under the leadership of Kalyan Singh. Mayawati had the first 6 months. The Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) - Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) alliance broke down soon when Mayawati rejected to step down after the completion of six months. The Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) withdrew its support from the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) on 19\textsuperscript{th} October, 1997. However, Kalyan Singh with the help of defectors managed its majority and ruled the state till November 1999.


5.7. The 12th General Elections -1998, the Moderate Phase of Political Parties and State Politics

The general elections were held during February–March 1998 following the dissolution of Lok Sabha on 4th December 1997.\footnote{India Parliamentary Chamber: Lok Sabha Elections Held In 1998, Inter-Parliamentary Union, http://www.ipu.org/parline-e/reports/arc/2145_98.htm (Retrieved July 28, 2016).} The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) election manifestoes from right from the beginning show a consistent pattern of fielding the core Hindutva issues. Prior to this election, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) published a national agenda in which it has dropped the issue of the Ram temple, the Uniform Civil Code (UCC) and Article 370 and placed more importance on nuclear policy, foreign investments and the review of Indian constitution.\footnote{Amrita Basu, “The Changing fortunes of the BJP,” in Routledge Hnadbook of Indian politics, ed. Atul Kholi and Prerna Singh (Routledge, 2013), 83.} It used a new chant, that is, “the construction of Ram Temple through negotiation and not by law.” Mr. Vajpayee vowed to construct the temple but only by persuading Muslims.\footnote{Sharad Gupta, “BJP will now talk its way to temple,” The Indian Express, February 3, 1998, p.3.} During the campaign rallies in Uttar Pradesh, Mr. Vajpayee made no discussion on the Ayodhya issue rather focused on the price of the onions, problems of sugarcane farmers, Bofors, and tried to reassure the Muslims that they had nothing to fear from the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP).\footnote{Pai, “New Political Trends,” 1842.} The party championed economic nationalism and promised to shield domestic industry from international competition; it advocated restricting direct investment to non-priority areas. Sudha Pai argues that the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) tried not to use its Hindutva as its core priority during the elections campaign. It rather maintained distance from the controversial issues and focused on the economic issues like as ‘swadeshi.’ The stability was the main agenda of the party, corruption in high places coming a close second.\footnote{Ibid.} Zoya Hasan argues that to some extant Vajpayee and other Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) leaders struggled to distance the party from the Hindutva agenda and moving more in the direction of consensual governance. This does not however mean that the party distanced and made itself aloof from the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) and Hindutva agendas.\footnote{Zoya Hasan, “Introduction: Conflict Pluralism and the Competition party System in India,” in Parties and Party Politics in India, ed. Zoya Hasan (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2002), 17-19.} Sonia Gandhi termed the mellowing down of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) a “political compulsion.” “There is only hatred behind the veil of goodwill.”\footnote{Sharad Gupta, “Sonia lashes out critics of Jain panel,” The Indian Express, February 2, 1998, p.1.} With regard to Communal Violence Asgar Ali Engineer argues that it is true that in the
post-Babri period there have been no major Communal Violence in India. But it will not be correct to maintain that the period has entirely been free from communal incidents. Because in each year, that is, from 1997 to 1998 there have been various communal clashes in different parts of country especially in the Uttar Pradesh where riots took place in Mathura (March 27, 1997; Dead: 2 or Injured: 21), Mohammadpur-Roorkee (May 19, 1997; Dead: 1; Injured: 8), Khampurban- Sambhal (October 21, 1997; Dead: 24).\textsuperscript{177} Uttar Pradesh also witnessed communal clashes in five places, that is, Gonda, Kanpur, Barabanki, Bulandshehar and Sharanpur in early November especially after the Kalyan Singh government had assumed the office.\textsuperscript{178} In the year of 1998, Communal Violence erupted in Daulatpur- Bulandshehar (January 4; Dead: 2; Injured: 4), Kanpur (January 10), Firozabad (February 18; Injured: 10),\textsuperscript{179} Moradabad (May 9; Dead: 3, Injured: 50).\textsuperscript{180} In all Engineer points out that there have been no major planned riots and were also not backed by any political party.\textsuperscript{181}

The 1998 elections were the third in a series of eventually four elections necessitated because of the failure of non-Congress governments to last full terms, the turnout went up from 57.94 percent in 1996 to 61.97 percent. It was also the fourth time since 1989 when a parliamentary poll yielded a ‘hung house,’ indicating that the era of coalitions had truly set in.\textsuperscript{182} The outcome of these elections was also indecisive, with no party or alliance able to create a strong majority. In post-election maneuvering the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) -led alliance managed a working majority of 286 members out of 545 and therefore on 15 March, Mr. Vajpayee was invited by president Narayanan to form the next government. He did so on 19 March heading a 41 party coalition government. The government collapsed again in late 1998 when the All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (AIADMK), with its 18 Member of Parliaments (MPs), withdrew its support. This led to a vote-of-confidence motion in the parliament, where the government lost by 272-273 (1 vote) and thus leading to new general elections in 1999.

\textsuperscript{177} Engineer, \textit{Communal Riots after}, 147-149.
\textsuperscript{180} Engineer, \textit{Communal Riots after}, 147-149.
\textsuperscript{181} Engineer, “Communalism and Communal Violence, 1997,” 12.
The first ever National Democratic Alliance (NDA) government, stayed in office for just few months. The 1998 polls became the watershed moment of the Bharatiya Janata Party’s (BJP) mainstreaming, which put an end to its ‘untouchable’ status. It marked the first poll when it, along with its allies, ended up being the largest vote-gatherers. It is important to look at the 1996 results when the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) emerged as the largest party with 161 seats to 140 bagged by the Congress. Yet, BJP’s vote share was 20.3 percent as against Congress’s 28.8 percent. In this election of 1998, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) tally crossed the 25 percent mark for the first time though Congress still remained ahead, the difference between the two parties was miniscule – 0.3 percent. It also marked for the first time since independence that India's long-time governing party, the Indian National Congress (INC), failed to win majority two consecutive elections.  

5.7.1. Election Results

In 1998 general elections the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) emerged as a single largest party in all over India with 182 seats (vote share of 25.59 percent). While the Congress tally remained low at 141 seats, the party posting its lowest ever vote share of 25.82 percent. In Uttar Pradesh the analysis of the election results revealed that from the conflict constituencies communal polarisation played a dominant role. From the conflict zones the Samajwadi Party (SP) and the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) emerged successful. (Table: 5.12).

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183 Mukhopadhyay, “Past Continuous.”
List of Successful Candidate from Uttar Pradesh, Conflict Constituency in 1998 General Elections

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Constituency</th>
<th>Winner</th>
<th>Sex</th>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Party</th>
<th>Votes</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mathura riot, 1997</td>
<td>Tejveer</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>GEN</td>
<td>BJP</td>
<td>303831</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sambhal riot, 1997</td>
<td>Mulayam Singh Yadav</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>GEN</td>
<td>SP</td>
<td>376828</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kanpur riot, 1997</td>
<td>Jagat Veer Singh Dron</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>GEN</td>
<td>BJP</td>
<td>335996</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gonda riot, 1997</td>
<td>Kirti Vadhan Singh Alias Kirti Vardhan</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>GEN</td>
<td>SP</td>
<td>278449</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Singh Alias Raja Bhaiya</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saharanpur riot, 1997</td>
<td>Nakli Singh</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>GEN</td>
<td>BJP</td>
<td>275103</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daulatpur riot-Bulandshehar, 1998</td>
<td>Chhattarpal</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>GEN</td>
<td>BJP</td>
<td>248212</td>
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<tr>
<td>Barabanki riot, 1998</td>
<td>Baijnath Rawat</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>SC</td>
<td>BJP</td>
<td>228368</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Varanasi, 1998</td>
<td>Shankar Prasad Jaiswal</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>GEN</td>
<td>BJP</td>
<td>277232</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baghap, 1998</td>
<td>Sompal</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>GEN</td>
<td>BJP</td>
<td>264736</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phulpur, 1998</td>
<td>Jang Bahadur Singh Patel</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>GEN</td>
<td>SP</td>
<td>216124</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mainpuri, 1998 P.V</td>
<td>Balram Singh Yadav</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>GEN</td>
<td>SP</td>
<td>264734</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Table: 5.12: Note: P.V=Poll Violence, M=Male, F=Female, SC=Scheduled Caste, GEN= General.

The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) has contested for 82 seats out of 85 and was able to win highest, that is, 57 seats (vote share of 36.49 percent). Whereas, the Congress in the State lost all its political seats. The Congress (I)’s share of the popular vote also fell from 8.14 percent in 1996 to 6.02 percent in 1998. Whereas, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) popular vote share in the Uttar Pradesh went up with 36.49 percent in 1998 to 33.44 percent of vote share in 1996. The Samajwadi Party (SP) also improved its strength from 16 seats (vote share of 6.7 percent) in 1996 to 20 seats (vote share of 28.70 percent) in
1998. Even the Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) has also improved its vote share by 1.96 percent with 6 seats in 1996 to 20.9 percent in 1998 with 4 seats.\textsuperscript{185} (Table: 5.13).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>INC S/V.S</th>
<th>SP S/V.S</th>
<th>BJP S/V.S</th>
<th>BSP S/V.S</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1998</td>
<td>0/6.02</td>
<td>20/28.70</td>
<td>57/36.49</td>
<td>4/20.90</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\textit{Table: 5.13:} Note: INC= Indian National Congress, SP= Samajwadi Party, BJP= Bharatiya Janata Party, BSP= Bahujan Samaj Party, S=Seats, V.S= Vote Share. 


Although, the Bharatiya Janata Party’s (BJP) Atal Bihari Vajpayee was sworn in as the prime minister for the second time receiving support from 286 members out of 545. The government collapsed again in late 1998 when the All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (AIADMK), with its 18 seats, withdrew support. This led to a vote of confidence motion in the parliament, where the government lost by 272-273 (1 vote) leading to new general elections in 1999.\textsuperscript{186} The outcome of the twelfth general elections revealed the changing nature of Indian politics from single party domination to coalition politics.

\textbf{5.8. The 13\textsuperscript{th} General Elections -1999: Sonia versus Vajpayee and Caste Politics}

The 13\textsuperscript{th} general elections were held from 5\textsuperscript{th} September to 3\textsuperscript{rd} October 1999. It was the third general election in a little more than three years time. The election was of historical importance as it was the first time a united front of parties managed to attain a majority to form a government that lasted a full term of five years ending a period of political instability at the national level that was characterised by unclear majority in last three general elections. The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) faced the election as the head of the National Democratic Alliance (NDA), a coalition of over 20 parties. Several other parties in the elections not part of the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) also committed to support the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) led government on matters of confidence. Vajpayee was the prime minister candidate from the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP). Sonia Gandhi emerged as his primary rival for the post. The election campaign


\textsuperscript{186} Hasan, Congress after Indira, 76.
became a two candidate contest for the most powerful political office. The core of struggle became “Atal versus Sonia” and “Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) versus the Congress Indira Party.” The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) tries to impress the people with the slogan of “Vajpayee brings you victory in Kargil war, prosperity in peace,” and this man (Vajpayee) lost by one vote, bring him back with your one vote. Vajpayee himself alleged the Congress president Sonia Gandhi would be national security threat if a person of foreign origin headed the government of the country. Sonia counter-replied that “she was the daughter in law of Indira Gandhi when she was prime minister for 16 years and wife of the prime minister for five years. How did I suddenly become a security threat?”

The issue of her Italian birth was capitalised upon by the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) which contrasted the “videshi” (foreigner) Gandhi versus the “swadeshi” (home-grown) Vajpayee. Another issue running in the favour of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) was the positive view of handling of the Kargil War by Vajpayee in Kashmir with Pakistan, strong economic growth posted in the last two years, as well as a low rate of inflation and higher rate of industrial expansion. The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) campaigned strongly on the back of these achievements, as well as cultivating some sympathy for the predicament which had led to the government’s downfall.

The issue of Ram temple was not the main agenda of the Party. The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) general secretary M. Venkaiah Naidu declared about the Ram temple issue that ‘his party would never raise the Ayodhya issue again even if it were to secure a majority on its own in the elections.’ He has also stated as ‘Ayodhya was a settled issue’ means no party is raising it anymore. It is no longer the agenda of any party. The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), setting aside its own Hindu nationalist agenda in favour of a common program, was at the core of the alliance that included regional parties as disparate and ideologically incompatible as the Hindu chauvinist Shiv Sena (SS) of

190 “The issue of my taking citizenship after 18 years is merely technical: Sonia,” *The Indian Express*, September 9, 1999, p. 3.
Maharashtra and the pragmatic, secular Telugu Desam Party (TDP) of Andhra and Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK) of Tamil Nadu.

The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) was able to form a more stable National Democratic Alliance (NDA) this time around and this was the first time that a non-Congress alliance lasted a full five year term. Atal Bihari Vajpayee was sworn in as the prime minister for the third time.

5.8.1. Election Results
The result of India’s 13th general elections was in favour of the National Democratic Alliance (NDA). The alliances forged by Vajpayee were the key to victory. The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) emerged as the single largest party with 182 seats only marginally better than the 179 it won in 1998 while National Democratic Alliance (NDA) with 298 seats (vote share of 40.8 percent) and the Congress won only 114 seats (vote share of 28.30 percent). The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) allies bagged another 117 seats. The Telugu Desam Party (TDP) of Andhra Pradesh came back with 29 seats; the Shiv Sena (SS) won 15; the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK) of Tamil Nadu won 12. The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) secured 23.8 percent of the vote, slightly below its 25.5 percent in 1998. However, this time it contested less constituencies than in 1998 – 340 seats, down from 384 in the previous election. It suffered a major setback in Uttar Pradesh, where voters rejected it on the ground of its poor performance. It was able to win only 29 seats of the contested for 77 seats of the state’s 85 parliamentary seats – down from the 57 seats it won in 1998. Its vote share this time was 27.64 percent.

The Congress and its allies won 134 seats and 34 percent of the vote. The Congress itself, with 28 percent of the vote, won only 112 seats (down 28 from the last general election). This was its worst performance since Independence. Despite its dramatic fall in seats, it fared well in a few states like Karnataka and Punjab and made gains in Uttar Pradesh where it was completely wiped out in 1998. The Congress has contested for 76

seats and of which it won only 10 seats with vote share of 14.72 percent. The Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) contested alone for 85 seats and was able to capture only 14 seats (vote share of 22.08 percent). The Samajwadi Party (SP) contested for 84 seats and won 26 seats (vote share of 24.06 percent).  

Table: 5.14: Note: INC= Indian National Congress, SP= Samajwadi Party, BJP= Bharatiya Janata Party, BSP= Bahujan Samaj Party, S=Seats, V.S= Vote Share.


5.9. Conclusions

The state of Uttar Pradesh occupies a very important place in Indian politics. The sheer size of the state meant that the major political parties continued to place the state at the center of their electoral calculations. Its politics is seen as a springboard for the national stage. It is the center for the formulation of communal-caste politics battleground. For communal politics it is more often used as a platform by the political parties whether national or regional. Especially for the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) the state of Uttar Pradesh has been very important for its high-stakes it attaches with its overall electoral fortunes tied to its seat tally from here. The party held sway over the state winning 50-plus seats from the there in the general elections of 1991, 1996 and 1998 and in 1998 it formed a coalition government at the center on the back of an unbelievable tally of 57 seats from the State. The critical importance of Uttar Pradesh in the Bharatiya Janata Party’s (BJP) electoral and government-formation calculations can be gauged from the fact that, in all, it won only 181 seats in that election. Its notable run ends in the 1999 general elections, with the party’s seat tally from state plunging to low of 29. That year, however, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) returned to power, helped by its bandwagon of allies. The state continues to occupy import place in electoral games of political parties.